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CONSUL GENERAL OF MEXICO IN CHICAGO VISITS

STARKE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

Starke County, Indiana - Eduardo Arnal Palomera, recently appointed to the position of Consul General of Mexico in Chicago, visited the offices of the Starke County Economic Development Foundation (SCEDF) this week where he met with SCEDF Executive Director Charles W. Weaver and others. The visit was a part of Arnal's pledge to visit all 128 counties in Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin that the Chicago Consulate serves, which includes over 3 million Mexican nationals living there. Arnal stated that he had visited all of the counties under his jurisdiction while serving as Consul General of Mexico in Denver for the past 4 years. Arnal was accompanied on this visit with five other members of the Chicago Consulate staff.

Arnal holds a law degree and previously served as a member of the Presidential Transition Team when current Mexican President Felipe Calderon took over from President Vicente Fox in 2006. He has prior experience as a City Manager and also served as a federal congressman for the National Action Party (PAN) in Mexico's House of Representatives. He was formally ratified for his position in Chicago by the Mexican Congress in March of this year. Since arriving in Chicago, Arnal has attempted to reach out to Mexican nationals and organizations in an effort to make the Chicago Consulate a friendlier place for them.

When meeting with SCEDF, Arnal discussed a number of topics including trade opportunities between the two countries with Arnal noting that the US was exporting more goods to Mexico

every year, thus becoming a true trade partner. Arnal also spoke about the efforts of the Mexican government in combating drug dealers and cartels, as well as how the Mexican economy is doing in relation to the rest of the Americas. He sees the battle against the cartels as being one in which he hopes to see the United States assist Mexico in some manner. He also pointed to relatively recent changes in the Mexican government as signs that things are changing for the positive in Mexico and that this change will bring additional benefits to the United States if the countries work more closely together.

Arnal sees these visits out in the communities he serves as an opportunity to speak first hand with the Mexican community in these areas, as well as introduce himself and what the Consulate Office can do to help increase economic growth between the United States and Mexico.

SECDF Executive Director Charles W. Weaver said after the meeting with Arnal that “this was a wonderful first step in establishing ties with the Chicago Consulate that could prove beneficial in increasing export opportunities by Starke County Industries to Mexico.” Weaver present the Consul General a gift box of Lehman’s gourmet mint candies made from Starke County grown mint.

ABOUT STARKE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

The Starke County Development Foundation is a not-for-profit local economic development organization (LEDO) providing economic development opportunities on behalf of Starke County, Indiana, the City of Knox, and the Towns of North Judson and Hamlet through the development of industrial parks, rail spurs, greenfield sites, shovel-ready sites, infrastructure and workforce development. For more information regarding Starke County Development Foundation, visit www.starkecounty.com.

ABOUT THE MEXICAN GENERAL CONSULATE IN CHICAGO

For additional information about the Mexican General Consulate in Chicago, visit www.consulmexchicago.com/.

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