

2013 INDIVIDUAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNER

DARRELL BALKWILL, WHITECAP DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, SK



Darrell Balkwill is currently the CEO of Whitecap Development Corporation for the Whitecap Dakota First Nation, located 26 kilometers south of the City of Saskatoon. He grew up in Saskatoon, receiving his Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Saskatchewan. Darrell has owned a number of successful businesses over the last 20 years and currently owns businesses in the health, transportation and real estate sectors. In 1986, Darrell began employment with the Saskatoon Tribal Council as their Economic Development Officer. He worked with the seven member First Nations for 17 years assisting in the establishment of community economic development programming, planning and project development. In September 2003 Darrell joined Whitecap Dakota First Nation as the Director of Economic Development and has since been involved in additional economic development initiatives and investments to improve the economic sustainability of Whitecap and its members. Darrell plays a critical role in establishing new partnerships and creating new business ventures to enhance the Whitecap Dakota First Nation economy.

Darrell has been involved and assisted in various economic development related strategic and investment plans. In his current capacity as CEO of the Whitecap Development Corporation, Darrell led the company through the successful implementation of numerous development initiatives, including; Dakota Dunes Hotel development; Dakota Dunes Golf Links expansion for a Club House; Saskatoon Tribal Council Casino Holdings, and; Whitecap Commercial Real Estate development. Most recently, Darrell played a key role in the creation of the Lake Diefenbaker Tourism Destination Area Plan. This resulted in the growth of both local and provincial tourism economies as well as millions of dollars in private and public investment in tourism focused infrastructure.

Darrell believes in preserving a strong sustainable community and works with the Whitecap Dakota First Nation Chief and Council to make Whitecap Dakota First Nation a lead and best practice to achieving economic success. Today, Whitecap Dakota First Nation boasts the lowest unemployment rate within all Saskatchewan First Nations communities. With his extensive experience and the success of the numerous development initiatives he has been a part of, there is no question that Darrell has played a key role in the economic success of the Whitecap Dakota First Nation and the surrounding region.