



CONTACT:  
PEDA  
Email: [info@peda.org](mailto:info@peda.org)  
Phone: 717.441.6047  
Fax: 717.236.2046

## PRESS RELEASE

---

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **PEDA Announces 2021 Economic Development Awards**

**King of Prussia, PA (October 7, 2021)** – During its annual fall conference, held this year at the *Valley Forge Casino Resort*, the Pennsylvania Economic Development Association (PEDA) honored a number of individuals and organizations for their demonstration of outstanding accomplishments in economic development.

On behalf of the PEDA Awards Committee, Chair James Becker, Executive Director of the Economic Progress Alliance of Crawford County, congratulated recipients of 2021 PEDA Membership Awards, thanking them for “shining a bright light on the meaningful work being done by economic development professionals across the Commonwealth.”

A summary of awards presented is as follows:

- **President’s Award**

Andy Skrip, longtime Vice President of Industrial Development for the Scranton Lackawanna Industrial Building Company (SLIBCO), who retired in early 2021, was recognized for his commitment, leadership and dedication to economic development in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Over the course of a nearly fifty year career, the bulk of which was spent representing SLIBCO, Mr. Skrip managed the development of seventeen local business, office and technology parks, totaling 2,558 acres, and the construction or renovation of nine buildings, totaling one million square feet. A true champion of economic development, Mr. Skrip has previously been recognized as PEDA’s “Developer of the Year”, while SLIBCO has been recognized for PEDA’s 2011 Project of the Year award, as well as being named PEDA’s Large Agency of the Year on multiple occasions.

- **Developer of the Year Award**

Supporters say one would be hard pressed to name someone who has had more of an impact on economic development projects in her community in recent years than Bette Brown Slayton. With projects her organization (Bedford County Development Association) has directly touched having resulted in over 4,000 new jobs and approximately \$3 million in annual property taxes, Slayton’s impact is unquestioned. From her successful efforts to convene stakeholders from her region to involvement with a nationally recognized restoration of a major historic landmark to her efforts to recruit one of the first regional distribution centers built on the East Coast by one of the world’s largest retailers, Slayton is being recognized for the significant role she plays in economic development across all sectors throughout Bedford County.

- **Marketing Innovation Award – *The “Rebuild Berks” Campaign***

Greater Reading Chamber Alliance (GRCA) was recognized for the “Rebuild Berks” initiative, which focused on Berks County’s commitments to public health and safety and to restoring its economic health during the COVID-19 pandemic. GRCA led the way on this multimedia branding campaign, where all residents of Berks County, among others, were encouraged to buy local and to connect local. Through the utilization of billboards, paid digital advertising, print advertising, radio spots, video and a dedicated website, the campaign netted nearly 29 million impressions and reached more than 590,000 unique individuals (all the more impressive, given that the county is home to approximately 400,000 people). The Rebuild Berks website welcomed more than 69,000 unique individuals and has hosted more than 93,000 sessions. Learn more at [www.rebuildberks.com](http://www.rebuildberks.com).

- **Program of the Year Award – *Lehigh Valley Talent Initiative***

The Lehigh Valley Talent Initiative was launched in an effort to address identified workforce needs in the Lehigh Valley. Working with its partners throughout the region – and with the recognition that the ability to provide economic opportunity to residents of the region depends upon their collective ability to attract, cultivate and keep a workforce with the skills needed by current and future employers – the initiative has resulted in measurable successes, the strengthening of relationships between employers and educators and an elevated awareness of career pathways, just to name a few. This unique partnership between employers, school administrators, colleges, universities and economic and workforce agencies, has allowed for the development of cross-sector coalitions that address challenges associated with the development, retention and attraction of talent and allow the region to have a workforce that is career-ready. Learn more at [www.lehighvalley.org](http://www.lehighvalley.org).

- **Project of the Year Award – *The Berks Park 183 Phase 1 Project***

The decision by the Berks County Industrial Development Authority (BerksIDA) to move forward with building out the infrastructure of its latest industrial park, Berks Park 183, was made in the midst of great uncertainty. Ultimately, this project has become a notable success for the County, as it has produced 55 acres of shovel-ready land and serves as a model for other Pennsylvania communities. Further, the project resulted in the employment of as many as 50 construction and utility workers and, already, 80 percent of the site is under agreement for development and is expected to host between 400 and 800 permanent jobs once full build-out is complete. Learn more at [www.berksida.com](http://www.berksida.com).

### **About Pennsylvania Economic Development Association**

PEDA's mission is to promote sound economic development policies, provide leading-edge economic development education and nurture an effective statewide economic development network to foster the economic growth of the Commonwealth.

PEDA's membership is comprised of county and regional economic developers, state government economic development employees, workforce development professionals, utility and transportation executives, industrial development authority directors, industrial and technology incubator operators, chamber of commerce executives, municipal directors of community and economic development, engineering and construction executives, economic development finance professionals, commercial and industrial developers, and local, county and state elected officials. For further information, visit [www.peda.org](http://www.peda.org).