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City of Hayward recognized for excellence in economic development initiatives

HAYWARD, Calif., Oct 10, 2024—The City of Hayward earned two prestigious international awards from the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) for its strategic use of federal funding in economic recovery initiatives and a unique partnership with California State University, East Bay.

The IEDC is a non-profit, non-partisan membership organization dedicated to serving economic developers worldwide. With a more than 4,500 members representing public and private organizations across the United States and around the world, IEDC is the largest membership organization for economic developers in the world. IEDC's independent panel of judges evaluated nearly 500 award entries before making award determinations.

Specifically, the City of Hayward was acknowledged and received two Silver Awards of Excellence in IEDC's Best Use of Federal Resources and Postsecondary Education Partnership categories at the IEDC 2024 Annual Conference on Sept. 16.

"The City of Hayward is setting the standard of excellence for economic development with its innovative programs. These two awards highlight Hayward's commitment to its community and demonstrate the transformative impact of economic development," said Nathan Ohle, IEDC President and CEO. "It is with great pride that IEDC presents these awards to the City of Hayward celebrating its leadership and innovation in the field of economic development."

The City's "Together for Hayward Economic Recovery Programs" earned a Silver Award of Excellence for its strategic use of federal resources. Leveraging \$2 million from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), these programs were implemented over three years, assisting over 200 businesses and more than 300 residents. The most notable of the 13 economic recovery programs include: Hayward Open for Business, Hashtag Hayward Grant Program, Gift Hayward – A Shop Local Gift Card Program, Point of Sale Grant Program, Restaurant Relaunch Program, Hayward Restore and Reopen, Learn to Earn and Small Business Assistance Grants. These programs aim to support small businesses, improve access to training and skill

development for the workforce and promote our business community. The small businesses that received funding or assistance through these programs collectively employ more than 2,900 people.

“Innovation Festival 2024” earned a Silver Award of Excellence for collaboration with the College of Business and Economics at California State University, East Bay. This inaugural event was the largest startup tech event in Hayward’s history. It brought together major partners of the community, California State University East Bay and the City of Hayward, while showcasing our community’s growing advanced manufacturing, biotechnology, AI and green technology sectors. The event featured startup pitches, a fireside chat on the latest technological trends and exhibits from startup companies with more than 300 attendees. Innovative technology companies that participated included Amazon Web Services, a global provider of cloud-based services, LG Nova, a social-impact business accelerator, Omatochi, a health company using technology for in-home care, Taelor, an AI-driven men’s fashion company, and Roybi, a company that has built an AI-powered smart toy robot. Student innovators had the opportunity to pitch their ideas for a chance to win \$10,000 in funding for their projects and up to \$50,000 in prizes. The free event was organized by The Smith Center for Private Enterprise Studies and the Up! Club, a student entrepreneurship and startup club that supports, encourages and provides resources for students to transform their ideas into reality.

To learn more about economic development at the City of Hayward, visit the Economic Development Division webpage [here](#) on the City of Hayward website.