



## Tavares of CCIDA discusses most daring career move

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Name : Jennifer Tavares

Title : Director of Economic Development

Company/firm : Commerce Chenango

Years with Company/firm : six

Years in field : eight

Years in real estate industry : six

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Real estate organizations/affiliations : n/a

How do you and/or your firm use social media?

Commerce Chenango manages three Facebook pages: general, economic development, and tourism. We share photos, press releases, videos, and events through these pages with significant exposure. Like many other organizations and businesses, social media is a growth opportunity for us and we hope to expand our use of it in the future. Individually, I utilize Linked In to connect with other professionals and expand my network.

What is the most daring thing you've done for your career? How did it turn out for you?

The most daring thing I've done is move my family here to take a position with my current employer. It was a big risk, as we had numerous loose ends to tie up: we sold our retail business, sold our house, and moved here with our two young children--knowing that my husband did not have a job. Six years later, I have no doubt that the decision was the right move for my family, and the right move for my career.

What do you consider to be the most successful way to increase referrals?

By providing excellent service and demonstrating success with specific projects. While I often caution business owners against relying on "word of mouth" as their main promotional strategy, in the economic development field, it makes all the difference. If a client is pleased with the service they've received, and refers a friend or colleague to our organization for assistance, I consider it a great endorsement of the work we do.

What is your favorite tip for balanced living?

My boss reminds me frequently that "The work will still be here tomorrow". Economic development is a career where there are endless deadlines and unlimited potential to do more work. Remembering to take some time to ourselves—a lunch break, a walk outside, an occasional day off—is more important than we realize. I try to ensure that I have time for my family, my favorite books, exercise, and my passion—making pottery.

Where would you like to be in 10 years?

I envision myself in a leadership role with an organization or private business, or making a successful living owning my own business--or both!

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