

CONNECT

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INAUGURAL AWARDS GALA A SUCCESS!



The first annual EDAM Awards gala was held on November 2 as part of the Fall Forum in Portage la Prairie and two awards were issued. Both the Project of the Year and the Rising Star Awards were issued as part of the festivities.

The evening opened with greetings from Manitoba's Minister of Education and Training, Hon. Ian Wishart, who shared wishes from the Province, outlining the significance

of Economic Development in workforce development for the coming generation. Minister Wishart was not alone in his praise for the efforts of Manitoba's EDOs. His sentiments were echoed by Executive Director for the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, Joe Masi, Portage la Prairie Mayor, Irvine Ferris and Deputy Reeve for the R.M. of Portage, Roy Tufford.

There were four nominees in the running for Project of the Year, with the Roquette Pea Protein acquisition taking home the honors. The plant, representing a \$400 Million investment in Manitoba's agri-food sector will create 150 new jobs and has been touted by Minister of Agriculture, Ralph Eichler as the single largest investment in the Province's history.

Accepting the award was Manitoba Agriculture's Grant Carlson. Though, he was quick to identify that it was through collaboration of the Province, the City, the RM, and Manitoba Hydro that the project landed in Manitoba, sharing the victory with key stakeholders from each of those partner agencies.

"It was a team award with the R.M., the City of Portage, Hydro and ourselves as the main groups that worked with it," Grant told the media on hand. "There were a lot of other people involved as well. Something that big has so many moving pieces."

The Rising Star Award category featured three nominees who have been active in the field for less than five years. Taking home the first ever award issued in this category was Portage Regional Economic Development Executive Director, Vern May.

May, who started his career in the municipal environment in 2013 has held roles with Souris and Minnedosa prior to being hired into his current position earlier this year.

Selection of the award winners was decided by an online survey of the membership, with more than 50 members casting votes in favor of their choices. It is intended to promote the awards annually each year at the Fall Forum, with an expanded slate of categories being discussed for next year's ballot. Congratulations to our winners and nominees.

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TOURS A POPULAR ELEMENT OF FALL FORUM AGENDA

Business Development Officer Roberta Irvine leads delegates on a tour of the Food Development Centre in Portage la Prairie.

Perhaps one of the most highly rated features of every EDAM Forum is the opportunity to get out and explore the host community, meet local entrepreneurs and innovators and celebrate some of the exciting things that are happening in Manitoba.

At the Fall Forum held in Portage la Prairie, the tour options included a slate of four options for delegates to choose from. Most which celebrated some of Manitoba's unique positioning to support and promote industry.

The Food Development Centre is a Provincially-funded research and development facility that helps aspiring entrepreneurs to take their food product from concept to commercialization. Offering on-site expertise and specialists that can guide a product through testing, labelling and packaging, the Centre has been instrumental in the success of a number of prairie-born food products reaching the market.

But it is not only expert advice that the FDC offers to its clientele. The Centre is also home to a number of food preparation spaces which are available on short or long term lease

agreements to allow producers to manufacture and package their product on site. This venue helps to alleviate some of the start up costs for a new producer, offsetting the costs of constructing as building and equipping it with the required machinery and infrastructure needed for a commercial food production facility.

A second group had the opportunity to visit Southport's K.F. Aerospace and tour their facilities. K.F. holds the contract to deliver all primary and some secondary flight training for all enlisted potential pilots in the Royal Canadian Air Force. On any given day, 25 aircraft depart from the private air strip as students work toward getting their wings to serve our country.

The site also includes a number of specialized classrooms devoted to specific models of aircraft as well as some state of the art simulators that create an immersive experience for pilots before they take the helm in a real flight situation.

The third tour from the Fall Forum gave delegates a look at how secondary education is adapting to the needs of industry and what skills

are being nurtured at Portage Collegiate's trades program. Guided by career preparation Counsellor, Blair Hordeski, the tour included visits to the carpentry, electronics, mechanics and aesthetics labs which are preparing students for direct placement into the work force.

The local trades program and related apprenticeship opportunities, has helped to place students on a career path with direct connections to local employers which is proving to support industry as well. In addition, students from our trades program have competed Provincially and nationally using the skills learned in the labs, producing award-winning results.

The unique shops and services that adorn Saskatchewan Avenue create an ideal opportunity for the fourth tour offered at the Fall Forum. The "retail therapy" tour directed guests to some of the community's unique shops and boutiques to offer up a retail experience that was anything but "off the rack".

Community tours continue to showcase our unique achievement and shared opportunities for growth.



“WE NEED A HOTEL!”

2017 EDAC Session shares insights about the feasibility of attracting a hotel development to your town.

Many communities lament the lack of accommodations locally as an impediment to growth. If your community has identified a hotel as a “must have” item on your wishlist, Brian Stanford, the Senior Managing Director for CRBE Hotels offers this advice:

1. Attracting an investor for a new hotel will require an 80-room minimum commitment, which is estimated to be a \$12 Million investment.
2. A community has the best chance of success if there is a local investor/investment group at the table. The outside investor is not interested to put forward more than 30% of the project cost.
3. The benchmark for feasibility is a 70% occupancy rate.
4. A successful hotel enterprise profits from tourism, but survives on local business demand.
5. Typically, investors shy away from investments in new markets that are more than one hour away from an international airport.
6. Annually in Canada, only 70 to 80 new hotels are constructed. Manitoba logs 4 million overnight stays compared to Ontario's 62 Million, so enticing investors will require a compelling business case.
7. Of all tourism spending, accommodation accounts for only 10%. How else are you monetizing local tourism?

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JUST WATCH ME!

For 16% of Canadians, living with a disability can create obstacles for employment. Inflexible hours on the job site or workspaces which are not readily adaptable are among the challenges which make employment difficult. That can be frustrating to people who are motivated to work, but are hampered by a medical condition or a disability. As a result, many find themselves unemployed or under-employed.

Entrepreneurship can be the key that unlocks opportunity. For some, being able to set their own hours and customize their work environment is the first step in being able to strategically design their professional future.

Helping to facilitate this success is what inspired the launch of the "Just Watch Me!" video contest in 2011. An initiative of the Community Futures Entrepreneurs with Disabilities program, the annual competition is serving to inspire entrepreneurs to envision what's possible, but it has also created some additional successes. Sharing the success stories of entrepreneurs in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, as well as highlighting the capabilities of persons with disabilities in the world of business has been an exciting ripple effect of the program which is leading to new ideas and innovation.

As this newsletter goes to print, the seventh edition of the contest is underway with public voting helping to decide this year's winner. However, one needs only to look at the line up of six previous contest winners to see the value and impact that this program is having on the business climate in rural Manitoba and beyond.



Wi-Fi Country Inc.
Chris Gaulin - 2011 Winner
Winnipeg, Manitoba

With a goal to provide a high speed internet solution for rural Manitoba that offers an alternative to some of the existing high cost solutions, on the market, Chris Gaulin's Wi-Fi Country Inc. was the first Just Watch Me contest winner in 2011. The company currently employs three networking specialists in addition to the founder himself.

Productions Canart Productions
Candace Lipischak - 2013 Winner
Otterburne, Manitoba

A skilled bi-lingual graphic designer and desktop publisher, Candace Lipischak struggled to find a career position that recognized that her disability "did not take a lunch break". Her ambition to launch her own design business and to pursue entrepreneurship ensured that Candace could take the time that she needed, regardless of the clock, to best serve her clients while also allocating the breaks and time that she needed to ensure effective self-care throughout the work day. Her pitch was compelling enough to take the honors in 2013.



Taylor's Curbside Recycling
Taylor Layton - 2014 Winner
Outlook, Saskatchewan

Taylor Layton struggled to secure meaningful employment in her community as a 20 year old with Down's Syndrome. She identified a community need and launched Taylor's Curbside Recycling program, at first with five clients. Building the business up to seventy weekly household pick ups, Layton's Just Watch Me win attracted national attention. In fact, Saskatoon's Flaman Trailers donated a custom-built trailer to help her expand her growing business, and she was also asked to speak at the Lia Sophia national conference in Toronto that year.

Kozy Kritters
Sydney Deneka - 2015 Winner
Beausejour, Manitoba

"Be happy and work hard" is a key message that Sydney Deneka shared in her video entry to the contest in 2015. Since 2012, this enterprising young lady has been crafting custom blankets for pets and babies from her home in Beausejour and the support from her family, school and community have been a big part of her success.

Apryl Harel Photography
Apryl Harel - 2016 Winner
Steinbach, Manitoba

Apryl Harel discovered her passion for photography at an early age and in 2010 began to pursue her passion as a career. While she prefers to get her clients in the outdoors to take advantage of the light and colors of nature, she has also assembled an impressive portfolio of studio images as well, from delightful toddler photo shoots, to family sessions and even boudoir photography. She credits a supportive husband and three daughters at home with making her dream a reality.

Lil' Steps Miniatures & Wellness Farm
Lucy Fouasse - 2017 Winner
St. Malo, Manitoba

Focusing on Equine Facilitate Wellness as an alternative therapy, Lucy Fouasse was last year's contest winner. With a goal to provide children with opportunities to develop life skills, critical thinking and gain insight through the direct relationship with horses, this experiential program is focused on the mental well-being of all who experience it.

These are just some of the incredible stories of men and women who refuse to let their disability define their career potential. Through their efforts as entrepreneurs, they are not only work toward their own future success, but they are also enriching the lives of many around them.

This year's contest features four entries from another quartet of inspiring entrepreneurs. Who will join this line up of exceptional prairie entrepreneurs this year? We'll share the results of the 2018 contest in the next issue of CONNECT.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: *Bryan Mintenko* EDO, Glenboro Community Development Corp.



Bryan has been addressing the challenges for both Economic Development and Recreation in the community of Glenboro, Manitoba.

Assuming the role of Economic Development Officer and Recreation Director for the Town of Glenboro in April 2017, Bryan Mintenko's background in the realm of sport was a great asset to help him identify the opportunities in the community and strive to achieve them.

Originally from Oakville, just west of Portage la Prairie, his passion for sports, recreation and community volunteerism was nurtured. He attended the University of Manitoba and in Winnipeg is where his passion for the sport of soccer really ascended to a new level. He has supported many teams as a coach and manager in addition to administrative positions as a convenor for the Winnipeg Women's Soccer League and as President of the Manitoba Soccer Referees' Association.

While originally attracted to the Glenboro position for the recreation element, he comments on his introduction to the EDO role.

"My previous experience in administrative roles in sport is a good fit for the goals of the Economic Development portfolio," says Bryan. "I enjoy the community building aspects of the position - the potential to increase investment, tourism and employment in the area."

In his first year in the position, one of his first major wins was to develop a winning bid for the 55+ Manitoba Games which will be hosted in his community this

summer. The games represent a meeting of both roles under his job title as they are projected to create a substantial economic boost for the region and leave a legacy for Glenboro as a host site.

Bryan is also enthusiastic about Glenboro's new participation in the Communities in Bloom program. Beyond simply beautification, the program is rallying local support behind landscape, heritage and environmental projects. This has also factored into the development of a new website and promotional materials for the municipality.

When not hard at work or attending EDAM events throughout the year, Bryan maintains an active presence in the soccer community across the Province as a coach, manager, player and referee. In addition to his exploits on and around the pitch, Bryan also enjoys marathon running and trains for a few events per year. Though, never leaving his work far behind, he admits:

"I travel to several tournaments every year and I make sure to take notes on the benefits of a successfully managed event."

If you'd like to connect with Bryan to discuss economic development, community recreation or to ask him about his "worst 'dead-end' job", you can reach him at:

E-mail: gcdc@glenboro.com

Phone: 204-827-2575





It's a new economy and new approaches to economic development are necessary. Here are the days of global competitiveness, talent mobility, knowledge economy, customer service, and the Internet of Things!

The short story is that we are management consultants who help people and places thrive in the 21st century economy. For us, this work isn't about churning out strategies. It's a commitment to improving the world around us, even if it's just one community at a time.

This passion makes our people our greatest strength. Our team's breadth of expertise allows us to push the boundaries of our practice areas. We continually explore new overlaps between our core practice areas—economic development, cultural development, and workforce development – because we believe sustainable growth and economic competitiveness won't succeed in silos.

We originally launched as Millier Dickinson Blais in 2007. Since then, we have grown into Canada's largest specialist economic development consultancy and continue to evolve to meet the needs of our clients. In 2011, we launched two new divisions – Workforce Development and Cultural Development. In 2017, we launched a Market Research and Analytics division in response to our clients need for evidence-based

intelligence to ground decisions and policy. We help you get the answers!

In this vein, we encourage you to check out our suite of specialized municipal solutions which will give you the local intelligence you need to make informed decisions: Citizen Satisfaction IQ™, Tax Sensitivity Calculator™, PlaceVantage™, Triage BR+E™, and Vicinity Jobs Supply and Demand Reporting.

We're not just experts in these fields. We're experienced practitioners. Our team members have worked on the ground in diverse communities and contexts. We understand the challenges faced by our clients. We customize our approach to each project to meet clients' needs using sound research, proven methodologies, and a collaborative attitude.

Your Manitoba-based Consultant: Jordan Tidey

Jordan is a Senior Development Analyst with MDB Insight based in Winnipeg. He brings a wide range of experience to the role in urban and rural economic development.



His projects have included setcor strategy investment attraction, designing business retention and expansion initiatives and connecting merchants to local opportunities.

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ATTRACTING INVESTMENT

HOW CAN COMMUNITIES BEST HELP THEMSELVES?

Before a sold our conference room at the 2018 Canadian FDI Forum in Quebec City this past October, Bradley Migdal stood before an expectant audience looking for insight into how best to attract investment opportunities for their communities. The Senior Managing Director for Cushman & Wakefield's Chicago branch who has worked with dozens of corporate clients to advise on their site selection process startled the audience by first asking what communities are doing for themselves.

"How many of you are publishing a quarterly newsletter and sharing that with the investors that you hope to attract?" Very few hands were raised among the 160 economic development agents in the room.

"You've come here looking for answers, but the reality is that each of you is more in control of your own destiny than you realize."

It was a jarring revelation to some that while we are all

actively immersed in the challenges of creating growth, that there are simple steps that we can each take to better market the opportunities to industry.

Migdal went on to identify that enterprising agencies and EDOs should not only be raising their profile with the companies and brands that they are most interested in, but also with the commercial real estate industry and agencies like his own that serve as site selectors and advisors for major corporate entities.

Beyond the census data and trend activity that these companies can readily access remotely, it is critical that communities are telling their story from the ground level, identifying not only what companies exist in your area, but what attracted them there, what keeps them there and what successes they have seen there.

What compelling picture can you paint of your community, through the lens of business and industry?

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE A "Train the Trainer" Event

Did you know ... All businesses and organizations need to train staff and volunteers about the accessible customer service standard before November 2018? It's the law in Manitoba.

An upcoming workshop being presented by the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities (SMD) offers you the chance to be part of the solution in your community by becoming a trainer.

The session takes place on March 22 from 9 am to 4 pm at the SMD offices in Winnipeg - Room 203 @ 825 Sherbrook Street. The fee for the program is \$250.

To receive the registration package or for more information please contact Heather at 204.975.3100 or hiscock@smd.mb.ca

Participants are asked to self-identify if they require any disability-related accommodations to participate in this session.

Is your community prepared to meet the needs of your residents when this becomes a legal requirement this year? Help them get ready.



WHEN THE EXECUTION SEEMS DIFFERENT THAN THE PLAN

EDAM's Spring Forum in Roblin offers up a great program for Economic Development practitioners for communities of all sizes.

Recognizing opportunity, choosing the right strategy and opportunities to explore regional communication and collaboration are key topics that will be delivered as part of the EDAM Spring Forum being hosted in Roblin from May 16-18.

Sessions Include:

- Economic indicators and the rural growth capacity. (Travel Manitoba)
- Choosing the right strategy (Bill Ashton, Rural Development Institute)
- Follow the red flags: How history and obstacles signal opportunity (Ben Brodeur)
- Making sense of the dollars (FWEF)
- ... and much more.

This semi-annual event not only creates an opportunity to liaise with peers across the Province who are facing similar challenges, but also to connect with colleagues that can offer insight into some of the approaches that they are taking.

All this, plus details of dirty economic secrets, methods of strategic madness and a panoramic journey that will reveal untapped prosperity in your community.

If you have not registered yet, we urge you to confirm your spot early. Hotel accommodations are available but are expected to fill up as the forum date approaches. We'll see you there.



WANT TO SHARE YOUR STORY?

EDAM CONNECT newsletter is a forum to spotlight the ongoing efforts and achievements of our practitioners across the Province. We'd like to showcase the work, challenges and successes of all of our members. If you have a story that you would like to share in an upcoming edition of this publication, connect with our editor by e-mail at: vmay@plprecd.ca and let us share your story with your colleagues across the Province.