

Second Annual  
Excellence in  
Economic Development  
Awards



John B. Corrigan Award

May 30, 2001

U.S. Department of Commerce

EDA National Forum  
on Economic Development



**THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE**  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear National Forum on Economic Development Attendees:

On behalf of President George W. Bush, I would like to personally welcome you to the Economic Development Administration's 2001 National Economic Development Forum, "Partnerships for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." I am especially pleased you are present for the Forum's Awards Luncheon.

As this new Administration and new century advance to new achievements, we are wise to recognize the accomplishments of those communities demonstrating excellence and innovation in economic development. I commend the Economic Development Administration (EDA) for establishing the Award for Excellence in Economic Development to honor outstanding economic development activities of national importance. The presentation of such awards is an appropriate recognition by EDA of its working partnership with local communities to stimulate economic growth and development in America's distressed areas.

To each of the local governments, Native American governments, nonprofit organizations, and universities and colleges across America who presented their nomination for consideration, I salute your innovations and achievements in economic development practices. To those nominees selected to receive the Award for Excellence in Economic Development, I give my sincere congratulations and every best wish for your continued success in promoting the economic growth of your communities.

Additionally, the John E. Corrigan Award for Excellence in Economic Development honors the achievements of EDA employees for their outstanding work in, and sustained dedication to, the field of economic development. I congratulate each of the Corrigan Award nominees and I join your colleagues in honoring your contributions to EDA. I am particularly happy to have this opportunity to personally recognize the accomplishments of the Corrigan Award 2001 recipient and to extend every best wish to you for your continued outstanding contributions in the field of economic development and the achievement of the EDA mission to provide economic development assistance in distressed areas

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. L. Evans", enclosed in a red rectangular box.

Donald L. Evans



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**The Assistant Secretary for Economic Development**  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear National Economic Development Forum Attendees:

I join my EDA colleagues in welcoming you to the 2001 National Economic Development Forum. We certainly enjoy having all of you with us in Washington, DC. We are particularly happy to have so many of you join us for our Awards Luncheon in honor of the recipients of the 2001 Excellence in Economic Development Awards and the John E. Corrigan Award.

I take this opportunity to thank the member organizations of the Coalition for Economic Development, and most especially to thank the International Economic Development Council for so professionally facilitating the Forum. I also want to thank EDA's Philadelphia Regional Office for all their generous assistance.

As many of you will recall, as EDA celebrated its 35<sup>th</sup> year in 2000, it appropriately gave tribute to outstanding economic development achievements in distressed communities across America by initiating the Awards for Excellence in Economic Development. This year, as in 2000, the three award categories are Excellence in Urban or Suburban Economic Development, Excellence in Rural Economic Development, and Excellence in Economic Development in Native Communities. Nominations were evaluated by a nine member panel of economic development professionals according to weighted evaluation criteria. Additional information regarding the selection panelists and the selection process follows later in this program brochure.

In this the second year of the Excellence in Economic Development Awards, EDA is gratified to have received so many nominations of outstanding economic development programs and projects across the United States. EDA applauds the many significant achievements made in these nominated communities.

We at EDA congratulate the recipients of the 2001 Excellence in Economic Development Awards and recommend the selected projects to you for your careful review. A brief summary of each recipient's achievements is provided herein.

On behalf of all of us in the Economic Development Administration, please accept our best wishes to each of you for your continued achievements in the economic development of communities all across our Nation.

Mary C. Pleffner, Acting

***Finalists***  
***for the 2001 Awards for Excellence***  
***in Economic Development***

EDA is most pleased to announce the names of the nominees for the 2001 Awards for Excellence in Economic Development that qualified as Finalists in their respective categories. The competition among the nominations was very strong. The Economic Development Administration extends heartiest congratulations to each of these Finalists and every best wish for their continued achievements in the economic development of their respective communities, cities and states.

***Urban or Suburban Economic Development***

Springfield Technical Community College  
Springfield, Massachusetts

City of Oakland  
Oakland, California

Minnesota Department of Trade and Economic Development  
Brownfields and Community Assistance Programs  
St. Paul, Minnesota

***Rural Economic Development***

Sawyer International Airport and Business Center  
Gwinn, Michigan

SouthEastern Arizona Government Organization  
Bisbee, Arizona

Maddock Economic Development Corporation  
Maddock Business and Technology Center  
Maddock, North Dakota

***Economic Development in Native Communities***

Shishmaref Tannery  
Native Village of Shishmaref  
Shishmaref, Alaska

# **Winner of the 2001 Award for Excellence in Urban Economic Development**

## ***Springfield Technical Community College Springfield, Massachusetts***

Springfield Technical Community College (STCC), founded in 1967, is the first American community college to establish and manage a technology park. STCC Technology Park began approximately 4 years ago and currently has 14 established private-sector high tech tenant businesses employing over 1000 persons. STCC is the most comprehensive community college in the Massachusetts system, offering 45 associate degree programs with 24 options, and 28 certificate programs in business, engineering technologies, health and liberal arts and sciences. Nearly 7,000 men and women are enrolled in the day and evening divisions.

The STCC site has played a pivotal role in supporting technology transfer across the Northeast throughout its history. The Springfield Armory was founded in 1794 as the nation's first arsenal and became a continual source of technological innovation over the years. With the closure of the Armory in 1968, the Federal Square portion of the site was used for light manufacturing. The Armory Square portion of the site across the street became the campus of Springfield Technical Community College. When in 1992 the light manufacturer announced the plant would close, STCC leadership began the process of gathering support and financial backing from the state to procure the Federal Square site and establish a Technology Park. Through unique legislation written for just this purpose, the park is owned and operated by the STCC Assistance Corporation. Thus, the two main segments of the historic Springfield Armory are reunited, and provide a new connection to the future.

During Massachusetts' economic recession in the early-1990s, few could have foreseen the imminent evolution of Springfield into a center attracting technology firms and providing high tech employment. Nevertheless, beginning in the mid-1990s, the Springfield Enterprise Center (SEC) was advanced from a concept to the centerpiece of the STCC Tech Park. The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, worked closely with STCC officials, the congressional delegation, and many

public, business and civic leaders from throughout the Pioneer Valley to build support and financial backing for the SEC.

In 1997, as a result of the comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) process among the aforementioned shareholders, EDA provided a \$990,000 grant award, which in turn leveraged the \$4 million to establish the SEC. Dedicated exclusively to the launching of new high tech business and to assisting recent start-ups achieve profitability, the SEC is located in the center of the city's two major disadvantaged areas where poverty and unemployment are the highest.

In March, 2001, one year after SEC's opening, 11 new businesses with approximately 75 new jobs have been generated at the incubator. It is estimated that within five years, a minimum of 250 new jobs should be created. In addition, working with the Springfield School District, a Youth Incubator has been opened, helping high school students to open businesses. New technology curriculum is developed and disseminated by the Northeast Center for Telecommunications Technologies. Moreover, the Park's historic legacy as a manufacturing site remains intact more than 200 years after the site was developed by George Washington.

STCC Technology Park generates a synergy between the community's major technology trainers and the new high tech employers. STCC's high tech training programs and the College's management of the Tech Park are a model for collaborative inner-city business and job development.

The STCC Tech Park demonstrates excellence in urban economic development by providing jobs and creating new jobs, by increasing productivity and technological advancement, and by contributing to Springfield's rebirth, especially its downtown area and adjacent neighborhoods. The STCC Technology Park has established a national benchmark for successful reuse and is an urban investment project that can be replicated throughout the United States.

# **Winner of the 2001 Award for Excellence in Rural Economic Development**

## ***Sawyer International Airport and Business Center Gwinn, Michigan***

In 1995, K. I. Sawyer Air Force Base, located in Marquette County, Michigan, closed its doors and the positions of 3,300 military personnel and 1,000 civilian workers were eliminated. This loss hit the surrounding communities hard and the resulting negative economic impact was severe. In 1997 Marquette was listed as the city with the fastest declining population in the country.

As is true in most military base reuse projects, a community must resolve numerous issues; however, securing the necessary financial resources is typically the primary concern. It was necessary for Marquette County to absorb the maintenance, modernization, and marketing costs of 5,200 acres of land and approximately 2 million square feet of vacant buildings. For a rural community with a slowly declining economy based on mining and forestry, these were astronomical challenges.

EDA's Defense Adjustment Program assists defense-impacted communities through the implementation of a local plan, generally developed with assistance from the Office of Economic Adjustment in the Department of Defense, to replace the lost defense-dependent economic sector with a stable and diversified economic base from which a community can continue to build its future. Such was the case with the conversion of K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base.

The redevelopment and reuse of K. I. Sawyer Air Force Base has created both short and long-term benefits for Marquette County. In the near-term there are now 50 employers and 1000 civilian employees working at the former base, thereby fully replacing the civilian jobs that had been eliminated. Previously, rental rates, that averaged \$0.25 per square foot from small start-up companies, have risen currently to \$3.00 per square foot from national credit-worthy tenants. Long-term growth

of the airport is ensured because it has the capability to accommodate both air passenger and cargo needs that are planned well into the future. Buildings and land are available for future growth as an aviation repair and maintenance center-of-excellence well into coming decades.

Over a 4-year period, EDA provided grant awards, totaling approximately \$10 million, to a variety of projects involved in this conversion effort. Included in the conversion were construction of the Sawyer International Airport Terminal, hangar and building renovations, surveying and marketing programs. As is common with military base reuse, the U.S. Department of Defense has provided financial assistance for day-to-day operations. This funding will cease in 2004. The County has developed a detailed business plan to ensure that on-site revenue and prudent business decisions will enable absorption of these expenses at that time, without cost to local taxpayers.

Sawyer's successful model can be replicated in situations requiring the adaptive conversion of a large facility such as an academic campus, a hospital, a closed mining facility, or a plant. Sawyer staff meet frequently with interested parties to share the economic development techniques they employ.

The successful redevelopment of K. I. Sawyer resulted from the collaborative efforts of the Marquette County Board of Commissioners, the congressional delegation, the Department of Defense and EDA. Through frugality, grant management, leveraging, innovation, and tenacity, this defense conversion project has overcome geographic, structural, population, financial, climatic, and other factors considered to be among the most difficult challenges. Today, Sawyer International Airport and Business Center is an example of excellence in rural economic development.

# **Winner of the 2001 Award for Excellence in Economic Development in Native Communities**

## ***Shishmaref Tannery in the Native Village of Shishmaref Shishmaref, Alaska***

The Native Village of Shishmaref is a remote and economically distressed village of some 800 people located on the northern shore of the Seward Peninsula on the Chukchi Sea. There are no roads connecting the village with the outside world. The tannery is the result of the vision of Henry Ahgupuk, who in the late 1980s, had the foresight and tenacity to bring this operation to reality. The Native Village of Shishmaref has operated the Shishmaref Tannery since 1991.

The Shishmaref Tannery utilizes bi-product or second tier raw hides and furs, many of which would otherwise have been discarded as waste were it not for the tannery. It provides hunters and trappers throughout Alaska the opportunity to increase market value of their products. The tannery supports a far-reaching cottage industry of hand-crafted products created with the traditional skills and artistry of craftpersons such as sewers and beaders. The tannery supplies the raw materials critical to the production of such traditional items as Native Alaskan parkas, mukluks, mittens, and fur caps, thereby helping to ensure the continuation of traditional crafts. The tannery also has expanded its trade with furriers throughout Alaska and the “South 48” and Shishmaref Tannery slippers are marketed worldwide.

The tannery provides one of the few industrial economic opportunities in northern Alaska by producing value-added, cash-generating goods from what previously had been waste products. In 2000, the tannery paid out almost \$100,000 in local salaries, an amount which represented 62 percent of its received revenues. Operational costs, representing 20 percent of revenues, are high due to such necessities as air transport and diesel fuel to power generators.

In 1999, EDA made an approximately \$1 million grant award to the Shishmaref Village Council to provide for a new tannery with larger facilities and modern, efficient equipment, to ensure the operation’s

viability. Facility upgrades are planned to include new tanning equipment, a water and waste handling system, and a water recycling/desalination process. An innovative aspect to the new building will be its triodetic foundation, resting on a gravel pad. As Shishmaref is located on a barrier island, which is eroding greatly due to ferocious storms from the Bering Sea, this special foundation, comprised of aluminum tubes resembling tinker-toys, provides for future relocations of the building if necessary. These upgrades and innovations will help to promote entrepreneurial opportunities, sustain regional service industries, and ensure the continuation of ageless skills developed by generations of the Eskimo people living in harsh Arctic conditions.

The new tannery became a reality through the collaborative efforts of the Native Village of Shishmaref, Alaska's congressional delegation, the University of Alaska Center for Economic Development (an EDA University Center), Kawerak, the Regional Native Non-Profit Corporation for the Bering Strait Region (an EDA Native Planning Grantee), and the office of the EDA Economic Development Representative. Additionally, it is noted the Catholic Campaign for Human Development provided a seed grant for equipment.

The innovation and commitment that created a tannery in this isolated village produced an engine of economic opportunity, previously unknown. The Shishmaref Tannery is operated entirely by the Eskimo people who have lived in this region for millennia. This project, undertaken in a Native American Community in a remote portion of Alaska, is an excellent example of culturally-compatible economic development.

# ***Selection Panel for Second Annual 2001 Excellence in Economic Development Awards***

The nine economic development professionals listed below kindly consented to serve as members of the Selection Panel for the 2001 Excellence in Economic Development Awards. The nine panelists are selected to represent nine different areas of expertise in the practice of economic development. The Economic Development Administration appreciates the participation of each panelist in the evaluation process of the Excellence in Economic Development Awards 2001.

## ***Academic***

Dr. John Mullin, Director  
Center for Economic Development  
University of Massachusetts  
Amherst, Massachusetts

## ***At-Large***

Paul Dempsey, Director  
Office of Economic Adjustment  
Office of the Under Secretary of Defense  
United States Department of Defense  
Arlington, Virginia

Ms. Marcia Warren  
Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Commerce on  
Native American Issues  
Office of Policy and Strategic Planning  
United States Department of Commerce  
Washington, DC

## ***Coalition for Economic Development National Organizations Representatives***

Mr. James W. "Bill" Curtis, Executive Director  
Eastern Alabama Regional Planning Commission  
Anniston, Alabama

Mr. Randall Morris, Vice Chairman  
Seminole County Board of Commissioners  
Sanford, Florida

Mr. Jiten Shah, Executive Director  
Green River Area Development District  
Owensburg, Kentucky

## ***Economic Development Administration***

Ms. Deborah Simmons, Director  
Budget Division  
Washington, DC

Mr. A. Leonard Smith, Regional Director  
Seattle Regional Office  
Seattle, Washington

Mr. Don Huff  
Chief of Construction Management Team  
Atlanta Regional Office  
Atlanta, Georgia

The peer review process employed by the 2001 Selection Panel followed strict criteria as set forth in the Award for Excellence in Economic Development brochure, published in January 2001. A total of twenty-eight eligible nominations was received by EDA for the 2001 Awards. Nominees were evaluated and finalists selected based on the following weighted criteria: (1) contribution of the nominee to national economic development in distressed areas; (2) ability to demonstrate benefits; (3) ability of the program to be replicated; (4) longevity of the benefits; and, (5) innovative nature of the program or project. Each nomination was reviewed by three members of the selection panel, which then recommended the finalists, with as many as three finalists in each of the three categories. Scores for each of the finalists in each category represented the average score from those three panelists reviewing the particular nomination. The 2001 seven finalists were then reviewed by all nine members of the selection panel and ranked again, with scores averaged.

# ***John E. (“Jack”) Corrigan Award for Excellence in Economic Development***

The John E. (“Jack”) Corrigan Award for Excellence in Economic Development recognizes employees of the Economic Development Administration for outstanding work in, and sustained dedication to, the field of economic development.

Established in 2000, the Corrigan Award honors EDA staff for their excellence in achieving the EDA mission of providing economic development assistance in distressed areas. The Corrigan Award is the highest recognition of public service within the bureau.

Mr. Corrigan, a former EDA employee and highly recognized individual in the field of economic development, has been a leader in the economic development community for the past 30 years. He served as Regional Director of EDA’s Philadelphia Regional Office from 1972 to 1998 with a three-year assignment as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Program Operations in EDA’s Washington office from 1982 to 1985.

The Lifetime Achievement Award from the Council for Urban Economic Development is among numerous awards Mr. Corrigan has received for his economic and community development accomplishments.

Edward M. Levin, former Chief Counsel to EDA, received the Corrigan Award in 2000.

Representing each of its six regional offices, EDA is delighted to announce the following names of EDA staff nominated in 2001 for their achievements:

## **Nominees for the 2001 John E. (“Jack”) Corrigan Award**

John (Jack) Arnold  
Economic Development Representative, State of Illinois, State of  
Minnesota  
Chicago Regional Office

Anne S. Berblinger  
Economic Development Representative, State of Oregon  
Seattle Regional Office

Patricia M. Dixon  
Economic Development Representative, State of North Carolina  
Atlanta Regional Office

Vicki Hendershot  
Operations, Planning and Control System Officer/Conference  
Coordinator  
Austin Regional Office

John Kuzma  
Senior Program Specialist  
Philadelphia Regional Office

Shirley Marshall  
Engineer  
Denver Regional Office

*Recipient of the 2001*

***John E. (“Jack”) Corrigan Award***

***for Excellence in Economic Development***

The Economic Development Administration, with great pride and particular pleasure, announces John B. (Jack) Arnold is the recipient of the 2001 John E. (“Jack”) Corrigan Award for Excellence.

Following his 1955 graduation from the University of Minnesota, with a degree in business and economics, Mr. Arnold did his post graduate work at the St. Paul College of Law. In 1966 he joined the Minnesota Governor’s staff assigned to the Upper Great Lakes Regional Development Commission, a three-state consortium to promote development in the Great Lakes area.

In 1969 Mr. Arnold joined the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration as the Economic Development Representative (EDR) for the State of Minnesota. As EDR he was responsible for the coordination in Minnesota of EDA programs with state, county, city and private organizations and the development of financing packages to bring about private-sector investments and jobs in areas of high distress.

In 1996, the State of Illinois was added to his territory as a result of his strong leadership skills in meeting the challenges produced by a reduction-in-force, which threatened to leave Illinois without the benefit of a full-time EDR. Continuing to serve as EDR for Minnesota, Mr. Arnold traveled regularly to Illinois and with his typical high level of enthusiasm quickly learned Illinois’ complex economy and became an active and respected member of the state’s economic development community. Shortly after beginning his duties in Illinois, and on his own initiative, Mr. Arnold began to link the nine EDA-designated economic development districts and two university centers into a network similar to the one he had developed in Minnesota. In so doing, he revitalized Illinois’ economic development districts and their partnership with the university centers. Additionally, under Mr. Arnold’s guidance, the coverage of Illinois by EDA-designated economic development districts has been increased from 40 percent to almost 70 percent. He also has developed solid working relationships with such

cities as Chicago, Rockford, and East St. Louis, which, prior to his initiative, had not been receiving the assistance from EDA that their economic distress warranted

Mr. Arnold also directs EDA disaster recovery programs in both states and has developed new approaches to recovery that are now implemented by other states and agencies. For instance, his innovative approach to promoting rapid recovery from the record-breaking 1997 flood in East Grand Fork, Minnesota, is a benchmark in providing distressed communities with disaster recovery assistance. He championed a three-step approach: first, recovery planning involving all stakeholders; second prevention of future damage; and, third strategic rebuilding and business attraction. To provide old businesses with the confidence to stay and new businesses the confidence to come, Mr. Arnold facilitated the planning and EDA-funding of an innovative flood control structure, known as the invisible wall, developed and proven in Europe but never before used in the United States. The construction of the invisible wall stimulated an economic revitalization of East Grand Forks. Moreover, the economy grew stronger than it had been prior to the flood.

Thanks to Mr. Arnold's leadership, the Army Corps of Engineers, which had declined to participate in the East Grand Forks invisible wall, now has accepted the design and is constructing invisible walls elsewhere. The Minnesota Society of Professional Engineers selected the East Grand Forks invisible wall as its 1999 project of the year.

Mr. Arnold is a life-long resident of Duluth, Minnesota, where he has spent the past 23 years restoring and developing several historic properties in the area. One of his current projects is the restoration of an English-style restaurant which has been in operation for 23 years. Other of his projects include properties providing private housing and office facilities.

EDA warmly congratulates Jack Arnold for his many distinguished achievements within the economic development community. Together we all extend every best wish to him, his wife, Barbara, and their entire family for their continued good health and happiness and outstanding contributions to their Duluth community and to the economic development community.

***Members of the  
Coalition for Economic Development***

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Association of University Centers

Association of University Related Research Parks

International Economic Development Council

National Association of Counties

National Association of Development Organizations

National Association of Installation Developers

National Association of Management and  
Technology Assistance Centers

National Association of Regional Councils

National Association of State Development Agencies

National Association of Towns & Townships

National Business Incubation Association

National Congress for Community Economic Development

National League of Cities

U.S. Conference of Mayors

