

**Tuesday, April 3, 2001**

**Contact: Lewis R. Podolske**

**John B. Atwood**

**202-482-2309**

**U.S. Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration Names Finalists for the 2001 Excellence in Economic Development Awards**

**Washington, D.C.** - The U.S. Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration (EDA) has named the finalists for the 2001 Excellence in Economic Development Awards. The Excellence Awards winners, all of whom share a common goal of helping people and communities overcome economic distress, will be announced on May 1. The awards will be presented at EDA's National Forum for Economic Development, May 29 -31, in Washington, D.C. - <http://www.edanationalforum.com>

"The Excellence Awards recognize cutting-edge development projects and strategies. Each of the finalists has worked to foster creative approaches to help economically-distressed areas achieve sustainable economic development, leverage private-sector investment, and generate jobs," said Acting Assistant Secretary for Economic Development Mary C. Pleffner.

The awards will be presented in three categories: Excellence in Urban or Suburban Economic Development, Excellence in Rural Economic Development, and Excellence in Economic Development in Native Communities.

The finalists are:

**Excellence in Urban or Suburban Economic Development:**

- **The City of Oakland, California - The Swans Marketplace Program** - By organizing a mix of residential units, office space and small retail and arts related uses around a shared courtyard, the city was able to create a downtown destination that promotes economic development and job growth in Old Oakland - <http://www.oaklandnet.com>

- **Springfield Technical Community College, Springfield, Massachusetts - The STCC Technology Park** - STCC's high-tech training programs, and the College's management of the Tech Park, has become a model for inner-city business and job development.

Today the Park is home to 14 high technology businesses employing almost 1000 people - <http://www.stcc.mass.edu>

- Minnesota Department of Trade and Economic Development, Minnesota - Brownfields and Community Assistance Programs - It is not uncommon to find abandoned, once-thriving parcels of industrial, or inner-city property marred with long-vacant buildings, debris and contamination. Minnesota's Department of Trade and Economic Development's unique Brownfields and Community Assistance Unit created two programs to assist cities and other public entities to defray the costs associated with land recycling. The Contamination Cleanup Program and the Redevelopment Grant Program help communities and local developers to take more immediate advantage of development opportunities - <http://www.dted.state.mn.us>

### **Excellence in Rural Economic Development**

- **Marquette County, K.I. Sawyer Development Department, and Sawyer International Airport, Michigan - The K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base Redevelopment Project** - Through frugality, creativity, leveraging, innovation, and tenacity, the former base has overcome multiple challenges considered to be some of the most difficult in the country. Today, the K.I. Sawyer International Airport and Industrial Park is becoming a hotbed of economic development in the Midwest -

<http://www.sawyerairport.com>

- **The Town of Maddock, North Dakota - Maddock Business and Technology Center** - The Maddock Business and Technology Park provides a shared telecommunications infrastructure and multipurpose facility that delivers business development, health care and child care training to residents of Benson County, including the Spirit Lake Sioux Reservation. Maddock is utilizing its telecommunications infrastructure to overcome the challenges of a declining population and lack of training and business opportunities in a remote location - <http://www.maddock.org>
- **SouthEastern Arizona Governments Organization, Bisbee, Arizona - The Southeastern Arizona Birding Trail Map** - The Southeastern Arizona Birding Trail Map project is working to boost tourism development by mapping out the location, species, and site facilities of the 50 top birding sites in Southeastern Arizona. Nature

tourism is the fastest growing segment of the travel industry, averaging a 30 percent annual increase since 1987 - <http://www.seago.org>

#### **Excellence in Economic Development in Native Communities**

- **Native Village of Shishmaref, Shishmaref, Alaska - The Shishmaref Tannery - The Native Village of Shishmaref is a remote, isolated village of 800 people located on the northern shore of the Seward Peninsula on the shore of the Chukchi Sea. The Shishmaref Tannery utilizes hides that area hunters once would have discarded. The Tannery provides an opportunity for hunters and trappers in this remote, economically-distressed part of Alaska to get greater value of their hides and furs. The Tannery also provides the basis of a far-reaching cottage industry for hand crafted traditional Native Alaska clothing and goods.**

**Last year's award recipients included Greater Kelly Development Corporation, San Antonio, Texas, for Excellence in Urban or Suburban Economic Development; SEDA-Council of Governments, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, for Excellence in Rural Economic Development; and Tule River Economic Development Corporation, Porterville, California, for Excellence in Economic Development in Native Communities.**

**EDA works in collaboration with local government and community groups to generate new jobs, help retain existing jobs, and stimulate industrial and commercial growth in economically-distressed communities. EDA assistance is available to both rural and urban areas experiencing high unemployment, low income, or other severe economic distress.**

**Additional information on how EDA programs are helping distressed communities create a positive and sustainable economic future can be accessed via the World Wide Web: <http://www.doc.gov/eda>**