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Subject: Interested in Economic Development in Rural Communities? IEDC has you covered!

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The **2015 IEDC Annual Conference** will offer sessions specifically designed for economic development professionals working in rural communities. While the conference is the go-to event to learn about all the major topics and trends in economic development, there will be an abundance of opportunities for attendees from small communities to engage with their peers on common economic development issues. Here are just a few examples of the sessions that include a specific focus on rural development or offer a rural perspective as part of the overall discussion:

Monday, October 5

Learning Lab: Open Mic: Economic Development on a Shoestring

We have several speakers from communities under pop. 25,000. Do not miss a chance to promote your community and your achievements. [Contact us for a chance to make a presentation.](#)

Tuesday, October 6

Town Hall for Communities with Populations Less than 25,000: Which Rural Are You?

Whether scenic, industrial or agricultural, small towns have big ideas about how they want to pursue economic development. However, all rural communities face specific challenges such as infrastructure, talent attraction and retention, and recruiting high-tech and advanced industries to their regions. Bring your problems and your solutions to this Town Hall for rural and small communities for a discussion with fellow rural and small town practitioners.

Facilitators:

- [Jason Anderson](#), Director, Economic Development, City of Rochelle/GREDCO, Rochelle, IL
- [Brett Doney, CEcD](#), President & CEO, Great Falls Development Authority, Inc., Great Falls, MT

A Place to Call Home: Attracting Economic Development Talent

The economic development profession, like many other professions, has a gray hair issue. Who will step in to fill the executive positions when the baby boomers retire? How will we attract young people into the profession and help them grow their careers? What strategies can rural communities and distressed cities use to recruit experienced economic developers? These questions and others will be answered when our panel of speakers takes a look at how to lure high quality professionals into the field of economic development.

Speakers:

- [Barry Broome](#), President & CEO, Greater Sacramento Area Economic Council, Sacramento, CA
- [Rodrick Miller](#), CEO, Detroit Economic Growth Corporation, Detroit, MI
- [Sandra Watson](#), President & CEO, Arizona Commerce Authority, Phoenix, AZ

Constructive Criticism: Economic Development Websites Under the Microscope

This session will evaluate websites from EDOs of all sizes, including those in small, rural towns. The exciting part is that you can [submit your website via this online form](#), and a select few entries will be chosen for a live critique by our panel of experts.

Speakers:

- [Aaron Brossoit](#), Chief Operating Officer, Golden Shovel Agency, Little Falls, MN
- [Jeffrey Kline](#), CEO & President, Accrinet, Charlotte, NC
- [Kathy Mussio](#), Managing Partner, Atlas Insight, Fairhaven, NJ
- [Douglas Tyler, CEcD](#), Director, Deloitte Tax LLP, New York City, NY

Mission Investments: Innovative Capital for Economic Development

Mission investments (also known as impact investments) from foundations and other philanthropic investors are a powerful and innovative source of capital for economic development projects. From Main Street to the industrial park and everywhere in between, these investments are catalysts for business recruitment, business retention and expansion, affordable housing development, and community facilities. This session will discuss the fundamentals of mission investing and how you can leverage this opportunity in your community.

Speakers:

- [Frank Altman](#), President and CEO, Community Reinvestment Fund USA, Minneapolis, MN
- [Christopher Perez](#), Program Officer, Rasmuson Foundation, Anchorage, AK
- [David Wood, PhD](#), Director, Initiative for Responsible Investment, Hauser Institute at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

Wednesday, October 7

New Lands, New Opportunities: Doing Business in Remote Locations

Whether you live on the inhospitable tundra or are located in a small town over an hour's drive from a major airport or interstate, you recognize that doing business in remote locations can be a challenge for you and the private sector; but opportunities for economic development should not be wasted. Economic development issues of transportation, government involvement, and inclusive development must be considered and addressed. This session will take a look at the particular challenges of economic and business development in remote locations.

Speakers:

- [Chris Chmura, PhD](#), President & Chief Economist, Chmura Economics & Analytics, Richmond, VA
- [Simon Millcock, ACEcD](#), Chairman, Queensland State Practitioner Network Economic Development Australia, Townsville, Queensland
- [John Morand](#), Lawyer, Hope, Ontario, Canada

How-to: Business Accelerator as an Economic Development Tool

Tapping into the local entrepreneurial environment is critical to economic development organizations because of the impact it has on local jobs, filling local office space, supporting local retail and creating a healthy community. This workshop will provide attendees with a step-by-step case study of how to tap use a business accelerator to tap into local resources for an exciting entrepreneurial initiative.

Speaker: [Susan Kelsey](#), Economic Development Officer, City of Lake Forest, IL, Lake Forest, IL

Ignite IEDC

Ignite® IEDC is back for another lightning round of public speaking on economic development issues. Come to learn about a new idea, a successful project or program, and much more. Speakers have 5 minutes and 20 slides to enlighten you. There is something for every community at Ignite.

Speakers:

- [Kevin Johnson, CEcD](#), Sr. Economic Development Officer, Invest Atlanta, Atlanta, GA
- [Tim Martin](#), Stephens County Development Authority, Toccoa, GA

The Essence of Crowdfunding

Online crowdfunding sites mean that entrepreneurs can access capital no matter where they are - even if they are in Bethel, AK, accessible only by air and river. Join us at a local favorite - Bear Tooth Theatrepub - to hear from entrepreneurs on how they have successfully used crowdfunding to kickstart their dream jobs.

Moderator: [Jon Bittner](#), Vice President, Anchorage Economic Development Corporation, Anchorage, AK

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) is a non-profit, non-partisan membership organization serving economic developers. With more than 4,500 members, IEDC is the largest organization of its kind. Economic developers promote economic well-being and quality of life for their communities, by creating, retaining and expanding jobs that facilitate growth, enhance wealth and provide a stable tax base. From public to private, rural to urban and local to international, IEDC's members are engaged in the full range of economic development experience. Given the breadth of economic development work, our members are employed in a wide variety of settings including local, state, provincial and federal governments, public-private partnerships, chambers of commerce, universities and a variety of other institutions. When we succeed, our members create high-quality jobs, develop vibrant communities, and improve the quality of life in their regions.

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