



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
OF FLORIDA'S SPACE COAST

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EDC Announces Award Winners at Annual Meeting

Volunteer of the Year and Thomas E. Gamble Excellence in Education awards presented

Brevard County, Fla. (October 31, 2011) – The Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast (EDC) is pleased to announce its 2011 recipients of the Volunteer of the Year and Thomas E. Gamble Excellence in Education for Economic Development awards. The winners were announced at the EDC's 2011 Annual Meeting on October 27 at the King Center for the Performing Arts in Melbourne.

Each year, the EDC staff has the unique opportunity to nominate an EDC investor as its Volunteer of the Year. The criterion for this award consists of donating a significant amount of energy and expertise in a way that has assisted the EDC in meeting and exceeding its goals. The 2011 recipient of the EDC's Volunteer of the Year Award is Mike Williams, Founder and president of M.H. Williams Construction Group.

During 2011, Mike served as a member of the EDC Executive Committee and Board of Directors, as well as Chairman of the EDC's Development Council. As Development Council Chair, Mike worked to improve the Space Coast's competitiveness, particularly in tackling the permitting process throughout Brevard County. Under Mike's leadership, the EDC Development Council partnered with Space Coast municipalities to develop a streamlined approach to building and site permitting. The ensuing best practices model served as the basis for the EDC's SNAP certification, recognizing excellence in simplified, nimble, accelerated permitting.

"I am incredibly appreciative and humbled by receiving this honor," said Mike Williams, founder and president of M.H. Williams Construction Group. "There are many individuals who give their time to various EDC efforts, so to be recognized with this award is truly an honor."

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Williams added, "However, I would be remiss if I did not also congratulate my fellow volunteers on the Development Council who have spent countless hours working alongside our local municipalities in an effort to streamline the permitting process. This award is just as much theirs, as it is mine. In particular, I would like to thank Ken Welsh of Welsh Companies; Dave Smith of R.C. Stevens Construction Company, Inc.; Vaughn Holeman of HSA Architecture Interior Design Planning; Luke Miorelli of M.E. Construction, Inc.; Bruce Moia of MBV Engineering, Inc.; Jake Wise of Construction Engineering Group; Franck Kaiser of Kaiser Consulting; and the EDC staff for going the extra mile in their willingness to make streamlined permitting a priority in Brevard County."

The EDC also presented the 2011 Thomas E. Gamble Excellence in Education for Economic Development award to Dr. Al Koller, Executive Director for SpaceTEC at Brevard Community College. Established in 2007, this award is named after one of the communities leading education professionals, Dr. Thomas Gamble, former president of Brevard Community College. The award is presented to an individual who has improved the field of education and/or the way students are served, making long standing, consistent, and highly valued contributions to further education missions on the Space Coast.

Dr. Koller led the team that developed and now operates SpaceTEC - the National Science Foundation's Center of Excellence for Aerospace Technical Education - coordinating the formal development of the only industry-endorsed national skills standards for aerospace technicians, and the nation's ONLY performance-based hands-on aerospace technician certifications.

He developed educational launch activities in support of workforce initiatives at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station Complex 47, promoting aerospace technician career development as a profession. To date, Dr. Koller has led the only educational launches ever flown from the Cape.

"This award is incredibly meaningful as Dr. Gamble was my colleague, sponsor and most importantly, my friend," said Dr. Al Koller, Executive Director for SpaceTEC at Brevard Community College. "SpaceTEC would not have happened without him, and if he were with us today, he'd be the one receiving this award. This award demonstrates to everyone the continued support of the EDC to business education as a key element of the organization's economic development initiatives. By acknowledging educators in this way, the EDC and its partners give substance and purpose to our work at SpaceTEC."

"The presentation of these two awards further demonstrates the tireless efforts and commitment of these community leaders to economic development on the Space Coast," said Lynda Weatherman, president and CEO of the Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast. "The EDC thrives on the work of its volunteers and community partners and we are extremely grateful to have the opportunity to present these awards."

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About the Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast

The Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast is dedicated to attracting new business and investment and expanding existing industry throughout the Space Coast, influencing change on government laws and regulations affecting economic development, promoting the Space Coast to encourage new investment, supporting efforts of Space Coast military installations, and relaying new programs and procedures to assist manufacturing and high tech companies. The EDC is a private, not-for-profit coalition whose stakeholders are business leaders committed to the economic growth and stability of Florida's Space Coast. Visit

www.SpaceCoastEDC.org.

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