

Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence recognized by Southern Growth Policies Board

TNCPE accepts 2010 Innovator Award for partnership with Tennessee Dept. of Economic and Community Development

Lexington, Ky. June 7, 2010 –The Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence and the Tennessee Three-Star Program (a program of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development) accepted a 2010 Innovator Award on Monday, June 7 from the Southern Growth Policies Board for their unique partnership assisting Tennessee communities.

The Innovator Award honors communities and organizations that work creatively to improve economic opportunity and quality of life on a regional basis. “The Three-Star/TNCPE partnership is an excellent example of a program that helps communities focus their local efforts on specific actions to improve quality and face the future,” said Ted Abernathy, Southern Growth Policies Board's Executive Director.

Three-Star maintains a close partnership with TNCPE, a nonprofit organization that uses the *Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence* to assess Three-Star communities’ strategic plans. TNCPE then provides coaching and feedback to help communities implement and improve their plans. The result is stronger communities that are more attractive to new business, more diverse economies and greater job opportunities.

“The Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence and the Tennessee Three-Star Program are true pioneers in the arena of local economic development,” ECD Commissioner Matt Kisber says. “Their one-of-a-kind partnership has made a true impact in our state’s communities, and we are quite literally setting the pace for community development efforts across the nation. I congratulate these two fine programs on their well-deserved recognition from the Southern Growth Policies Board.”

The 2010 Innovator Awards were presented in conjunction with Southern Growth’s 2010 Chairman’s Conference, “Driving the Next 20 Years: Maximizing the New Automotive Industry in the South,” held June 7-8 in Lexington, Ky. Hosted by Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear, the conference focused on the role the automotive industry can play in creating jobs and investment in the South.



“We believed all along this was an innovative approach to economic and community development, but winning the Southern Growth Policies Board Innovator Award for the state of Tennessee confirms it,” said Katie Rawls, president and CEO of TNCPE. “We’re delighted to receive the honor.”

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*The non-profit **Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence** is an economic development organization that provides regional organizations access to low-cost performance improvement education and services. This is done primarily through the framework of an awards program based on the Baldrige National Quality Program. In addition, TNCPE provides educational opportunities throughout the year, including the Excellence in Tennessee Conference in February.*

*Administered by the Department of Economic and Community Development, **Tennessee’s Three-Star Program** assists local communities in their efforts to achieve excellence in community and economic development. Participating communities are guided through a comprehensive plan of essential criteria developed by local economic development professionals and a cooperative collaboration of various state agencies. These combined efforts have made the Three-Star Program an important component of the state’s economic development strategy. For more information, visit tn.gov/ecd/CD_three_star.html or contact Laura Elkins, (615) 532-1910, laura.elkins@TN.gov.*

*The **Southern Growth Policies Board** is a non-partisan public policy think tank based in Research Triangle Park, N.C. Formed by the region's governors in 1971, Southern Growth Policies Board develops and advances visionary economic development policies by providing a forum for partnership and dialog among a diverse cross-section of the region’s governors, legislators, business and academic leaders and the economic- and community-development sectors. This unique public-private partnership is devoted to strengthening the South’s economy and creating the highest possible quality of life. Member states include: Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.*