Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 31 August 2018 04:03

In June, Michael Sage, deputy director for Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation, based in Gallup, earned the designation of certified economic developer, a national recognition that denotes a mastery of skills in economic development, professional attainment and a commitment to personal and professional growth.

The CEcD exam was administered by the International Economic Development Council on June 23-24 in Buffalo, NY, at Buffalo Marriott HarborCenter. Sage was the only applicant from New Mexico to pass the exam. He joins GGEDC Executive Director Patty Lundstrom, who secured certification in 2016, as certified economic developers. GGEDC is the only economic development organization in New Mexico with 100 percent of professional staff as Certified Economic Developers.

The CEcD designation recognizes qualified and dedicated practitioners in the economic development field and sets the standard of excellence within the profession. Candidates must pass a rigorous and comprehensive examination, which has three parts and spans two days. The exam tests a practitioner's knowledge, proficiency and judgment in the following key areas of economic development: business retention and expansion; finance & credit analysis; marketing and attraction; strategic planning; entrepreneurial & small business development ; managing economic development organizations; neighborhood development strategies; real estate development & reuse; technology-led economic development; workforce development strategies.

As highly competent economic development professionals, certified dconomic developers work

with public officials, business leaders and community members to create leadership to build upon and maximize the economic development sector. Excellence in the economic development profession improves the wellbeing, quality of life and opportunities for individuals, businesses and communities. There are currently over 1,100 active CEcDs in the U.S.

The International Economic Development Council is a nonprofit membership organization serving economic developers. With more than 5,000 members, IEDC is the largest organization of its kind. Economic developers promote economic well-being and quality of life for their communities, by creating, retaining and expanding jobs that facilitate growth, enhance wealth and provide a stable tax base.

From public to private, rural to urban, and local to international, IEDC's members are engaged in the full range of economic development experience. Given the breadth of economic development work, members are employed in a wide variety of settings including local, state, provincial and federal governments, public-private partnerships, chambers of commerce, universities and a variety of other institutions. IEDC's members create high-quality jobs, develop vibrant communities and improve the quality of life in their regions.

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