



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

2016 British Columbia Economic Development Awards Winners

Richmond, BC, June 16, 2016 – The BC Economic Development Association (BCEDA) announced the winners of the 2016 BC Economic Development Awards at the BC Economic Summit Awards Banquet held Tuesday, June 14th, in Richmond, BC.

This year's award winners are (detailed descriptions follow):

1) **Economic Development Marketing Innovation Award:**

The BCEDA Marketing Innovation Award recognizes achievement in marketing initiatives that support economic development:

Community Less than 20,000 Population: City of Powell River - *"Resident Attraction Campaign"*

Community More than 20,000 Population: Community Futures Central Kootenay – *"ImagineKootenay.com Web"*

2) **Community Project:**

The BCEDA Community Project Award recognizes an organization that has implemented various economic development initiatives that provide economic benefits to a community or region.

Community Less than 20,000 Population: City of Quesnel - *"Healthcare Recruitment Red Carpet Welcome"*

Community More than 20,000 Population: Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission – *"Make Digital Media Here"*

3) **BCEDA Chairman's Award: Marilyn Hutchinson**

The Chairman's award is presented annually by the Chair of BCEDA to an individual who has made a significant contribution to BCEDA, the profession and economic development throughout British Columbia. Recipients of this prestigious award in the past includes John Furlong, Kevin Poole, Pat Bell, Burns Lake Recovery Team members, and many other deserving recipients.

The 2016 Chairman's Award winner, Marilyn Hutchinson has been a part of the BCEDA since 1996. She was a member before she was even an EDO. Her career has been in both the public sector and private sector, directly related to supporting communities and indirectly supporting communities. She has been a strong supporter of the economic development profession and of the association. She has encouraged partnerships, has been quick to volunteer, and has often provided leadership while staying in the background. Marilyn exemplifies the qualities of adaptable, resilient, opportunity seeking, creative, and collaborative.

4) **Stan Rogers Memorial Award:**

In recognition for a project (private or public) making the most significant economic impact in a community.

Chilliwack Economic Partners Corporation – “*Canada Education Park*”

“Effective economic development is a shared function of all levels of government, but it is most effective when implementation is lead at the local and regional level,” said BCEDA Chair Kate Zanon. “Communities across the province that make business readiness a priority and create opportunities for investment in their local economies have long been credited as being one of the main engines of economic growth and diversification.”

This marks the 26th year that BCEDA has presented these awards. The awards are presented to association members working on community-based economic development projects in BC and are an excellent way to recognize individuals and groups that produce outstanding work in economic development that has helped to make a difference in supporting and expanding local economies. We are proud to present these awards, along with our partner, Fortis BC.

“It continues to amaze me the incredible efforts put forward by communities and economic development professionals to ensure strong local economies. This awards program continues to generate keen interest amongst economic developers and communities across the province.” said Dale Wheeldon, President and CEO, BCEDA. “It is very evident that many communities, regions and partners are implementing creative and bold strategies to encourage economic growth. Narrowing it down to a few winners is becoming increasingly difficult for our judges. Our thanks goes out to all who submitted projects for consideration this year. Their efforts to build stronger communities, and thereby a stronger provincial economy are to be commended and congratulated.”

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Contact:

Dale Wheeldon, President and CEO, BCEDA, (604) 819-3809

About BCEDA

The BC Economic Development Association (BCEDA) is the leading professional association of economic development practitioners in the Province of BC. BCEDA currently has over 450 members from communities throughout the province. BCEDA provides services that help member communities grow and expand new and existing businesses, attract new business investments, and work towards strategic infrastructure investment, land use planning, and community enhancement.

BCEDA services include an annual summit and networking event, educational and professional development opportunities, public relations, advisory services and resources and partnering with communities and the Province of BC to market British Columbia for business investment.

Economic Development Marketing Innovation > 20,000 City of Powell River – *Resident Attraction Campaign*

Summary

The Powell River Resident Attraction Campaign was developed mainly to lure young people and families to the community that can telecommute; are interested in starting a business; or fill local job vacancies. The campaign utilizes a number of tools including social media, video profiles, a print brochure (English and Mandarin Language) and a website (www.powellriver.info) which provides detailed information on the community.

The Social Media tools are the real heart of the campaign's activities. The most important first step was to get residents and local organizations to buy into the campaign and use their social media networks to help get the message out. Ultimately, Facebook has been the most active of the tools being used.

The most popular pieces of content produced by the campaign are the video profiles of new residents. Having people who have migrated to the community tell their story about why they chose Powell River is probably one of the most powerful messages that could be delivered.

Since the launch of the campaign, organizations within the community have worked with the City to build complimentary tools to assist with their recruitment needs. The first partnership was with the Powell River Division of Family Practice to help attract new General Practitioners to the community. The partnership resulted in the production of three video profiles of local Doctors ([YouTube Channel](#)), Social Media Tools ([Facebook](#)), and a Print/Electronic Brochure ([GP Brochure](#)).

Impact

The results of the 2016 census will be the ultimate indicator of whether or not the campaign is having a positive impact, but over the past five months interviews with local businesses through the City's Business Retention and Expansion program and with residents have identified that there is a strong feeling that local economic conditions have improved greatly and new people are migrating to the community.

In April 2016 alone there were \$14.5 million in sales (59 units). \$12.9 million of that total were single family residences (47 units) and \$1.6 million were vacant lots (12 units). According to local realtors, a majority of purchases have been made by people coming from outside of the community.

The main Live and Invest website has been busy as well over the past year receiving a little over 25,000 views as of May 11, 2016. The Opportunities page has received about 6,900 views and the Real Estate page of the site has also been very active with a little over 6,300 views. The main site is where the video profiles have been viewed the most.

Economic Development Marketing Innovation > 20,000 Community Futures Central Kootenay – *ImagineKootenay.com*

Summary

Launched in December 2015, the new Imaginekootenay.com website was a collaboration of two successful programs; Invest Kootenay and Work West Kootenay. The Imaginekootenay.com website provides a platform which allows 12 communities, representing approximately 100,000 people, to strengthen their ability to compete in a global marketplace.

Imaginekootenay.com is designed to showcase the outstanding work, business and lifestyle opportunities in our communities. The Imagine Kootenay website provides interested investors with up-to-date information about a community's business environment, improves investor readiness at the community level with tools and capacity development, connects people to the variety of business and employment opportunities available within the Kootenay Region and features lifestyle information with connections to activities and services found in partner communities.

The website is designed around three main pillars:

- **Imagine Working:** Showcasing samples of the diverse employment opportunities and sectors in the region, and providing links to job boards in partner communities;
- **Imagine Investing:** Free service for community funded opportunity holders to post businesses for sale or market new opportunities with over 1800 registered investors;
- **Imagine Living:** Features lifestyle information and connections to individual communities.

By working in partnership, the Kootenays as a whole has greater visibility as Imagine Kootenay than one single community.

Impact

Imagine Kootenay currently has close to 200 opportunities posted form around the region IK has been able to verify 33 investments that have been realized through the website amounting to over \$8 million in investment to the Kootenays.

As we continue to roll out our marketing plan, targeted online ads, blog posts and paid content will continue to drive traffic, as well as increase the number of opportunities and registered investors on the website.

Community Project < 20,000

City of Quesnel – *Healthcare Recruitment Red Carpet Welcome*

Summary

This has been a true community project. With funding from the Cariboo Chilcotin Hospital Regional District, the community hired a Healthcare Recruitment Coordinator. The number of partnerships in support of the project was critical for success and came from all aspects of the community and region.

The Healthcare Recruitment Coordinator has worked with Northern Health and Healthmatch BC to provide information that communicates the best Quesnel has to offer. This has been done through a

- Location brochure
- Connection with a new potential physician (or other healthcare professional) prior to arrival
- Community Tours that matches interests
- Once they have committed to Quesnel she works with them to settle in to the community, and organizes a welcome dinner allowing them to meet other key stakeholders.
- In addition and a demonstration of the community buy in Regency Chrysler stepped in with the offer of free use of vehicles in order to make Quesnel a more attractive choice for locums and to successfully stop the temporary closure of the emergency room.

Impact

Over the course of one year, 13 new doctors have been recruited to Quesnel, and two that left have decided to return. In early 2016, a sign went up at one of the clinics: Two doctors were accepting new patients, and more on the way.

Community Project > 20,000

Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission - *Make Digital Media Here*

Summary

“Make It Here – Innovate Kelowna” is a brand owned by the COEDC and shared with multiple stakeholders to build awareness of the entrepreneurial spirit in Kelowna and the Okanagan. It was created to attract innovative businesses and the creative class to support a knowledge based economy.

In April 2016, in a first for the Kelowna community, the COEDC brought together a cross jurisdictional delegation including government, post-secondary education and industry. The COEDC created/facilitated programming aimed at recruitment of Digital Media workforce and

promotion to digital media companies in Toronto ON, including a pitch session targeted to Toronto based digital media studios, a “Boomerang” reception targeting alumni from the region’s two post-secondary institutions and a panel presentation and booth at the Toronto Animation Arts Film Festival targeting workforce, studio and production recruitment in the DM industry.

The COEDC launched a portal website- the region’s first one-stop-shop landing page to funnel inquiries about relocation- and 2 videos promoting Make Life Here and Make Digital Media Here to coincide with the campaign.

Impact

- Direct impacts realized within 2 weeks of the Make Digital Media Here campaign include:
- Digital Media companies from the delegation received over 240 qualified applicants and project to hire 52 animators & 3 Director/Supervisors - all will relocate to the Okanagan
- Okanagan Young Professionals Collective connected with 45 young professionals in regards to relocation and has 3 strong leads for relocation
- One local company closed an \$8million deal, influenced by the culture of collaboration and multi-organizational and jurisdictional support of infrastructure and community demonstrated by the delegation.
- The delegation connected with 31 digital media studios through the pitch event or direct meetings over 3 days
- Okanagan College connected with a leading animation software provider to begin establishing an Animation Centre for Excellence in the region and received 3 solid leads for a faculty position in the animation program

Stan Rogers Memorial Award Chilliwack Economic Partners Corporation – *Canada Education Park*

Summary

In 1998, the Canadian Forces Base (CFB) closed its 400-acre site in Chilliwack. During its lifetime the Base was the area’s second highest employer and also provided vital support to the local communities in times of crisis or difficulties.

In 2003, the City of Chilliwack, the Chilliwack Economic Partners Corporation (CEPCO), Canada Lands Company, and additional partners signed a memorandum of understanding to officially

launch the Canada Education Park project. Over the last 13 years, the Park has unfolded on 200-acres of the former Canadian Forces Base, adjacent to the Vedder River (400 acres total of institutional, commercial and residential development, including Garrison Crossing).

The Canada Education Park is a multi-agency educational partnership that brings together some of the nation's most respected education, training and research facilities including the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Pacific Region Training Centre (RCMP PRTC), the Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC), Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), the City of Chilliwack, Canada Lands Company and the Chilliwack Economic Partners Corporation.

The redevelopment of Canada Education Park has resulted in state-of-the-art training facilities for all of the partners involved, including the University of the Fraser Valley campus, the RCMP Pacific Region Training Centre, Canada Border Services Agency and the Justice Institute of British Columbia.

- RCMP Pacific Region Training Centre: 225 employees/6,000 officers and employees trained per year, as well as 2,500 officers receiving annual qualification
- University of the Fraser Valley: 198 employees/students - ft: 2447, pt: 1634
- Canada Border Services Agency: 26 employees/ 64 officers per week or 3,328 per year
- Justice Institute of British Columbia: 23 employees/300 students