



Washington Economic Development Association (WEDA)
Economic Development Awards Program
Celebrating Outstanding Achievements in Economic Development

Nomination Category: Emerging Professional Award

Award Nominator, E-mail Address, and Phone Number: CenterFuse Board of Directors,
ellensburgcenterfuse@gmail.com, (509) 962-7146

Name Person Nominated: Carolyn Honeycutt

Nominee's Name, E-mail Address and Phone Number: Carolyn Honeycutt, CenterFuse Executive Director, honeycuttc@ci.ellensburg.wa.us, (509) 962-7146

In 500 words or less, please tell us why you believe this nominee should receive this award:

Carolyn Honeycutt came to Ellensburg in 2010 as the new Main Street Director for a struggling organization, increasing the budget by almost 300%, leading projects that inspired over \$27M in public and private investment in the economic core of the city. She developed business training and entrepreneur development programs, as well as events and programs to promote economic vitality. In 2018, Carolyn's work earned Ellensburg recognition as a top 10 Great American Main Street finalist.

In 2018, Carolyn became the executive director of CenterFuse, the City's business development authority, a nine-member volunteer board of community members. The entity had stagnated and the City directed a complete overhaul of the organization. Under Carolyn's leadership, the board has a vibrant new mission and a vision for economic prosperity and values to support both the mission and vision; a new brand and marketing plan articulate and promote mission, vision, and values. Carolyn has worked with the board to restore accountability and financial transparency. A new strategic plan and work plan guided this work and have set CenterFuse on an exciting path forward, curating growth the City is already receiving from neighbors to the west, and growing entrepreneurship and stability for existing businesses.

Carolyn's Executive Director position includes oversight of the Ellensburg Arts Commission, which she has helped to restructure meetings and public art policies. Organizationally her position is housed inside the City Community Development Office, ensuring maximum coordination with city planning. Under Carolyn's leadership, CenterFuse undertook the full and detailed rewrite of the economic development portion of the community Comprehensive Plan—the first in a decade. On behalf of CenterFuse, Carolyn is continuing this work, helping City staff to evaluate community land use and zoning policy. Her knowledge will inform the CenterFuse's next big project, "gamifying" the navigation of permitting and land use guidelines for new and expanding businesses and developers.

In addition to managing the volunteer board and coordinating development initiatives with the City, on behalf of CenterFuse Carolyn manages the Ellensburg Business Incubator and owns and manages a light industrial business park. In coordination with the board, Carolyn has updated all aspects of property management and development, including leases, budgeting, business recruitment, and property maintenance oversight for seven tenants. Over the past 12 months, Carolyn has worked with the board to complete a cost-benefit analysis of both facilities, in order to understand how best to leverage board and City resources to promote economic development.

Carolyn's expertise in promoting investment has helped CenterFuse position the City for new opportunity. In 2018 she helped complete the data collection and community description that resulted in the governor naming two census tracts in Ellensburg as Opportunity Zones. Recently Carolyn helped the CenterFuse board win a \$50,000 grant for Broadband Feasibility Study, from the Public Works Board. In July, Carolyn presented and received authorization for an increased Distressed Counties Sales Tax grant that will expand the capacity of CenterFuse to reach out to the community and to implement marketing strategies designed to support the strategic plan.





LEARN. DO. LIVE.

To: Suzanne Dale Estey, WEDA Executive Director

Bruce Kendall, WEDA Awards Committee Chair

From: Andreas Bohman, Vice President of Operations, Central Washington University

Re: WEDA Emerging Professional Award

It is my pleasure to support the nomination of Carolyn Honeycutt for the WEDA Emerging Professional Award. Carolyn is the Executive Director of CenterFuse, the business development authority for the City of Ellensburg. I have worked with CenterFuse recently on two exciting initiatives: the recruitment of CI Security to Ellensburg, and the successful application to the Washington State Public Works board for a \$50,000 grant for an analysis of broadband capacity and access.

Carolyn was appointed executive director of the City's business development authority in 2018. At that time, the board lacked a mission or vision that recognized the current business environment of the community. Carolyn led the work to overhaul the organization, including a full brand refresh that emphasized innovation, collaboration, and a welcoming approach to business support and recruitment.

That approach was most evident when the cybersecurity company, CI Security, approached the City about locating an office in Ellensburg. Carolyn reached out to CWU to set up a tour of a new computer science facility. This might seem like a regular occurrence, but it was the first time I had ever been included in such an event. The meeting was very positive and launched a relationship that produced not just a new office for CI Security, but internships for CWU students and jobs for our graduates.

CenterFuse reached out to CWU again in the effort to secure a grant to fund the analysis of and recommendations for improving Ellensburg's broadband eco-system. CenterFuse considers this a critical step in positioning the City for economic development in the IT sector, as well as for business development and resiliency, public services, and education. Rather than considering CWU a competitor or rival, she has embraced the university to leverage the knowledge and experience we can bring to the work of CenterFuse. Her efforts resulted in full funding of this important analysis.

Carolyn's leadership has truly been transformational, positioning CenterFuse as a community resource and force for innovation in economic development. Carolyn is bringing agencies, businesses, and people together and infusing new energy to the work of promoting prosperity in our community.

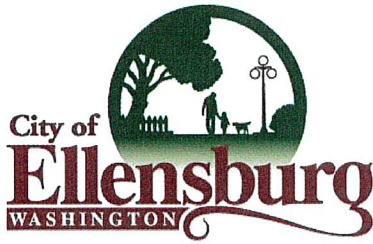
Kind Regards,

Andreas Bohman
Vice President of Operations

Vice President of Operations

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This is an electronic communication from Central Washington University.



CITY OF ELLENSBURG
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January 2, 2020

Suzanne Dale Estey, Executive Director
Bruce Kendall, Awards Committee Chair
Washington Economic Development Association
3213 West Wheeler Street #424
Seattle, WA 98199

Re: WEDA Nomination— Emerging Economic Development Professional

Dear Ms. Estey and Mr. Kendall:

This is to support the nomination Carolyn Honeycutt as the WEDA Emerging Economic Development Professional.

Carolyn came to the City with a proven track record of leadership and community engagement having led the growth of Ellensburg's Downtown Association for 7 years. Those skills and commitment to our community have become the springboard to re-energized and focused economic development for the City. Successful economic leadership starts at the top. Carolyn's efforts have been critical in recruiting active, knowledgeable, engaged Board members to further the work of Ellensburg's Public Development Authority. At the same time, stronger partnerships have been forged with Central Washington University, the County Chamber of Commerce, and our current business community. She has managed to balance the demands of business recruitment while supporting the equally critical task of local business retention and support. The strategic plan developed with the PDA and endorsed by the City Council truly provides a template for growth and successful economic development for our community.

Simply put, Ellensburg is investing in economic development. Without Carolyn, those investments would not be as successful as they are. Her skills as an economic development professional have emerged and are demonstrable as the City points to economic development success.

We appreciate your consideration of this nomination and would be glad to provide any additional information needed.

Sincerely,

Bruce L. Tabb
Mayor



BASALT

January 2, 2020

Good Day,

I would like to convey my endorsement for Carolyn Honeycutt, who serves as the Economic Development Manager for the City of Ellensburg, as well as Executive Director of Centerfuse, here in Ellensburg, Washington. Carolyn was the dynamic force behind economic development in downtown Ellensburg, during her tenure as the Executive Director of the Ellensburg Downtown Association. She expanded that focus to include all of Ellensburg, with her transition to the bigger roles for the City and Centerfuse. Carolyn has a passion for economic development that has resulted in significant successes during her tenure in the positions she has held over the past decade.

I can attest personally to the impact of her efforts. I have spent my career in the hospitality industry, having worked on the development and openings of dozens of hotels and resorts in the mainland US, Caribbean, Hawaii and the south Pacific. In 2014, after moving to Ellensburg, I had the beginnings of a plan to develop a hotel in downtown Ellensburg. I met Carolyn early in that process. Her professionalism and passion soon convinced my wife and I that we were on the right track. Carolyn helped us meet the right people and opened the right doors to get the project started. That effort led to a Downtown Marketing Study that identified the need for a hotel, a feasibility study that confirmed the potential. inevitably that led us to the development of the 51-member partnership that has now built Hotel Windrow and Basalt, a \$15,000,000 hotel and food and beverage facility that will become the centerpiece for downtown Ellensburg. The project is the single largest investment in downtown in nearly 20 years. The impact that Hotel Windrow and Basalt will have on economic development in this area is immeasurable and significant. Without question, the development would not have happened without the effort and expertise of Carolyn Honeycutt during the early stages of the project.

It is easy to say that a community wants economic development. At the end of the day it takes the commitment and passion of professionals like Carolyn Honeycutt to make it happen. I heartily endorse Carolyn's efforts as an **Emerging Economic Development Professional**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steve Townsend", with a large, stylized initial "S" and a long horizontal flourish.

Steve Townsend
Managing Partner and General Manager
Hotel Windrow and Basalt