

## **Empire State Development News**

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## **EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT NAMES NEW QUEBEC REP FOR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

Empire State Development Co-Chairmen Daniel C. Gundersen and Pat Foye today announced that Consultants MNC Inc., through its president Yves Gignac, have joined ESD's Office of International Business Development as the Trade and Investment Representative for Quebec, effective Dec. 1.

Mr. Gignac and his team will be responsible for assisting New York businesses that want to enter the Canadian market through the province of Quebec.

"Canada is New York State's largest country export market, with billions of dollars on exports in 2007," Chairman Gundersen said. "It is imperative that New York State be at the forefront of international business development if we are to realize our goals for revitalizing the Upstate economy. Yves's proven expertise in both private and public sectors will trumpet ESD's international push and give us the competitive advantage to compete in today's ever-changing economy."

"The strong Canadian dollar makes investment in New York products and companies attractive to Canadian consumers and investors," said Chairman Foye. "We are pleased that Yves will be joining our team as his background makes him ideally suited to maximize this opportunity to benefit New York's businesses."

The position includes identifying agents and distributors in Quebec for New York firms and evaluating products and markets, as well other general assistance to New York firms interested in entering or expanding into Quebec. Additionally, he will be tasked with attracting Canadian foreign investment from the province of Quebec to New York State.

In 2006 New York State exports to Canada totaled \$12.2 billion, an increase of 14 percent from 2005 levels. Industrial machinery, including computers, accounts for the top export to Canada, totaling \$1.7 billion.

An area in particular need of improvement is reversing the trade deficit with Canada. Although the country is New York State's top market for merchandise exports, the trade balance is worsening with New York importing more from Canada than it is exporting.

A highly qualified individual, Mr. Gignac's career spans nearly 30 years in economic development and investment and promotions strategies. His past employers include the City of Montreal, Montreal International and the Montreal Urban Community.

Mr. Gignac earned a Bachelor of Commerce degree from Concordia University in Montreal, Quebec. From 1992 to 1994 he was recognized by his peers and was awarded the Montreal region's Economic Development Professional of the Year from the Quebec Association of Economic Development Professionals. He is a past director of the British-Canadian Chamber of Trade and Commerce, the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Canada, and the Belgium and Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Canada and has served on numerous other boards in Canada and Europe. M. Gignac was also among the first to support the creation of the association Americans in Montreal.

Mr. Gignac is fluent in French and English. He has been married for more than 25 years, has three children and lives in Pierrefonds, Quebec.

Empire State Development is New York's chief economic development agency, encompassing business, workforce and community development. ESD also oversees the marketing of "I LOVE NY," the State's iconic tourism brand. For more information, visit [www.nylovesbiz.com](http://www.nylovesbiz.com).

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