



MEDIA RELEASE - October 20, 2021

Ontario East Economic Development Commission "Economic Development Officer of the Year" Announced at the Ontario East Municipal Conference

[EASTERN ONTARIO] The Ontario East Economic Development Commission (Ontario East) recognized Donna Gillespie, CEO, Kingston Economic Development Corporation, as the "Ontario East EDO of the Year" at the Opening Ceremonies of the Ontario East Municipal Conference (OEMC) being held online today and tomorrow. The award is sponsored by ResearchFDI, one of Canada's leading investment attraction agencies, founded by Bruce Takefman, who was a member of the awards selection committee.

With a career spanning over 20 years Donna has been a leader in economic development and investment attraction supporting projects totalling more than \$250 million for the region in recent years. She has met the challenges of COVID-19 to the business community head-on with various promotional campaigns and is recognized for her leadership, mentoring skills, accessibility and for being an inspiration to her team and community in economic development. She is also a past member of the Ontario East board of directors.

Nominated by her staff for her tireless efforts and outstanding leadership in economic development, not only in the past year, but also for the past two decades, Donna will be presented with the award at an OEMC regional reception ceremony in Kingston today.

"Ontario East is pleased to recognize Donna for her efforts to promote her community and the region as a premier business location. We congratulate Donna on this important recognition and appreciate her support for our organization and the economic development profession." commented Chris King, President, Ontario East Economic Development Commission and CEO, Quinte Economic Development Commission.

"It has been my privilege to work with Donna over the past few years and to witness her extraordinary commitment to the Kingston business community. She brings an innovative pragmatism to her role and has worked tirelessly to support the Kingston business community to survive and thrive throughout the pandemic, while still remaining focused on investment attraction and business growth. Donna's leadership has been inspirational to her staff and to her community. This award is so well deserved," stated Gillian Watters, Board Chair, Kingston Economic Development.

-30-

For more information about the Ontario East Municipal Conference please visit: www.oemc.ca

Please contact Ontario East for more information on this release at 613-634-8569 or info@ontarioeast.ca