



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NEWS RELEASE**

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**2012 CDFA Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient Announced  
-- Distinguished Leader Gary Smith Recognized by Council --**

Columbus, OH – The Council of Development Finance Agencies (CDFA) is proud to announce the recipient of the 2012 CDFA Lifetime Achievement Award. This year's winner will be presented the award during a special ceremony at the 2012 CDFA National Development Finance Summit in Washington, DC on August 2, 2012.

Two years ago, the CDFA Board of Directors created the CDFA Lifetime Achievement Award. The CDFA Lifetime Achievement Award is given to individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the development finance industry throughout their professional career. In order to be eligible, candidates must have made innovative and lasting contributions that have had an impact on the way development finance programs are operated, managed and administered. Individuals may also be eligible for the award if they have made a significant legislative contribution to the advancement of new development finance tools, strategies and approaches. This year, the Council is recognizing one very distinguished leader. The recipient of the 2012 CDFA Lifetime Achievement Award is:

**Gary W. Smith**, a graduate of West Chester University with a MA in Public Administration, began his economic development career in 1976, as Assistant Director of the Chester County Development Council. In 1979, he was promoted to Executive Director, and in 2005 advanced to President/CEO. Gary has pioneered award-winning programs of below market-rate financing, agricultural economic development, brownfields redevelopment, conduit funding for commercial construction, industry partnerships, urban revitalization and multi-agency collaboration. During his tenure, the Council has secured over \$200 million in external funding for over 320 projects ranging from regional economic revitalization to workforce development. Throughout Gary's 32 years at the Council, its programs and services have created over 110,000 new jobs, helped to retain more than 135,000 existing jobs, and acquired \$7.5 billion in commercial financing loans. Over 6,500 new businesses have been established in Chester County during this period.

Today, the Council employs over 40 economic development specialists who help businesses located in Chester County and throughout Pennsylvania to grow and prosper. In 1986, Gary created a nine-county regional association of economic development corporations to promote regional cooperation, facilitate public policy making and establish innovative financing programs for area businesses. Gary also serves as Executive Director of the Chester County Industrial Development Authority, the Central and Western Chester County Industrial Development Authority, the Chester County Economic Development Foundation and the Public Safety Training Foundation.

In his efforts to assist the Chester County business community, Gary has guided the activities of many county organizations. He was Executive Director of the Business & Industry Chamber for Chester County and established the first countywide Chamber of Commerce for Business and Industry. He also founded and directed the Southeastern Economic Development Company of Pennsylvania (SEED Company of PA), a regional cooperative SBA 504 lending corporation. He served on the Board of Directors of the YMCA and many other organizations. In 1988, Gary was named Chester County Citizen of the Year.

Gary is a former President of the Council of Development Finance Agencies, the Council for Urban Economic Development, the Commercial Industrial Investment Council of Chester County and the American Economic Development Council. In his spare time, Gary is active in his church and in the Eagle Scout program. He manages his family's farm, raising a herd of cattle and avidly hunting waterfowl. A devoted family man, Gary is the husband of Victoria Smith and father of sons Bradford and Adam.

"It is an honor to recognize Gary for his lifetime of achievement in the development finance industry. Gary represents the very best of our industry and his accomplishments have been felt throughout CDFA and our industry. CDFA has enjoyed countless successes with Gary leading many efforts over the years, and our industry is stronger today due to his commitment, dedication and support." said Toby Rittner, CDFA President & CEO.

In honor of his recognition, Gary will be presented a special award at the 2012 CDFA National Development Finance Summit and recognized nationally through this press release. CDFA is honored to have a distinguished leader, like Gary Smith, as the 2012 recipient of this award.

*The Council of Development Finance Agencies is a national association dedicated to the advancement of development finance concerns and interests. CDFA is comprised of the nation's leading and most knowledgeable members of the development finance community representing public, private and non-profit entities alike. For more information about CDFA, visit [www.cdfa.net](http://www.cdfa.net) or e-mail [info@cdfa.net](mailto:info@cdfa.net).*

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