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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Economic Development Association of Minnesota (EDAM)  
Names Annual Award Winners**

ST. PAUL, MN — The Economic Development Association of Minnesota (EDAM) announced winners of the organization's annual Economic Development Awards on June 17, 2009, at the organization's Summer Conference.

The Development awards are given annually at the EDAM Summer Conference to recognize individuals or organizations that deserve recognition for outstanding economic development achievement. Nominations are submitted throughout the spring and winners are selected by an awards committee comprised of EDAM members.

**President's Award:**

***Mark Lofthus***, Department of Employment and Economic Development, for outstanding service to the Economic Development Association of Minnesota and for his past and continuing work at the Department.

**Partnership Awards:**

Metro: ***Workforce Ready! Collaborative***. The purpose of the collaborative is to improve workforce-training initiatives, promote existing workforce resources and programs, and increase the pipeline of workers in the precision manufacturing sector in the West Metro.

Non-Metro: ***Renewable Energy Marketplace – Alliance for Talent Development***. The "Renewable Energy Marketplace – Alliance for Talent Development" is an industry-led consortium of economic development, workforce development, education and workforce leaders that provides the framework and commitment to transform the 36-county region of South Central, Southwest, and West Central Minnesota from primarily agriculture-dependent to a knowledge- and innovation-based economy that capitalizes on the region's strength in agriculture and renewable energy.

**Business Retention/Expansion:**

***City of Elk River for Sportech, Inc.*** Sportech is an innovation-driven plastics thermo-former, specializing in the design, development and production of quality products and accessories for the power sports industry.

**Economic Development Initiative – Technology:**

***Blandin Foundation for the Blandin Broadband Initiative***. The Blandin Foundation Broadband Initiative is a unique effort to stimulate the deployment of broadband networks and to increase the effective use of these networks as a means to enhance community vitality.

**Economic Development Marketing Award:**

***MetroMSP.org***. MetroMSP.org is a regional site selection and economic development website covering the 11-county metropolitan area. It was developed by a public-private collaboration.

**Redevelopment Awards:**

Metro: *City of Saint Louis Park for the Highway 7 Corporate Center*. The Highway 7 Corporate Center is a success story located in St. Louis Park on a notorious Superfund site known for its significant contamination and blight. This complicated project demonstrates the many challenges of brownfield sites and the barriers to redeveloping former industrial properties.

Non Metro: *Wabasha Port Authority and Development Agency for the National Eagle Center*. The National Eagle Center resulted from the collective efforts of a partnership among many private individuals and organizations — along with Federal, State, and City resources — creating an overwhelming success.

Headquartered in Saint Paul, EDAM serves economic development professionals throughout Minnesota and has more than 500 members who represent private enterprise, local and regional economic development agencies, chambers of commerce and utilities.

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