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## Zimmermann Named State Tourism Director of the Year

The National Council of State Tourism Directors (NCSTD) has named Michigan's George Zimmermann the State Tourism Director of the Year for 2011.

"During his tenure at the MEDC, George has led the team that created the award-winning Pure Michigan brand, taking the campaign to a national audience since 2009," said Michael A. Finney, President and CEO of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. "These efforts have resulted in increased visitor spending at Michigan businesses, more jobs for Michiganders and more revenue for the state of Michigan."

The campaign, created in 2006, has helped highlight Michigan as a national tourism destination. 2010 saw spending by out-of-state visitors increase 21 percent and surpass that of Michigan residents for the first time. The travel and tourism industry generated \$17.2 billion in Michigan last year and helped create an estimated 152,600 jobs statewide.

The NCSTD, an affiliate of the U.S. Travel Association, has recognized a State Tourism Director of the Year each year since 1970, "to honor a tourism director that has clearly influenced the obvious and measurable improvement of a state or territory's 'travel and tourism profile' with their leadership."

Zimmermann is the first Michigan tourism director to receive this recognition, and he is the only person to be so honored twice – he was State Tourism Director of the Year in 1997 while serving as Ohio's director of tourism.

"This award is particularly gratifying to me because it comes from my peers, the state tourism directors around the country," said George Zimmermann, Vice President for Travel Michigan at the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. "I am both thankful and humbled by their recognition of our work."

Zimmermann joined the MEDC as the Vice President for Travel Michigan in 2001. In addition, he is an officer, executive committee member and board member of the U.S. Travel Association, and he serves on the U.S. Department of Commerce Travel and Tourism Advisory Board.

Travel Michigan, part of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, is the State of Michigan's official agency for the promotion of tourism. Travel Michigan markets the state's tourism industry and provides valuable visitor information services. For Michigan travel news and updates, go to [michigan.org](http://michigan.org).

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation, a public-private partnership serving as the state's marketing arm and lead agency for business, talent and jobs, focuses on helping grow Michigan's economy. For more on the MEDC and its initiatives, visit: [MichiganAdvantage.org](http://MichiganAdvantage.org)

Travel Michigan is part of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.

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