

# Grand Forks EDC Awards Bollingberg With 2024 Impact Award

*Long-time community leader, Karl Bollingberg, was presented the 2024 Klaus Thiessen Impact Award at the Grand Forks Region EDC Annual Meeting on March 26.*

GRAND FORKS, NORTH DAKOTA, USA, March 28, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corporation (EDC) board of directors announces Karl Bollingberg as the 2024 Klaus Thiessen Impact Award recipient. The award was presented to Bollingberg at the EDC Annual Meeting held at the Alerus Center on Tuesday, March 26. Since 2014, the EDC board has presented the award annually to recognize an outstanding business or individual that has made a positive impact on economic growth, vitality, and prosperity in the Grand Forks region.

"Karl epitomizes the spirit of the Klaus Thiessen Impact Award," remarked EDC President and CEO, Keith Lund. "His profound contributions to the economic vitality of the Grand Forks region, both through his professional endeavors and community service, are truly commendable. Karl's unparalleled dedication is exemplified by his remarkable tenure as an EDC board member, being the only to span two nine-year terms from 2001 to 2009 and 2014 to 2022."

Bollingberg worked at Alerus Financial in Grand Forks for 35 years, from 1987 to 2022 where he



Karl Bollingberg and EDC President & CEO, Keith Lund, sit on stage at the 2024 Annual Meeting as Karl accepts the Klaus Thiessen Impact Award.



Karl Bollingberg, 2024 Klaus Thiessen Impact Award recipient stands with his wife, Twila, and EDC Board Chair, John Oncken, and EDC President & CEO Keith Lund.

played a pivotal role in providing invaluable financial support and guidance to countless businesses and entrepreneurs across the region. “I spent about 90% of my career primarily supporting businesses,” said Bollingberg. “My position provided a unique opportunity to explore businesses all across the region, learning how each works and functions from smart and resilient entrepreneurs. Working with those entrepreneurs was my greatest joy throughout my career.”



When asked about his time with Alerus, Bollingberg shared many memories, but one stood out as his favorite. In the early 90's when he was just getting started as a banker, he and a few other community partners flew to Baraboo, Wisconsin to visit two entrepreneurs. The entrepreneurs were pursuing funding to start a fiberglass airplane manufacturing company that would feature parachutes for safety.

“After we arrived, we walked into a warehouse where we saw three to four kit planes half-built at various stages of completion, and then into another area where a fuselage built out of wood was set up on a platform. They had us sit on five-gallon pales inside the fuselage to get an idea of what it was going to look like,” Bollingberg recounted. “As a banker, I was skeptical that they were going to be successful. However, they turned around and did exactly what they said they were going to do, and the company exists today at Cirrus Aircraft.”

Bollingberg went on to share about his community involvement and how important that was throughout his career. His strong value of giving back and serving others was instilled while he was growing up and has continued throughout his life. In his younger years, Karl participated in his local 4H and FFA chapters. In college, he joined NDSU FarmHouse Fraternity which emphasized service as a core value. Throughout his professional life, he was involved with several organizations including the Chamber of Commerce, Grand Forks Region EDC, Community Violence Intervention Center (CVIC), Bank of North Dakota, his church council, and many more. Bollingberg's service has even continued in retirement, where he still serves on several boards including the Bank of North Dakota, Grand Forks Regional Airport Authority, Federal Home Loan Bank, and Cornerstone Bank.

“I think of an award recipient as being very humble, an out-of-the-box thinker, passionate about helping community, businesses, and government work together. If you look at Karl's experience and involvement, it is apparent that he is a perfect fit for the Klaus Thiessen Impact Award. I am happy that the EDC could recognize him for his impact and service to the community,” said John Oncken, EDC Board Chair and CEO/Owner of True North Equipment.

See previous award recipients and more information about the award at <https://grandforks.org/inside-the-edc/klaus-thiessen-impact-award/>

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