

# LAWRENCE MCKINNEY NAMED 2024 ECONOMIC DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR

*Honored by the International Economic Development Council for exemplary leadership and impactful contributions to economic development*

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*Nathan Ohle, IEDC President and CEO*

Economic Development Council ([IEDC](#)) has named Lawrence McKinney as the recipient of its 2024 Economic Developer of the Year Award. Mr. McKinney, a much-awarded 35-year veteran of the economic development field and the President and CEO of the [Cleveland County Economic Development Coalition \(CCEDC\)](#), has been a thought leader and driving force behind numerous initiatives enhancing the economy and quality of life of Norman, Cleveland County and Oklahoma.

“Economic development requires bold leadership to thrive, and Mr. McKinney exemplifies this through his ability to

cast a vision, inspire progress, and advocate for meaningful change. His personal perseverance and professional commitment to innovation, collaboration, and community impact have set a high standard for our profession,” said Nathan Ohle, IEDC President and CEO. “As for challenges, Mr. McKinney doesn't just respond; he anticipates them and forges solutions to strengthen economies and improve the quality of life of residents. This award reflects his profound influence on both the industry and the people he serves.”

Under Mr. McKinney's leadership, the CCEDC's recent accomplishments include:

- Securing \$20 million in American Rescue Plan Recovery Act (ARPA) funding for the Norman-based Oklahoma Aviation Academy – Oklahoma's first Aviation High School.
- Securing a \$7 million Quality Jobs Tax Credit from the Department of Commerce for the recruitment of employee-owned Advanced Call Center Technologies, employing over 1,500 citizens and now the largest private-sector employer locally.
- Securing \$1 million for the construction and management of Mountain Bike Trails at Lake Thunderbird, as part of a talent attraction program.
- Securing \$800,000 to develop a countywide state-of-the-art AI-enabled workforce development program.

- Securing \$3.2 million to purchase and renovate what will be the new home of Startup 405, the County's only state-certified business incubator.

"I'm deeply honored and humbled to receive this award on behalf of the great State of Oklahoma, Cleveland County, and my team at CCEDC," said Mr. McKinney. "I'm not aware of an economic development agency anywhere with a staff of four that has procured over \$25 million in funding to improve the quality of life, education and economy of a community our size. I could not be prouder of my Board, staff, or volunteers, or more excited about the opportunities ahead."

IEDC, headquartered in Washington DC and founded in 1924 as the American Economic Development Council, is the world's largest professional sanctioning body for community development professionals, with 4500 members worldwide.

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Lawrence McKinney, CCEDC President & CEO

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