

KC group will prospect in Costa Rica

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About 20 members of the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce will make a business development trip to San Jose, Costa Rica, on Oct. 19-22.

The trip is intended to help educate area companies and economic development officials about business opportunities with Costa Rican companies through the recently proposed U.S. Central America Free Trade Agreement.

Mary Pyle, managing director of the Greater Kansas City World Trade Center, the chamber's international division, said the group will include representatives from Hallmark Cards Inc., First National Bank and Park University, and Kansas City Manager Wayne Cauthen, Councilman Troy Nash and Councilwoman Bonnie Sue Cooper.

"With the elevation of the CAFTA agreement, that will eliminate a lot of the trade barriers and tariffs between companies in the U.S. and Costa Rica," Pyle said. "We're meeting with a law firm, a bank, city officials, a U.S. company that's been doing business in Costa Rica and the University of Costa Rica."

The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative said May 28 that U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick and ministers of five Central American nations signed the U.S. Central American Free Trade Agreement. The agreement is contingent on approval by all the countries' governments.