



San Diego
Regional
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NEWS RELEASE

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SAN DIEGO REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION NAMES MARK CAFFERTY AS PRESIDENT & CEO

SAN DIEGO (December 20, 2011) – Following an extensive search process, Mark Cafferty, President & CEO of the San Diego Workforce Partnership, has been named the new President & CEO of the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation (EDC), according to EDC Board Chair Debra L. Reed.

Cafferty will succeed Interim President & CEO Bill Geppert, who took over after the retirement of Julie Meier Wright this past June. He will assume the position on February 1, 2012.

“A nationwide search, conversations with economic development directors in numerous major metropolitan areas and deep consideration about how to best fulfill the organization’s mission led us to a very clear conclusion,” said Reed. “Mark is the right leader to take this organization to the next level in a fast-changing world.

“We wanted a leader who clearly understands the urgency of regional job creation and has the proven ability to foster collaborations between like organizations. Obviously, we also wanted someone who fits well with the existing organization,” added Stath Karras, chair of EDC’s Search Committee.

Cafferty will head an organization with a current fiscal year budget of approximately \$3 million and 13 employees.

“I am really looking forward to this opportunity to apply so much of what I have learned to a more dynamic, entrepreneurial environment,” said Cafferty. “I see this as a chance to have an even broader impact on the region, move at greater speed to launch new initiatives, and build on what my predecessors – Julie Meier Wright and Bill Geppert – have put in place.”

Wright headed the organization for 15 years before her retirement.

“The position requires someone who can clearly execute major initiatives, such as developing a comprehensive economic development information system with statistical data, industry information, and community linkages to facilitate expansion projects, retain existing businesses, and/or attract new companies to the region. Mark did that at the Workforce Partnership, where he built a labor market information and research division from scratch,” Karras concluded.

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Cafferty joined the Workforce Partnership in 2001, becoming Chief Operating Officer in 2006. He was named Interim President & CEO in January 2008, winning the job on a permanent basis that July. Since then, he has increased the workforce training organization's budget by more than 30 percent, managed a one-time award of \$25 million under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and secured more competitive grants than at any time in the past six years.

This month, he was recognized as the *San Diego Business Journal's* Most Admired Nonprofit CEO. He is also one of *The Daily Transcript's* Top Influentials for 2011.

"He embodies the best possible combination of next-generation vision, proven success running a large organization focused on job creation, exceptional intellect, and the passion and energy to get results," said Reed. "We are very lucky to have him join us."

Cafferty, 40, has more than 18 years' experience in creating jobs and fostering job growth. He served as the deputy director of the Boston Private Industry Council before moving to San Diego in 2001.

A Boston native, Cafferty earned a BA in Marketing and Communications from Assumption College in Worcester, MA and advanced certification in Performance Measurement and Non-Profit Management from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. In 2007, he was selected as a Center for Social Innovation Fellow for Non-Profit Leaders at the Stanford Graduate School of Business.

He is a member of the Board of Directors of EDC, South County EDC and CleanTECH San Diego, as well as chair of the EDC Foundation. Cafferty is also a member of the EDC Mega-Region Advisory Committee and CONNECT Policy Committee. He has worked closely with the EDC and all three sub-regional EDCs to create a proactive business retention program over the past three years to provide access to training programs and layoff aversion assistance. In addition, he worked directly with the EDC on several business recruitment and attraction efforts, including Disney, Soitec, Motorola Mobility and AT Still University.

Cafferty and his wife, Charlene Kakimoto, M.D., have two children and live in Point Loma.

The San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation is supported by more than 150 of San Diego's largest companies and most influential business leaders. EDC's mission is to promote the region for investment; attract, retain and help expand companies in the region; ensure the region's competitiveness for investment through a private sector-driven agenda that supports growth and expansion of high-wage, high-growth industries in the region.

Chartered by the County and City of San Diego, the San Diego Workforce Partnership funds job training programs through collaborations with more than 50 organizations and institutions, fostering economic growth and prosperity in the region. The San Diego Workforce Partnership serves as a critical source of information on the region's current and projected labor market, offering employers, job seekers, educators and trainers occupational data critical to regional job growth.