

# Grand Forks Region EDC Wins Two International Awards for Economic Development

*The 2024 Excellence in Economic Development awards were bestowed to the InternGF Program and Greater Grand Forks: Way Cooler Than You Think! Rural Video Series.*

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EINPresswire.com/ -- The Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corporation (EDC) received two 2024 Excellence in Economic Development Awards: silver for the Greater Grand Forks: Way Cooler Than You Think! (Cooler) rural video series in the multimedia promotion category, and bronze for the InternGF internship funding program in the talent development and retention category that impacted between 25,000 and 200,000 residents. Both awards were presented and honored at various events at the IEDC 2024 Annual Conference in Denver, CO, from September 15th – 18th.

“Workforce attraction and development is a top priority for businesses located in the Grand Forks region, and for companies looking to expand to the area. The EDC is dedicating time and resources to help grow our region’s population,” said Keith Lund, EDC President & CEO. “I need to congratulate EDC Director of Workforce Development Becca Cruger and the incredible team of dedicated professionals that drive these and other critical initiatives. Their work is truly making a positive impact in the Grand Forks region.”



"The Grand Forks Region EDC is setting the standard of excellence for economic development with its InternGF internship funding program and Greater Grand Forks: Way Cooler Than You Think! rural video project. This award highlights the EDC's commitment to its community and demonstrates the transformative impact of economic development," said Nathan Ohle, IEDC President & CEO, "It is with great pride that IEDC presents this award to the Grand Forks Region EDC, celebrating their leadership and innovation in the field of economic development."

The InternGF internship funding program started in 2018 in collaboration with the University of North Dakota (UND) Center For Innovation. InternGF offers up to \$3,500 to offset the cost of the intern's wage to companies adding a new internship experience or expanding internship responsibilities. In 2023, at the five-year check-in, it was revealed that 66.7% of InternGF participants were still living and working in the Grand Forks region, which is higher than the number of overall graduates. This retention of program participants demonstrates the value of having students connected to regional internship opportunities and the InternGF program.

The Cooler rural video series was completed over 18 months to highlight the rural communities of Grand Forks County. Each video highlighted a rural city, its unique culture, and why it's a 'cooler' place for people to live. The full video series highlights our region's wide range of activities and living options, taking an 'against the grain' approach to traditional talent attraction of featuring activities within the major city limits. The videos have racked up over 4,000 views on the Cooler YouTube channel and are utilized as part of the larger Cooler talent attraction campaign.

"Each day, our office focuses on what we can do to grow and expand our region's workforce through programs and initiatives like InternGF and the Cooler rural video series. I am honored and humbled that the EDC has been selected to receive these international awards," said Becca Cruger, EDC Director of Workforce Development. "I am grateful for the EDC investors who continue allocating resources to allow us to do this work. I am also grateful for the amazing partnership with the UND Center For Innovation which provides funding and programmatic support to keep InternGF running."

"We are absolutely thrilled to announce this year's award winners. These exceptional projects showcase remarkable dedication and ingenuity within the field," said Kevin Kramer, Chair of IEDC's Excellence in Economic Development Awards Advisory Committee. "Grand Forks Region EDC's contributions will leave a lasting impact and demonstrate its commitment to creating positive change for its residents."

Every year IEDC looks specifically for economic development organizations, government entities, initiatives, and programs that have demonstrated consistent, exemplary performance in the economic development profession, leading the execution of projects that have a significant impact on revitalizing communities and playing a major role in shaping and improving the practice of economic development.

To learn more about the InternGF program, visit: [GrandForks.org/interngf](https://GrandForks.org/interngf)

To watch the Cooler rural video series, visit:

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJ0tcjtCAIE9yBiMXu6Vf9A92CqLhnleK&si=YagQ-dNhx3DwxOL7>

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