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**EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCES NEW SOUTHERN TIER REGIONAL DIRECTOR**

*Bonnie Palmer will serve as ESD's Director for the Southern Tier and Executive Director of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council*

Empire State Development (ESD) today announced Bonnie Palmer, who previously served as Business Development Specialist for Empire State Development's Central New York regional office, will oversee the Southern Tier regional office. As the new Southern Tier Regional Director, Ms. Palmer will work under the leadership of President, CEO & Commissioner Kenneth Adams, managing daily operations of the Southern Tier office in Binghamton and promoting economic development practices that both retain and attract businesses and create jobs in the region. In addition, Ms. Palmer will serve as Executive Director of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council (STREDC), where she will assist in coordinating the Council's activities and implementing the region's Strategic Plan.

"Bonnie Palmer is a veteran of ESD and brings more than a decade of experience in promoting and implementing our economic development practices and programs, which makes her the perfect fit to lead our efforts in a diverse, eight-county region like the Southern Tier," Commissioner Adams said. "With Bonnie's knowledge of the Southern Tier and familiarity with its industries and constituencies, we are confident in her abilities to advance our goals of fostering private sector growth, creating jobs, and strengthening the economy. Bonnie will also be a major asset to the Southern Tier Regional Council and her leadership will surely help with the implementation of the Council's vision and strategic plan to grow the regional economy."

In her former role as a Business Development Specialist for ESD, Ms. Palmer was mainly responsible for assisting with implementation of New York State economic development programs in the Central New York region. This included direct business outreach; program marketing; loan and grant origination for regional business attraction, expansion and retention

projects, as well as community and neighborhood revitalization efforts; providing technical assistance to businesses; and assistance with New York State certification of minority- and women-owned business enterprises. Prior to joining ESD, Ms. Palmer served as Director of Economic Development and Planning for the City of Geneva and as Executive Director of the Geneva Industrial Development Agency. Her experience also includes 15 years with the City of Syracuse in progressively responsible positions, including Economic Development Planner, Senior Economic Development Specialist, and several years as the Assistant Director of Economic Development for the city.

“I’m excited to take on this new role as ESD’s Southern Tier Regional Director and lead the State’s economic development efforts to attract investment, business development, and creation of new jobs to this diverse region,” said Palmer. “Under Governor Cuomo’s leadership, momentum has been building across New York State and the results are very evident in the Southern Tier, where we are seeing companies expand, communities working together to grow the economy, and – most importantly – thousands of new jobs being created and retained. It is an honor to be chosen to serve this unique region and I am eager to be on the ground working to provide new economic opportunities for New Yorkers. I am also excited to join the top-notch staff at the regional office and work with the extraordinarily dedicated co-chairs and members of the Southern Regional Economic Development Council.”

Robin Alpaugh, ESD’s Senior Project Manager in the Southern Tier who has served as Acting Regional Director since August 2013, will remain with the Regional Office and assist with the transition.

“Bonnie Palmer is an exceptional choice to lead the State’s business efforts in the Southern Tier and we are excited to work with such an experienced economic development professional as the new Executive Director of the Regional Council,” said STREDC Co-chairs Harvey Stenger, President, Binghamton University and Tom Tranter, President & CEO of Corning Enterprises. “As we look forward, Bonnie’s leadership will be critical as we continue building on the success of being recognized as a “Top Performer” two years in a row and the more than \$220 million we have secured for our region over the last three years. Bonnie’s expertise on the State’s programs and initiatives will make her a great leader for Empire State Development in our region and add significant value to the Council’s efforts to revitalize our small cities and rural communities, and strengthen the regional economy in the Southern Tier.”

Empire State Development (ESD) is New York’s chief economic development agency ([www.esd.ny.gov](http://www.esd.ny.gov)). The mission of ESD is to promote a vigorous and growing economy, encourage the creation of new job and economic opportunities, increase revenues to the State and its municipalities, and achieve stable and diversified local economies. Through the use of loans, grants, tax credits and other forms of financial assistance, ESD strives to enhance private business investment and growth to spur job creation and support prosperous communities across New York State. ESD is also the primary administrative agency overseeing Governor Cuomo’s Regional Economic Development Councils and the marketing of “I Love NY,” the

State's iconic tourism brand. For more information on Regional Councils and Empire State Development, visit [www.nyworks.ny.gov](http://www.nyworks.ny.gov) and [www.esd.ny.gov](http://www.esd.ny.gov).

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