



It's not easy winning big investment projects, especially in a recovering economy where states are desperate for jobs and competing fiercely with incentive packages, tax breaks, and work force development programs. Successful economic development leaders must make every effort to understand the drivers behind a company's expansion or relocation, match their assets to the company's needs, and make quick decisions. Only then can they survive the often-strenuous due-diligence process and close deals on high-value investment projects that lead to long-term economic growth, job creation, labor stability, and trustworthy relationships — and even the possibility of national or international recognition as a place to do business.

With that in mind, *Area Development's* annual Gold and Silver Shovel Awards recognize individual states for their achievements. This year, three states that were top achievers — Indiana, Michigan, and South Carolina — are being awarded Gold Shovels in recognition of projects undertaken in 2010 creating a significant number of high value-added new jobs as well as investment. Silver Shovels are being awarded to nine runner-up states in three population categories. The Silver Shovel Award recipients are Texas, North Carolina, and Georgia in the greater than 9 million

population category; Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Louisiana in the 4 to 9 million population group; and the fewer than 4 million population category is represented by Mississippi and Kansas.

## GOLD SHOVEL AWARDS

### Indiana

After winning Silver Shovels in 2008–2010, Indiana received its first Gold Shovel Award this year — a reflection of its business-friendly environment and talented work force. Key Indiana clusters include transportation, distribution and logistics, sustainable energy, IT, and advanced manufacturing.

Automotive continues to be a growing industry in the state, including “green” car manufacturing, such as Think North America's \$43.5 million plant in Elkhart that will produce electric cars. The biggest news is Chrysler Group expanding its transmission manufacturing facilities in Kokomo; this \$1.15 billion investment will enable production of advanced front-wheel drive automatic transmission for future vehicles and employ 400 workers.

“Kokomo has been the center of our power-train strategy for years and this additional investment reaffirms that position,” says Chrysler Group CEO Sergio Marchionne. “We're committed to this community and its work force and appreciate the support of the City of Kokomo.”

### Michigan

Michigan also received its first Gold Shovel Award after winning

