



Community and Economic Development in North Carolina and Beyond Blog: Economic Development Organizations Receive Top Honors for 2017

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A perpetual interest in the field of economic development is identifying “best

practices” and benchmarking the “state-of-the art” with respect to promising tools, strategies, and programs. One source for this type of information is the ***Excellence in Economic Development Awards*** competition administered by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) over the past several years. The IEDC awards competition recognizes success, innovation, creativity, quality, and community impact in the work of economic development organizations.

Organizations submit entries to be considered for awards in various categories including promotional materials, internet and new media, programs, and partnerships. Judges apply specific criteria in reviewing the submissions to select gold, silver, and bronze level winners for each category based on the size of the population served.

IEDC announced the 2017 award recipients in September at its Annual Conference in Toronto. Two North Carolina organizations were recognized this year. Electricities of North Carolina, Inc. is the silver winner in the General Purpose Print Promotion category (population greater than 500,000) for its NC Public Power Calendar. The calendar uses journalistic photos and short stories to highlight distinctive businesses, destinations, and community leaders in the Electricities service area. The Town of Fuquay-Varina is the silver winner in the Video/Multimedia Promotion category (population 25,000-200,000) for its State of the Town Address video, which communicates the town’s economic development and community achievements.

The Program Awards category includes multi-year programming, business retention and expansion, entrepreneurship, neighborhood development, human capital, sustainable and green development, and real estate redevelopment/reuse. The numerous award winners in this category constitute a database that is worth mining for examples of best practice and promising strategy. A few of the notable 2017 winners include:



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- Charleston (SC) Regional Development Alliance – Opportunity Next: Building a Globally Competitive Economy for Charleston
 - York County, VA – Home-Based Business Assistance Program
 - Howard County (MD) Economic Development Authority – Ellicott City Flash Flood Response and Recovery
 - City of Norfolk, VA – Norfolk-Works Waterside Week Hiring Event
 - Prince William County, VA – Prince William Science Accelerator
 - Paducah (KY) Economic Development – Historic Coca-Cola Bottling Plant Redevelopment
 - Northeast Tennessee Regional Economic Partnership – Farmers Exchange Building Redevelopment