

From the Desk of the CEO



Dear CALED Members and Friends,

As we enter the summer of 2015, I have many exciting things to share with you. First, if you are not aware, CALED is celebrating 35 years of leadership in economic development this year. Created in 1980, we are now one of the largest economic

development associations in the country – and, it is all because of our members. Thank you for your continued engagement with CALED and for making the commitment to help us create a relevant and responsive organization for the benefit of California’s economic development professionals.

In honor of this milestone, we held a special 35-year anniversary dinner at this year’s annual conference in Riverside. The dinner was only one of the several exciting moments that made this year’s conference a huge success. Some of the other items include:

- ♦ A plenary session focused on the positive facts about why businesses thrive in California. See page 3 for the list of top ten tweets from this session.
- ♦ Over 340 conference participants with great energy and enthusiasm focused on improving local economic development in California. Download the conference app to catch up on the great conversations, pictures and updates from attendees. You can find it on Google Play or iTunes by searching CALED 2015.
- ♦ Economic Development Award of Excellence Winners in categories for Programs, Projects, Promotions, and a new category for Local Policies aimed at increasing local economic development. See page 14 to learn about the winners and their entries.
- ♦ Multiple opportunities for attendee engagement and peer-to-peer networking from extending break times, to receptions, to a culinary crawl, to a fun run. Check out some of the fun on pages 12 & 13
- ♦ Engaging sessions with pertinent content for today’s economic developers including Measuring your Economic Development ROI, Using EIFDs in Your Community, and a mentoring session on Women in Leadership.

And, of course, there was my annual report to the membership, which included not only a briefing on some of our impacts and outcomes, but also a discussion on what is next for economic development in California. With the loss of so much expertise at the local level, where can economic developers grow their skill set to meet the needs of their communities? By becoming more engaged in the logistics of projects, how does that change the role of an economic developer?

Over the next year, the CALED leadership and staff will tackle what is next for economic development in California, where CALED can lead to best support the profession, and what else can we do to make a difference on behalf of our members. As always, we look to you – the members – to provide input on these types of issues to ensure we are meeting your needs. If you have ideas, thoughts, suggestions, or want to brainstorm on the future of economic development, please feel free to reach out to me or the CALED Board and Board Advisors.

We value your feedback and use it to find ways to better serve you, which is why, after 35 years, CALED is still the voice of local economic development in California.

Thank you.

Gurbax Sahota

CALED
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 YEARS OF
LEADERSHIP