

Business leaders like Prudential see opportunity in El Paso: Shawn Ollis

Shawn Ollis Guest columnists

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“Just another call center with low paying jobs.”

We hear those words more than you can imagine. When we first announced we were opening a business and technology center in El Paso back in 2014, our global name brought with it some confusion. Why was El Paso chosen by a national financial institution as a new strategic location for the Southwest? There were several reasons.

Business leaders across the country are learning quickly about the opportunity here in El Paso — the opportunity to hire skilled individuals from the region, the opportunity to engage externally in the community and internally within multiple growing business functions in the site, and most importantly the opportunity to invest in our veteran and military spouse talent.

Prudential has always been dedicated to recruiting our country’s veterans as they transition into the workplace. In fact, more than 50 percent of our employees in the El Paso branch are veterans or military spouses. El Paso is one of the leading sites for Prudential to recruit and hire a very diverse workforce, with a focus on veteran talent.

We offer the tools and training on-site and work with both government and private sectors to help recruit, train and hire directly into meaningful careers. Careers in technology, finance, data management, underwriting and many others.

We know the importance of positioning new hires into roles that will allow them to grow and move up in their careers. When our employees feel invested and cared for, they stay longer and perform better. Over 100 of our jobs are technology jobs — highly trained positions that involve teams from around the globe — as far away as Japan. We continue to add more registered representatives to our workforce as well — providing the training and encouraging our teammates to obtain licenses that can advance their skill set and pay.

We also have the first and only Spanish bilingual-facing service group across all of Prudential. Adding a fluent Spanish service team has allowed us to connect with our growing community — not only in El Paso, but across the country. This is what we call progress: creating new opportunities for our existing labor force and allowing them to use their skills toward a solid career path.

Along with investing in our employees, we continue to invest in our community. El Paso is our home. We are focusing now more than ever to accelerate, expand, and strengthen the math and IT talent pipeline



The headquarters building of Prudential Financial Ins. Stands in Newark, N.J. *Emile Wamsteker/Bloomberg*



Shawn Ollis is site executive - El Paso and vice president of operations for Prudential. *Shawn Ollis*

supplying the region's workforce. Investments are being made, starting with elementary school students and progressing up to adult education and training.

Over the past two years, we have committed over \$1.6 million in funding to support these El Paso efforts and anticipate making a similar level of commitment over the next two years, bringing our total philanthropic investment in El Paso to approximately \$3 million. Organizations like the University of Texas at El Paso, Workforce Opportunity Services, El Paso Community College, Project Bravo and Girls Who Code are developing and strengthening the next generation of skilled workers in El Paso and we are proud to partner and support their work.

We have over 200 Prudential employees in El Paso and will continue to add more skilled jobs in the coming years. As an El Paso native, I want to see this community flourish and continue to move forward. As a father of three children, I want to know that we did our part to help build and enrich a community they feel proud to call home. To us, this means higher paying jobs in El Paso with real meaningful career paths. Adding more jobs, creating a happier workplace and investing in our workforce is our legacy for El Paso.

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