



August 16, 2009

Virtual Call Center Comes To State

By Tom Mast, Star-Tribune Staff Writer

Denver-based Alpine Access, a virtual call center, is expanding into Wyoming.

The company expects to bring about 100 jobs to Wyoming in the next year. It claims home-based workers in over 1,000 cities in the U.S.

Spokeswoman Cori Keeton Pope said people hired for the Wyoming jobs will answer in-bound customer service, technical support, sales support and collection calls.

"They could be questions about products and product orders, travel and airline reservations, cell phone or credit card accounts, technical support questions and the like," she said.

She said the company has a wide range of clients, including Fortune 500 companies, in such sectors as retail, financial services, telecommunications and travel.

Keeton Pope said workers must provide their own equipment, which includes a computer, high-speed Internet access and a corded telephone headset. She said people will be hired throughout the state.

The full-time workers will receive health benefits, along with paid time off and access to a matching 401(k) plan. Starting wages range from \$8 to \$12 an hour.

In a press release, Alpine Access CEO Christopher Carrington said Wyoming's business friendly environment and broadband connectivity make the state attractive.

He said the Wyoming Workforce Development Training Fund played a key role in starting up in Wyoming.

Under the program, business training grants for new positions can provide between \$1,000 and \$4,000 per trainee per fiscal year, depending on an employee's full-time status and wage amount.

The company expects to create 50 jobs at first, then expand throughout the state.

Joan Evans, director of the state Department of Workforce Services, said the distributive model of Alpine Access can help people find work in areas of high unemployment.

"I think that's the beauty of this virtual call center," she said. "They don't have to chose a community to start up in. They've chosen our state."

She added while Alpine Access will do the actual worker recruitment, the jobs will be posted at wyomingatwork.com.