

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **New Department of Labor Economist, Business Specialist Serve Southeastern Idaho**

A new regional economist and business specialist will work together in southeastern Idaho to fulfill the Labor Department's strategic goal of leveraging its resources, knowledge and skills to help achieve the immediate and long-term challenges of employers and businesses of the seven southeastern Idaho counties.

Regional business specialist Lon Crowell spent the past five years as the planning and development services director for the City of Pocatello where he directed development opportunities at the Pocatello Regional Airport Business Park and several business retention and expansion projects that included Amy's Kitchen, ATCO, Great Western Malting and Western States CAT. Crowell has served on almost 30 boards and committees including as the director of the Pocatello Development Authority and vice president of the Redevelopment Association of Idaho. Crowell can be reached at (208) 236-6710, ext. 4336.

The new regional economist, Esther Eke, holds a doctorate in civil engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Lagos, Nigeria. She has nearly nine years of experience teaching and conducting research in various academic institutions across the country. Before joining the department, Eke worked as a postdoctoral researcher at Utah State University and Johns Hopkins University. Eke can be reached at (208) 236-6710, ext. 4331.

Kandi Rudd, the Department of Labor regional manager in Pocatello, said "Lon's wealth of experience combined with Esther's background in research will really help the department accomplish its goals. The Pocatello office is fortunate to have both an economist and a regional business specialist who are so talented."

For information on the department's services, go to <https://labor.idaho.gov>

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