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Empereon Hiring Again; 450 Jobs By End Of Year

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Empereon expects to have a Coudersport workforce of at least 450 people by the end of the year, according to local manager Jamie Evens, who told the Coudersport Chamber of Commerce yesterday that he didn't believe a call center being built in Olean, NY, would be any competition for qualified workers.

Evens said, "The work is definitely there" to support 450 jobs locally, and he said he didn't expect to have any difficulty filling the positions.

"I have a stack of 400 resumes on my desk right now," he said.

Evens added that he didn't believe the call center for "The Connection" being constructed in Olean, NY, would be any major competition for employees.

He said currently Empereon doesn't have anyone driving that far to work -- "95 percent of our people are closer to Coudersport."

Evens also said, "I've met with The Connection. I truly believe we have more to offer."

Empereon currently employs 80 people in its Coudersport call center, 78 of whom

are former Adelphia/Time-Warner employees, he said. 75 are "on the phones doing outbound sales."

Evens said the company would be adding in-bound retention and technical support functions very soon.

Long-term, Evens said he expects the center to be split about 50-50 between outbound and inbound calls.

"Historically, Empereon is an outbound company, but the equipment we've installed is basically inbound equipment," he said.

Evens also tried to counter rumors that Empereon's employees will be getting a

pay cut.

"Employees pay will not be reduced after the first 90 days," said Evens, explaining that while the hourly rate does drop back from \$10 to \$8 an hour, commission kicks in as an incentive to sales.

Evens also said, "There will be health benefits for all employees after the 90-day probation period."

He said, "The medical benefits haven't been finalized. We completed a census

TURN TO EMPEREON.

ON PAGE 10

residents... and it doesn't follow the protocol DPW staff are supposed to follow."

"Absolutely not," said Banks, "absolutely not!"

EMPEREON

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

of employees last week, and (the benefits company) is working on a quote for us."

He said Empereon "is trying to get something as close to the Adelphia/Time-Warner package as possible."

Evens said the company took a pause in hiring over the holidays because it's difficult to train people around holiday vacations.

But he said hiring will begin again soon, and in earnest.

"I expect the next hire class to begin the first week of February," he said.

Hiring will be done in training groups of 10 instead of 15, he said, because the smaller groups are easier and quicker to train.

"The goal is 450 by the end of the year," said Evens. "We were hoping for 400 by June, but I'm not sure we will make that with the smaller classes."

He said, "We believe we could be as high as 650, not this year, but in 2009."

When asked how many management jobs there were, Evens said, "Empereon really believes in promoting from within. Of the 80 people currently here, five are management team, and all but two of them started on the phones... And we're going to fill two more management positions this week (from within the local employee base.)"