

Downtown Fresno Partnership wins 2015 Downtown Merit Award

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During its annual conference and trade show, the International Downtown Association (IDA) recognized the Downtown Fresno Partnership with a Downtown Merit Award for work related to the I Believe in Downtown Fresno campaign.

The I Believe in Downtown Fresno campaign was among 19 qualified entries in the category of Marketing and Communication. This category highlights plans or strategies that used print, electronic media, or multimedia efforts to promote downtown and further the value of city centers.

A coalition of community advocates launched the I Believe in Downtown Fresno campaign in 2013 to raise awareness about the importance of a vibrant downtown to the health of the city. Campaign leaders met with over 1,600 residents, held 50 meetings in homes, churches, offices and public spaces, and organized a rally in support of city council's vote to restore traffic to Fulton Mall.

The campaign has inspired renewed interest in downtown Fresno as evidenced by the increased investment in downtown, the I Believe signs that hang in storefront windows and residential yards throughout the city, and the 2015 Triple-A Champion Fresno Grizzlies sporting the logo on their jerseys this season.

"I have always said that an intentional effort must be made to win the mindset battle over downtown Fresno and I can't think of a better example than the I Believe campaign," said Fresno Mayor Ashley Swearingin. "The Downtown Fresno Partnership is showing the entire community what a little pride and lots of passion can do and I congratulate their entire organization for bringing international recognition back home to Fresno."

"The Downtown Fresno Partnership received the IDA Merit Award for delivering excellence in downtown revitalization," said David Downey, IDA president and CEO. "Each year the IDA Awards Jury recognizes organizations that utilize best practices in our industry. The I Believe in Downtown Fresno campaign is a shining example of outstanding community partnerships, delivering real value to the city."

The I Believe campaign helped spark a renaissance in downtown Fresno: In the last 18 months, downtown Fresno has seen over \$60 million of investment, the construction of nearly 200 apartments, a dozen new businesses and the opening of Fresno State's downtown campus.

"The Downtown Fresno Partnership is receiving this award on behalf of the hundreds of individuals, business owners and community leaders who have been tireless advocates for the rebirth of downtown Fresno. It's an honor to be recognized by the International Downtown Association for the progress that we've made by coming together as a community," said Aaron Blair, president and CEO of the Downtown Fresno Partnership.

To celebrate downtown Fresno's first international award, the Downtown Fresno Partnership and Tioga-Sequoia Brewery are throwing a party. The event is free and open to the public and will be held Oct. 14 at the Tioga Sequoia Beer Garden, located at 745 Fulton St.

