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NEWS RELEASE

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VIRGINIA BEACH DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WINS INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR MARKETING CAMPAIGN

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) announced the 2010 award winners for the Excellence in Economic Development. The Virginia Beach Department of Economic Development (VBDED) received an Award of Excellence for its Powerful Forces at Work – *Wall Street Journal* advertising campaign in the category of Paid Ad Campaign for communities with populations of 200,000 – 500,000.

The marketing campaign was launched in 2009 to target and inform national businesses about the strategic business advantages of Virginia Beach. Print ads were developed to communicate key messages that appeal to business decision makers such as the cluster of the defense and engineering industries, the proximity to the Port of Virginia, our recession-proof economy and our pro-business environment. The ads ran in the *Wall Street Journal*, and each one highlighted one of the many powerful forces at work in Virginia Beach.

To support the advertising campaign, VBDED distributed video testimonials of Virginia Beach business leaders that also communicated these key messages via email blasts to select audiences. The distribution lists were built from attendees from marketing trips the department participated in, site selectors and target industries contacts. Every ad and email blast was tracked to measure the response rates and traffic to VBDED's website, www.yesvirginiabeach.com.

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VBDED wins international award for marketing campaign

“This is the most prestigious award in our industry,” says Warren D. Harris, Virginia Beach Economic Development director. “We competed with economic development entities across the world. To receive an award for our work is a tremendous complement, but we are even more pleased that these marketing efforts have worked. During a very sluggish economy, Virginia Beach has been able to show strong and steady growth to bring new businesses to the city, increase capital investment and add jobs. The strength of the marketing campaign has helped us to leverage limited funds with a strong message that resonates with our target market.”

“We recognize Virginia Beach Department of Economic Development for providing successful strategies to promote new paradigms in economic development in this period of global recovery,” said William Best, IEDC chair. “Our awards honor organizations and individuals for their efforts in creating positive change in communities. The Virginia Beach Department of Economic Development is showing that they are at the forefront of the economic development profession and are using innovative and effective practices that can be replicated in other communities.”

IEDC's Excellence in Economic Development Awards recognize the world's best economic development programs and partnerships, marketing materials, and the year's most influential leaders. These 28 awards honor organizations and individuals for their efforts in creating positive change in urban, suburban, and rural communities. Winners were recognized at IEDC's Annual Conference on September 27 and 28 in Columbus, Ohio.

The mission of the City of Virginia Beach Department of Economic Development is to attract and retain national and international business and industry that results in the creation of new capital investment and jobs that increase the per capita income in the community. The City of Virginia Beach is the most populous city in the Commonwealth of Virginia with a population of 440,908 and is the 42nd largest city in the United States. Virginia Beach has been recognized as having one of the 10 best economic development groups in the nation by *Site Selection* magazine. In 2006, Virginia Beach was named one of the 10 best big cities in America by *Money* magazine. In 2008, the Department of Economic Development received re-accreditation through the International Economic Development Council, one of only 25 economic development organizations in the world to have this recognition. For more information, visit yesvirginiabeach.com.

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