



Pictured are Matt Rusch and his wife, Lori at his promotion ceremony.

(Courtesy photo)

Army Reserve officer promoted

Matt Rusch, of Omaha, NE, was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve during a ceremony held on April 20 at the 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) headquarters on Fort Des Moines.

Rusch currently serves as the Staff Judge Advocate for the 103rd ESC, which oversees 5,300 Army Reserve soldiers and units located in Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. Brig. Gen. Arlan DeBleick, commanding general, 103rd ESC, hosted the ceremony.

Rusch is the son of Art and Lana Rusch of Vermillion. He is a 1992 graduate of Vermillion High School, Vermillion, and a 1996 graduate of Creighton University in Omaha, NE. In 1999, Rusch earned a Juris Doctor in law from the University of South Dakota School of Law in Vermillion.

Rusch currently resides in Omaha, NE, with his wife, Lori, and children. He is a partner with the law firm Erickson, Sederstrom, P.C., in Omaha and he practices primarily in the areas of civil litigation and real estate.

USD named a 'Best Value College'

The University of South Dakota is a Best Value College, according to Forbes, which also ranked USD as one of "America's Top Colleges" for 2013.

As one of only 25 schools (USD is No. 17) in the United States to be named a Best Value College by Forbes, USD also achieves the highest Forbes ranking (No. 330 overall) among South Dakota colleges and universities. Forbes' "America's 2013 Top Colleges" can be viewed online at www.forbes.com/top-colleges. The publication's annual review of the best undergraduate institutions in the country praises USD for its academic offerings, research and affordable tuition (in-state and out-of-state).

"When it comes to choosing a college that's a perfect fit, cost is a key factor. Excellence and affordability are hard to beat," said James W. Abbott, president of the University of South Dakota. "What students should expect in return for their investment is a quality education, so it's an honor that Forbes recognizes that

USD is delivering an affordable choice that also has great educational value."

"America's Top Colleges" assesses the quality of the educational experiences at 650 national institutions and highlights faculty expertise, career prospects, and emphasizes financial prudence, so students can make an informed, consumer choice when it comes to selecting a college or university.

Additionally, "America's Top Colleges" rankings are based on five categories: student satisfaction, which includes professor evaluations from RateMyProfessor.com and freshman-to-sophomore retention rates via the Department of Education; post graduate success, including alumni salary via Payscale.com; student debt, which takes into account average federal student loan debt load and student loan default rates; graduation rate; and competitive awards, particularly schools whose students win prestigious scholarships and fellowships like the Rhodes, the Marshall and the Fulbright.

Small businesses to connect at conference

Small businesses that want to conduct and commercialize health-related research will connect with national experts and programs Oct. 28-30 in Sioux Falls. Close to 500 are expected to attend the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) 15th annual Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Conference held at the Sioux Falls Convention Center.

NIH awards more than \$700 million annually to small businesses to perform research and development through its innovation and technology transfer programs. "South Dakota and the surrounding states have growing medical industries," says Matthew Portnoy, NIH SBIR/STTR program coordinator. "We look forward to sharing how NIH can partner with small businesses to bring new products and

technologies to market."

This year's conference, "How to Be Competitive in a World of Change: Opportunities Through SBIR/STTR Awards," will offer presentations from experts, one-on-one meetings with staff representing most NIH institutes and centers, a poster session providing examples of NIH-funded projects, and a "Pitch to Investors" panel to educate attendees about investor expectations. The conference is hosted by the University of South Dakota Research Park.

This is a significant opportunity for South Dakota to highlight its growing medical research capacity and great economic climate to companies from across the United States," says USD President James W. Abbott. "These are exactly the types of activities we want to foster and support through the USD Research Park."

SBIR and STTR are programs the provide research funding to small businesses interested in commercializing new technologies. The South Dakota SBIR office helps the state's small businesses seek SBIR and STTR funding from various federal agencies for technological innovation and to foster university-private sector partnerships.

"This is a great opportunity for regional business to gain first-hand knowledge of the SBIR/STTR funding process," says Gary Archambault, South Dakota SBIR Director.

For more information about the conference, or to register, visit www.usdresearchpark.com. The early-bird registration discount ends Sept. 30 and a discounted student rate is also available. This project will not be funded in whole or in part with federal funds from NIH.

SD gas prices inch downward

South Dakota's statewide average price for regular self-serve gasoline today is \$3.66 per gallon, four cents lower than one week ago, according to AAA South Dakota.

Today's national average gas price is \$3.54, the fourth highest price for this calendar date behind 2008 (\$3.80), 2012 (\$3.69) and 2011 (\$3.61). The nationwide average stands seven cents

below the price a week ago and has now declined for 23 of 25 days, including a current streak of 12 consecutive days. During this 25-day stretch, the national average has fallen 13 cents, partially offsetting the nearly 20-cent jump in the national average from July 7-19.

Today's national price is 16 cents below that of Aug. 13, 2012. Last Tuesday, August 6,

marked the first time since June 1 that U.S. motorists enjoyed a year-over-year savings at the pump.

Where gas prices go from here depends on possible hurricanes in the Gulf and whatever refinery problems pop up because of them.

After a day with no clear direction, West Texas Intermediate settled at \$106.11, up 14 cents per barrel at the close of

formal trading yesterday on the NYMEX.

A not-for-profit organization, AAA South Dakota serves its 91,400 members across South Dakota with emergency help on the road, auto travel assistance and a wide range of personal insurance, travel, financial and automotive services through branch offices, and the Internet at AAA.com.

VHS

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Then the students would have to remember everything four months on, sometimes without success.

"As far as time-adjustment for the kids, everything stays fresh with them," Cameron said.

Huber said she would have appreciated an open house when she was a freshman.

"I got lost my first day, so it would (have been) nice to know where my classes (were) and know my teachers," she said.

Still, even though the open house is offered, it is not a requirement for

students to attend.

"We'll get about 70 to 80 percent of the kids to show up today," Cameron said. "Obviously, some have vacations that their parents are on, some are working, and those types of things."

Mockler said she was one of the students who did not attend when she was a freshman.

"All my friends went, but I missed it, and I was the only one who got lost," she said.

At 82 students, the incoming class of freshmen is smaller than any that came before it, Cameron said.

"As of now, the high school is at the lowest number it ever has been," he said. "I've been in the district now for 28 years,

and we have approximately 349 students at the high school at this time. When I first came up to the high school in 1997 ... we had 520-some. So, we have had a large drop in numbers."

However, the classes in the elementary schools are growing, he said.

"In next year's eighth grade class, I believe they have 127 kids," he said.

But no matter the size of the class, Cameron said the open house helps the students feel much more

comfortable with that first day of school.

"There's a lot of anxiety with the big move, going from eighth grade to the bottom of the food chain here, basically. Just knowing their way around the building, knowing what lunch they're in, knowing how to get into their lockers and all those other things are just so helpful," he said.

"It's been very successful for us, so we will continue to do this," he said.

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