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SavantX brings high-tech research center to Santa Fe

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Jun 12, 2020

The emerging technology sector in Santa Fe just got another addition.

SavantX, a Jackson, Wyo., data analytics firm, is moving some of its operations to Santa Fe, and though its initial footprint will be small, company CEO and co-founder Ed Heinbockel believes his company will grow to at least 116 employees in 10 years.

The SavantX corporate research center in Santa Fe likely will have six employees for its first year, starting with data scientists and programmers, and potentially add 15 employees in 2021 and 26 employees in 2022, Heinbockel said.

The average salary for jobs at the company will be over \$90,000 annually, according to a New Mexico Economic Development Department news release.

The department awarded \$152,930 in Job Training Incentive Program funds to train SavantX's first five employees. The department also pledged \$450,000 from its Local Economic Development Act closing fund and the city of Santa Fe added \$50,000.

SavantX is a spinoff of Visual Purple, another Heinbockel company. Both were in San Luis Obispo, Calif., when SavantX was founded in 2015. He moved Visual Purple to Boise, Idaho, and SavantX to Wyoming because he "loves Jackson."

SavantX has three employees in Wyoming plus 24 contract workers. SavantX has 17 total employees, with others working remotely in California, Oregon, Nebraska and Texas.

Heinbockel said he first looked in Oregon, Idaho, and Park City, Utah before honing in on Santa Fe.

"I like the talent pool and lifestyle in Santa Fe," he said, adding that the company plans to recruit its employees from Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratories.

The SavantX operations, sales and customer support will remain in Jackson, but Heinbockel plans to encourage his six-person California team to move to Santa Fe this year. Later on, he said he plans to move to Santa Fe as well.

SavantX has an office on Jones Street near Guadalupe Street and Paseo de Paralta — and near Descartes Labs, which does similar work in technology for satellite imagery analysis.

“It is within walking distance of [Cafe] Pasqual’s, which is my criteria; it’s my favorite restaurant,” Heinbockel said.

Santa Fe has grown a modest tech sector in the 21 years Marie Longserre has been CEO of the Santa Fe Business Incubator, where numerous tech companies started and some still reside — including Falling Colors, Flow Science and Descartes Labs.

“Expanding our technology sector, specifically data analytical companies, is exciting and so necessary right now,” said Longserre, who added she believes it’s important for Santa Fe to diversify beyond tourism. “What we have done over the years is taken steps on the ladder. The technology ecosystem is strong and growing.”

SavantX has had the U.S. Army, the Defense Intelligence Agency and the nuclear power industry as clients for its product. Heinbockel describes it as a data analysis and visualization technology to find “useful and meaningful” data in massive data sets, simplified by him as “Google on steroids.”

SavantX is just rolling out its HONE technology, short for Hyper Optimization Nodal Efficiency. He gives an example of its use as trucking companies being able to better optimize their loads to improve the ability for drivers to stay on schedule.

Customizing the basic HONE platform and creating new versions of the technology for individual clients are expected to lead the company’s job growth in Santa Fe.

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