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MARTY FITTANTE AWARDED INAUGURAL ADVOCATE FOR ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT FROM THE MICHIGAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPERS ASSOCIATION

Lansing, Michigan – April 10th, 2025 – The Michigan Economic Developers Association (MEDA) held its inaugural Economic Development Impact Day on April 10th, at the Heritage Hall at the Michigan Capitol. The legislative conference was built around highlighting the significant contributions of its members and the pivotal role of the legislature, administration, and state departments in driving successful economic development priorities in Michigan’s communities. Another inaugural event taking place was the presentation of the first Advocate for Economic Advancement award. Marty Fittante, the Chief Executive Officer of InvestUP, was the honorable first recipient.

The award was developed by MEDA’s Advocacy Committee to recognize a strong advocate for economic development advancement that has a proven record of support for economic development in a service area, region, or the entire state.

The Advocate for Economic Advancement meet the following criteria:

- **Impact:** Demonstrated success in advocating for policies, programs, or initiatives that support economic development and/or evidence of influencing decision-makers and stakeholders to advance economic development priorities.
- **Innovation:** Proven track record of innovative approaches or ideas that have advanced the profession and creativity in addressing economic development challenges.
- **Commitment:** Dedication to community improvement by advancing economic development opportunities for quality of life and willingness for long-term involvement in economic development activities.
- **Leadership:** Skilled at collaborating with diverse groups including government, business, community and the public with the ability to develop and implement economic development strategies and best practices.
- **Community Impact:** Tangible results and positive outcomes to include improvements at the local, regional, state, or federal levels, attributed to the nominee’s work.

Nominated by Mary Myers, Director of Economic Development Services at the Lake Superior Community Partnership, Marty has helped attract over \$130 million to the Upper Peninsula, impacted thousands of jobs, and support hundreds of businesses across the region. His success stems not just from what he accomplishes, but how, by building trust, fostering collaboration, and breaking down barriers to create

lasting, inclusive solutions. The nomination detailed a lengthy list of accomplishments and praise since Marty took the helm as the first CEO of InvestUP in 2019.

“There are few individuals who work harder, care more, and advocate more effectively for their place in the world than Marty Fittante. As great as he is as an economic developer and zealous advocate for his place, he is a better human being. He epitomizes the best of teamwork and public service,” Quentin L. Messer, Jr. is the Chief Executive Officer, President and Chair - Michigan Strategic Fund, Michigan Economic Development Corporation.

Aside from his work at InvestUP, Marty is also the Economic Development Leaders of Michigan Chair and on the Citizens Research Council of Michigan’s Board of Trustees and was most recently appointed by Governor Whitmer to the Growing Michigan Together Council as co-chair of the Job, Talent, People Workgroup to bring a voice to the issues and opportunities in the Upper Peninsula, and all rural Michigan, as they advise Governor Whitmer on specific policies to grow Michigan’s population.

We look forward to seeing Marty’s continual impact in Michigan’s great Upper Peninsula and on the state as a whole.

ABOUT MEDA

The Michigan Economic Developers Association has partnered with economic developers to grow their community in Michigan for over 60 years. By providing education, networking, and advocacy, MEDA makes it possible for professionals to do their job more effectively and efficiently. To learn more, see www.medaweb.org.

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