



## The Voice of Economic Development

WEDA Newsletter – May 2019

*Working Together for Jobs & Economic Prosperity Across Washington State*

### Message from WEDA Board Chair, Jonathan Smith *Progress Abounds for WEDA – Please join us!*

Spring is in full swing and the State Legislature has adjourned its session Sine Die. As you will read about in the Legislative Wrap Up in this newsletter, WEDA has really cranked up the volume as your Voice of Economic Development in Washington, and it is paying off. **Thank you** to the many WEDA members who participated in one of our three WEDA Advocacy Days in Olympia, met with, wrote to or emailed your legislators. It made a tremendous difference!

We had a record-setting WEDA Winter Conference in Olympia in March, doubling our attendance and sponsorships, and engaging attendees with substantive programming. **Thank you** for those who joined us – you could feel the new energy and the networking buzz throughout the conference.

Our new consultant team has brought new ideas, energy and a strategic approach that is elevating the commitment to economic development statewide. We already have 16 new members for 2019, and we are working hard to continue to grow our membership.

WEDA recognizes that while Washington State has enjoyed an unprecedented economic boom, there are many communities across the state that are still struggling, and several counties with unemployment rates over 9%. There are also pockets of serious poverty in our urban counties. WEDA believes we need to empower communities across Washington with the tools to be world-class economic engines and assist businesses large and small in becoming globally competitive. We believe the time is now to plan for the next economic downturn with proactive measures to sustain our economic vitality and strengthen the economic development ecosystem at the state, regional and local levels.

WEDA is the only trade association in Washington laser focused on economic development, and it is a small but mighty non-profit organization. We need your engagement and ideas as we continue to serve you and strengthen WEDA! WEDA is committed to working with you to retain, expand and recruit jobs and investment across Washington State. If you haven't already done so, please join our WEDA team as an investor for 2019, and once you do, join us on the Legislative Committee, the Conference Planning Committee or the Communications & Marketing Committee.

I am looking forward to seeing you at our Summer Conference at the beautiful Suquamish Clearwater Resort in Kitsap County, August 7-8. **Please join us!**

Let's keep *Working Together for Jobs & Economic Prosperity Across Washington!*