

Expansion has green hue

Maker of personalized business greeting cards builds an addition to its Olive Street facility.

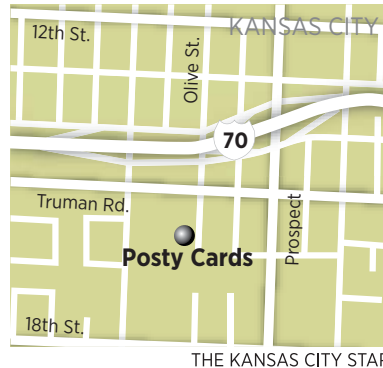
By KEVIN COLLISON
The Kansas City Star

Posty Cards, a manufacturer of personalized business greeting cards, has launched a \$6.4 million expansion that is being described as the greenest industrial project in Kansas City.

The family-owned firm has begun construction on a 25,000-square-foot addition to its current facility at 1600 Olive St. and expects to add 22 jobs within five years. It currently employs 40 people at an average starting wage of \$30,272 annually.

"We're out of room and this is doubling our space for our offices and manufacturing," said Erick Jessee, Posty Cards general manager.

The company, which was founded in 1948, designs, manufactures and sells personalized business birthday cards, corporate holiday cards and all-occa-



sion greeting cards.

The expansion also will continue the company's commitment to environmentally sound practices.

Electricity at the Posty Cards plant is entirely offset by renewable wind power, catalogs are printed on paper certified by the Forest Stewardship Council, and the company recycles extensively.

The expanded facility is expected to become the first LEED Gold-certified manufacturing facility in Kansas City when it's completed in July 2010. Its features will include solar

photovoltaic panels, solar-heated water, rain water reclamation for irrigation and native plant landscaping.

"We're committed to making our business as sustainable as possible," Jessee said. "We hope to inspire other small businesses to do something similar."

The expansion project was assisted by a 100 percent city property tax abatement on its increased value over the next 10 years and \$2 million from the federal New Market Tax Credit program. It also will be eligible for additional employee training assistance. Posty Cards has pledged to fill at least six of its new jobs with neighborhood residents.

"We've experienced tremendous support from the city of Kansas City, the Economic Development Corp. and the state," Jessee said. "This project was only possible through their support."

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