



Wisconsin Economic Development Association

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## **The New North Talent Campaigns Win Coveted Community and Economic Development Award**

### *Achievements in Economic Development Recognized at 2024 CEDA Awards*

**Eau Claire, WI** – The Wisconsin Economic Development Association (WEDA) is excited to announce the New North Talent Campaigns have won a 2024 Community and Economic Development Award (CEDA) in the Talent Attraction, Development, and Retention category. The CEDA Awards were established by WEDA to recognize economic development projects, businesses, and organizations that have made significant contributions to the Wisconsin economy. Winners were recognized at the annual CEDA Awards ceremony, which was held September 26, 2024, in Eau Claire, WI.

Three CEDA finalists were selected in each of the four following CEDA categories: Business Retention and Expansion; Community Impact; Real Estate Redevelopment and Reuse; and Talent Attraction, Development, and Retention. The winners in each category were announced and celebrated at the awards ceremony that was attended by over 200 economic development professionals from across the state.

“Economic development drives growth and prosperity throughout Wisconsin, attracting capital investment, creating new jobs, and providing an improved quality of life for residents. However, the hard work of economic development professionals is usually underappreciated and often unrecognized,” said WEDA Interim President and CEO Kathryn Berger. “The CEDA Awards provides a much-needed opportunity to celebrate economic development and the accomplishments of so many hard-working industry professionals. I am thrilled to congratulate each CEDA finalist and winner.”

The New North Talent Campaigns won a CEDA Award in the Talent Attraction, Development, and Retention category, which recognizes initiatives or programs that document successful talent attraction, development, and retention outcomes. Finalists in the category successfully illustrated how their talent initiative provided a strategic and innovative approach to meet certain workforce goals, including strengthening the skills of the workforce, talent attraction and retention, and addressing barriers to employment such as childcare, housing, and transportation.

Due to an aging population and a shrinking workforce, the New North, a regional economic development organization in Northeast Wisconsin, developed an innovative approach to attract more residents to fill

open jobs across all industries in their 18-county footprint. Tapping into a WEDC Talent Marketing Co-op Grant and other private sector investment, New North implemented an extensive digital marketing campaign with multiple programs targeting specific demographic groups, including the “more YOU in NEW” campaign to attract millennials to the region, as well as the “Find your True North” program geared toward young professionals and outdoor enthusiasts using a targeted social media approach to promote the benefits of living in the New North. They also partnered with Mission Wisconsin on a digital campaign promoting the state’s veteran benefits that targets U.S. veterans living outside Wisconsin. The successful programs helped make the New North one of the fastest growing regions in the state, significantly boosting overall net migration and bringing 81 veterans and their families to Northeast Wisconsin.

"We are thrilled to receive this recognition for our talent attraction initiatives that have helped bring nearly 15,000 new residents to the New North over the past three years," said Renee Torzala, New North Vice President Marketing and Investor Relations. "Studies show that authentic stories of real people are effective because they give a personal glimpse into someone's life. We will keep sharing the compelling stories of our region to attract new talent to the great state of Wisconsin."

CEDA finalists were screened and selected by an impartial panel of judges comprised of key WEDA members and partners. The independent panel reviewed many projects that were submitted for consideration, but the 12 finalists and ultimately the winners were selected based on the significant economic impact each project has had on its respective community or region.

The 2024 CEDA Awards would not have been possible without the support of WEDA’s generous partners and sponsors, including the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation; Alliant Energy; Dairyland Power Cooperative; First Ring Industrial Redevelopment Enterprise; Madison Gas & Electric; US Bank; the Wisconsin Economic Development Institute; and Xcel Energy.

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#### **About WEDA**

*The Wisconsin Economic Development Association, founded in 1975, is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to growing Wisconsin’s economy. Driven by the needs of our 400-plus members, we represent the economic development interests of both the private and public sectors through advocacy, education, and leadership on statewide initiatives.*