



Ladysmith Young Professional Panel Discussion

- *If you are a native to the area, what drives you to want to stay and create a career/life here? OR If you a transplant to the area, what attracted you to the area to follow a career path/put down roots here?*
 - Being close to family (2)
 - Good neighbors
 - Moved to area due to employment
 - Internship Opportunities that led to career here
 - Active in Young Professionals group(2)
 - Chamber of Commerce involvement
 - Relationships - significant others having careers here too
 - Small town feel
 - Quiet, enjoyable living
 - Outdoor recreation opportunities(2)
 - Affordable housing (2) - especially compared to urban areas
 - Small business ownership/entrepreneurship opportunity
 - Sense of community
- *What are some of the drawbacks to living in a rural community?*
 - Stigma w/ “coming back” - some perceptions view it as failing if you come back
 - Lack of bigger city amenities
 - Stress of over-commitment to groups and volunteer involvement
- *What do you feel are amenities that are needed to keep or attract talent like yourself in the communities where you live?*
 - Don’t want “target down the street”
 - Amenities for families are most important such as a good school, hospital, community center - all of these are necessary for young families with children
 - Sporting and athletic opportunities for kids
 - Quality and flexible childcare options
 - Mentorship opportunities for students to increase engagement with industry

- *What can encourage civic involvement from the younger generation?*
 - Disconnect between generations-seems to slowly be changing/more cooperation exists
 - Elected boards allowing for work schedule flexibility - meetings during the day don't work for full time employees - hard to coordinate around kid's schedules
 - Employers recognizing the importance of civic involvement for employees and offering reimbursement for meeting time or allowing employees to attend meetings without losing compensation for that time.

- *Is there adequate broadband and/or cell coverage in your area for the connectivity you require for work/play?*
 - Spotty out of town/right in town no issues
 - Internet and cell coverage is terrible in rural areas
 - Have to drive into town to accomplish tasks online
 - Growing family's needs for better quality have increased
 - Have had to change providers three times
 - No broadband available at a business (Ladysmith Veterinary Clinic) - has to run internet through a Verizon hotspot

- *Do you feel there is adequate workforce training for young folks in the area, in Technical Colleges, to provide a pathway for high school graduates?*
 - Internship opportunities do exist
 - Last few years-more tour groups coming through manufacturing industry
 - Opportunity to reach out to local schools
 - There are leadership/educational opportunities offered through employer (hospital)
 - Personal flexibility-given by employer
 - Opportunity to grow in place
 - Expose K-12 to opportunity to learn about technical colleges and programs-connect young people

- *How important do you feel it is for a community strategy to have businesses, economic development, etc. get to grade school and high school students to expose them to local career paths, and if you feel that is important, is that strategy being executed in your area.*
 - On the right path - things are improving
 - Extremely important to have real-world exposure
 - Discover possibilities after shadowing/mentoring with industry
 - More involvement from industry
 - Career fair-most high school students have made up minds- need to target younger students
 - Exposure to direct career paths and opportunities that exist