

## NEWS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

#### BC Economic Development award winners for 2020 announced

**KELOWNA, B.C., March 11, 2020** - The British Columbia Economic Development Association (BCEDA) and FortisBC teamed up once again to announce the winners of the 2020 BC Economic Development Awards at the BCEDA's annual summit banquet in Kelowna last night.

These awards recognize BCEDA members for outstanding work in supporting their local economies, and making a meaningful difference in their communities. For over 30 years, the BCEDA has given these awards to individuals and groups who have dedicated their time to community-based economic development.

Congratulations to the following 2020 BC Economic Development Award winners:

#### **Economic Development Marketing Innovation Award**

The BCEDA Marketing Innovation Award recognizes achievement in marketing initiatives that support economic development.

**Winner (community less than 20,000 population):** City of Quesnel for *Hello, Quesnel – Resident Attraction Marketing Campaign*.

**Winner (community more than 20,000 population):** City of Campbell River for the *NexStream Tech Competition*.

#### **Community Project Award**

The BCEDA Community Project Award recognizes an organization that has implemented various economic development initiatives that provide economic benefits to a community or region.

**Winner (community less than 20,000 population):** City of Port Alberni for the *Port Alberni Food Hub*.

**Winner (community more than 20,000 population):** Venture Kamloops for *VK Accelerate*.

#### **Chairman's Award**

The Doug Weir Memorial Award is presented annually to recognize a member of BCEDA who, through volunteer effort, has made a significant contribution towards the function, goals and/or mandate of the BC Economic Development Association

**Winner: David A. Bennett, director, communications and external relations at FortisBC**

BCEDA has had the pleasure of working with FortisBC for nearly a decade. During that time, they have been quick to respond when British Columbia was experiencing the worst wildfires in BC history.

FortisBC agreed to manage a hotline for BC businesses which collected information that was then shared with communities and key decision makers. In 2018, when wildfires broke out again the offer to relaunch the hotline was quickly provided. When the BCEDA is in need of assistance with communications, media relations, helping to resolve community issues and making connections in various regions, a member of the FortisBC team is always there to provide assistance.

“I am extremely pleased that year over year we receive strong entries that are put forward by communities and economic development professionals showcasing the creativity and smart strategies that encourage economic growth in their region,” said Dale Wheeldon, president and CEO at BCEDA. “This year’s theme is *Energizing Economic Development through Collaboration* and all of the nominated projects are great examples of the partnerships required for success. It is always very difficult for our judges to narrow down the winners and my sincere thanks goes out to everyone who submitted projects for consideration this year. Their efforts to build stronger communities, and thereby a stronger provincial economy, are to be congratulated.”

The awards are presented and sponsored by FortisBC.

“At FortisBC, we are always looking for ways to give back to the communities in which our staff live and work,” said David Bennett, director, communications and external relations at FortisBC. “I’m proud to be involved with the BCEDA and present these awards to those who are as passionate about supporting local communities as we are.”

For more information about the BCEDA and the summit, visit: [bceda.ca](http://bceda.ca).

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**About BCEDA**

*The BC Economic Development Association (BCEDA) is the leading professional association of economic development practitioners in the Province of BC. BCEDA currently has over 450 members from communities throughout the province. BCEDA provides services that help member communities grow and expand new and existing businesses, attract new business investments, and work towards strategic infrastructure investment, land use planning, and community enhancement. BCEDA services include an annual summit and networking event, educational and professional development opportunities, public relations, advisory services and resources and partnering with communities and the Province of BC to market British Columbia for business investment.*

**About FortisBC**

*FortisBC Energy Inc. is a regulated utility focused on providing safe and reliable energy, including natural gas, propane and thermal energy solutions. FortisBC Energy Inc. employs more than 1,800 British Columbians and serves approximately 1,008,400 customers in 135 B.C. communities. FortisBC Energy Inc. owns and operates approximately 49,000 kilometres of natural gas transmission and distribution pipelines. FortisBC Energy Inc. is a subsidiary of Fortis Inc., a leader in the North American regulated electric and gas utility industry. For further information visit [www.fortisinc.com](http://www.fortisinc.com).*