



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 12, 2007

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**SOUTHERN OREGON COMES OUT ON TOP IN
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AWARDS**

Oregon Economic Development Association presents 2007 Awards of Excellence

PORTLAND, Ore. _ In a year filled with numerous economic development achievements and success stories for communities throughout Oregon, efforts by individuals and organizations in southern Oregon received recognition at this year's Oregon Economic Development Association (OEDA) annual conference.

During OEDA's third annual Back-to-Business Conference, held October 8 and 9, 2007, in Portland, one individual and three organizations, all from southern Oregon, received Awards of Excellence. Winners of the awards were selected based on the best practices they have established and that can be emulated by other economic development leaders in their own communities. The four award categories were:

- Economic Development Leader of the Year;
- Business Development Success Story;
- Creative Marketing and Promotions; and
- Outstanding Collaborative Partnerships.

Economic Development Leader of the Year

Cited as one of the most influential economic development leaders in the state, Steve Vincent, regional business manager for Avista Utilities in Medford, was named Economic Development Leader of the Year. In addition to leading Avista's economic development initiatives, Vincent:

- serves on a federal advisory board to the Secretary of Energy;
- serves on the Oregon Department of Treasury Growth Account Board, a board that is tasked by statute to invest a part of the Education Stability Fund in venture capital funds;
- is a founding board member of Earth Advantage, a Portland-based residential green building certification nonprofit organization;



- serves as the marketing committee chair of Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development Inc. (SOREDI); and
- is a member of the Jackson and Josephine County Regional Rural Investment Board, which allocates lottery funds to public sector entities resulting in job growth.

The Business Development Success Story Award was presented to Murphy Engineered Wood Products for the rebuilding and modernizing of its Sutherlin, Ore., plywood mill after it burned to the ground in the summer of 2005. Extensive support from local and state economic development partners was instrumental in the decision by John Murphy to rebuild, resulting in a new modern laminated veneer lumber plant, which will create 90 jobs for the region.

The Creative Marketing and Promotions Award went to the Southern Oregon Marketing Partnership for the comprehensive marketing campaign it developed and implemented, which resulted in attracting new businesses to the region. The team began with a \$90,000 grant from the Coos, Curry, Douglas County Regional/Rural Investment Board that enabled it to carry out a marketing program that centered around a postcard direct mail campaign and attendance at targeted trade shows.

The Outstanding Collaborative Partnerships Award was handed to Rogue Valley's Power-Up Oregon. Designed to support the retention and growth of living-wage jobs, a skilled workforce, and competitive businesses in Southern Oregon, Power-Up Oregon brought together businesses and economic and workforce development leaders to address the most critical issues facing the region's economy. The initiative is a multi-agency collaborative partnership that is led by: Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development, Inc. (SOREDI); The Job Council; Rogue Valley Workforce Development Council; and Rogue Community College.

About the Oregon Economic Development Association

The Oregon Economic Development Association (OEDA) is a statewide nonprofit organization whose members are representatives from public and private economic development organizations and corporations throughout Oregon who are committed to business expansion, recruitment and retention. Information about OEDA can be obtained from its Web site www.oeda.biz.

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