



Washington Small Business Development Center

Dear WEDA Selection Committee,

I am pleased to submit this letter of reference in support of Allan Peterson for this award recognizing significant contributions to Washington State's business and economic development community.

As a Business Advisor with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Allan made sustained and meaningful contributions to economic development through his direct support of small businesses and his leadership in international trade engagement. Over his career he provided practical, results-driven guidance that helped businesses expand markets, increase revenues, and build long-term resilience.

One of Allan's most innovative contributions was his early identification and promotion of the SBA Portable Assistance Grant to support export readiness. His efforts to encourage and guide this funding directly enabled Washington small businesses to access export-focused resources that would otherwise have been out of reach.

Since 2016, Allan played a critical role in organizing and supporting trade missions and trade show participation across key global markets, including South Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, China, Mexico, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom. Through these efforts—both in-person and virtual—he prepared Washington companies for meeting foreign buyers and helped establish long-term international partnerships. He also strengthened export outcomes by fostering collaboration with the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA), the Washington State Department of Commerce, and other partners.

A clear example of Allan's impact is his work with Cascade Milling, an organic flour producer based in Royal City, Washington. Cascade Milling participated in the first trade mission supported by Washington SBDC and WSDA, where Allan helped prepare the company for marketing their product and relationship-building with South Korean buyers. Through sustained engagement over several years, Cascade Milling has established a solid export relationship and regularly ships ocean containers of organic flour to South Korea.

Allan's contributions stand out for their consistency, strategic focus, and measurable results. His work has delivered lasting benefits to Washington's business and economic development community well beyond his retirement. For these reasons, Allan exemplifies the spirit and intent of this award and is highly deserving of this recognition.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Christy Mastin

Letter of Support for Alan Peterson

I am writing to offer my strongest possible support for the nomination of Allan Peterson for WEDA's Economic Development Advocate of the Year Award. Allan's career with the Washington State Small Business Development Center spans more than two decades, and his impact on communities, entrepreneurs, and the broader economic development ecosystem in Washington State is both deep and enduring.

I had the privilege of working closely with Allan during my time at the Grant County Economic Development Council, where he served as an SBDC advisor beginning in 2004. From the outset, Allan exemplified what effective economic development looks like at the ground level: patient, technically skilled, collaborative, and relentlessly focused on helping small businesses succeed. Over the course of his career, he helped small businesses access more than \$60 million in financing and played a critical role in the growth of Grant County's economy.

One of Allan's most significant contributions was his leadership in introducing small businesses to international trade and export opportunities. While working with Allan in 2014, he pioneered an innovative approach that connected Grant County's sister city relationship with Gunpo, South Korea, to targeted business export trade missions. Allan ensured that local businesses were prepared, supported, and positioned to build lasting international relationships that resulted in real sales and ongoing partnerships. The innovative model Alan developed was replicated and expanded across the state for more than a decade, breaking down barriers for small business to access international markets.

Allan's influence extended well beyond individual business support and export missions. The close working partnership between the SBDC and the Grant County EDC during this period became a model for effective collaboration between business advising and economic development organizations. That experience directly informed my later advocacy for stronger coordination between WEDA and the statewide SBDC network. The resulting collaboration has benefited both networks and strengthened Washington's overall economic development capacity, particularly in rural communities.

Allan Peterson is the definition of an outstanding economic development professional. His career reflects the values WEDA seeks to elevate, and I am proud to support his nomination without reservation.



Jonathan Smith, CEcD