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## North America's Top 50 Economic Developers are Back In A New Way: Consultant Connect Announces Leaders In The Industry

**KALAMAZOO, Michigan** – Consultant Connect, a consulting agency designed to bridge the gap between economic developers and site consultants, announces its 2017 list of North America's Top 50 Economic Developers. The economic development professionals selected for this list were nominated by their colleagues in both the economic development industry and the site consultant community for excellent practices, innovation and success in building the communities they serve.

Each top 50 economic developer will be featured in an ebook. These industry leaders will be interviewed for the ebook to share their expertise in the field and leadership insights they've learned along the way. Consultant Connect strives to lift up this industry by recognizing remarkable economic developers for the entire economic development community to learn from.

"This annual list recognizing North America's Top 50 Economic Developers is designed to acknowledge the hard work of the top leaders in this field and elevate the conversation around economic development and job creation," said Ron Kitchens, managing partner of Consultant Connect. "Each of the leaders represented on this year's list are beyond deserving of this recognition for their efforts in building our communities."

The complete list of North America's Top 50 Economic Developers includes:

*Abby Liu*, McKinney Economic Development Corporation, Texas  
*Ben White*, Round Rock Chamber  
*Benjamin Teague*, Economic Development Coalition for Asheville-Buncombe County  
*Bentley Story*, Arkansas Economic Development Commission  
*Beth Doughty*, Roanoke Regional Partnership  
*Brad Smidt*, Greater Phoenix Economic Council

*Brian Hilson*, Birmingham Business Alliance  
*Buddy Rizer*, Loudoun County Department of Economic Development  
*Carrie Chenery*, Shenandoah Valley Partnership  
*Cathy Chambers*, JAXUSA Partnership  
*Chris Wimsatt*, Team Volusia Economic Development Corporation  
*Clark Krause*, BVEP  
*Clay Walker*, NETWORKS Sullivan Partnership

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*Dan Culhane*, Ames Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development  
*Dan Henderson*, Gilbert, Arizona  
*Deborah Price*, Missouri Partnership  
*E. Ray Covey*, AEP Texas  
*Gary Tonjes*, Albuquerque Economic Development, Inc.  
*Gene Goddard*, Greater MSP  
*Gregg Simon*, Metro Atlanta Chamber  
*James Otterstein*, Rock County, WI  
*Jessica Breaux*, TVA  
*Jim Paetsch*, Milwaukee 7  
*Juawana Colbert Williams*, Fayetteville-Cumberland County Economic Development Corporation  
*Julie Sullivan*, Dayton Development Coalition  
*Kati Hynes*, Charlotte Chamber  
*Keith Gillenwater*, EDG of Wabash County  
*Kimm Coyner*, REDI Cincinnati  
*Kurt Foreman*, Greater Oklahoma City Chamber  
*Larry Barnett*, Midlothian Economic Development  
*Lee Crume*, Jobs Ohio  
*Lucienne Pears*, Charlotte County EDC  
*Mark Young*, Jonesboro Ark Chamber of Commerce

*Matt McQuade*, Columbus 2020  
*Megan Lucas*, Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance  
*Mike Rosa*, Dallas Regional Chamber  
*Mitchel Allen*, Greater Phoenix Economic Council  
*Pandy Brazeau*, Virginia Economic Development Partnership  
*Patrick Murphy*, Alabama Power  
*Patty Horvatich*, Pittsburgh Regional Alliance  
*Rob Cleveland*, Cornerstone Alliance  
*Robert Van Goens*, RowanWORKS  
*Susan Davenport*, Gainesville FL Area Chamber of Commerce  
*Susie Davidson*, Idaho Commerce  
*Tim Vanderhoof*, Enterprise Florida  
*Tom Long*, San Antonio EDF  
*Tony Kaai*, Denison Dev. Alliance (Denison, TX)  
*Tricia Paesani*, CT Department of Economic and Community Development  
*Vanessa Goeschl*, Charlotte Regional Partnership  
*Walter Sprouse*, Augusta Economic Development Authority

### **About Consultant Connect**

Consultant Connect is designed to bridge the gap between leading economic developers and location consultants through exclusive networking events and educational services. Consultant Connect not only gives economic developers an inside look into the world of site selection – it gives them the applicable information necessary to propel their communities forward. For more information, please visit [www.consultantconnect.org](http://www.consultantconnect.org) or call 269.207.4982.

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