



TOP: John Honey answers a question while giving a tour on Monday.
 ABOVE: John Honey and Chuck Lee pose outside the CTEC main entrance.

CTEC: 'It's the perfect blend of private...public'

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 While there are plenty of skill centers around, Honey said the CTEC difference is students will learn from people with industry experience – who have also earned teaching degrees – how to tie everything together, from vocational classes to applied math to hands-on experience.
 “This supports entry into the workforce,” Honey said. “Employers get better employees. We’re moving away from the mindset of every kid must go to college and then go to work. Now they can get ready for both. They’ll better understand how things are built.”
 Larry Tokarski with Mountain West brought Lee on board to help put the program together. In addition to his school board experience (and city council before that), Lee was formerly the longtime president of Blanchet Catholic School.
 “Larry really had this vision,” Lee said. “He’s invested a lot to make it happen. Larry hired me to give kids hope.

There are an incredible number of businesses starving for a qualified work force. What we’re doing here is building a work force to keep businesses here and to help bring new businesses here.”
 As an example, Lee said he talked to a business owner in Donald in the manufacturing business.
 “The guy said he could hire 100 people right now if he could find them,” Lee said. “We’ve always told kids they have to go to college to be successful. Well, this guy in Donald is paying a welder \$85,000 a year.”
 Jeremy Mills was among those on Monday’s tour.
 “It’s an amazing project,” Mills said. “This is a great opportunity for kids to get hands-on experience.”
 Mayor Cathy Clark saw the inside of the facility for the first time.
 “It meets the needs for both students and industry,” Clark said. “It’s the perfect blend of private and public putting together something that will be so meaningful.”

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means hazelnuts from KRP could command a higher price.
 Klein confirmed the shortage, but stopped short of guaranteeing financial success.
 “There has been a shortage of hazelnuts of late leading to increased demand and price,” Klein said. “A deteriorating orchard may not produce a yield sufficient to turn a profit even with the past season’s high prices. There’s a good possibility that supply issues may correct themselves as soon as this fall.”
 Klein noted the hazelnut harvest season is short.
 “Harvest in an orchard of this size is usually done one time, late in the season when all the nuts are down,” he said. “If the orchard gives access to the public it complicates an already hazardous activity. The harvest season is late September through October. If you can get someone to manage and harvest through the decline of the trees that’s great. It may be tough going forward as the costs could exceed the potential return plus the risks.”

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