



NEWS RELEASE

SBA Number : 04-17-0503

Release Date: Immediate

Contact: Susan Chang

714-550-7420 x 3808

e-mail: Susan.chang@sba.gov

Rose Girard is the SBA's Women in Business

Advocate of the Year

SANTA ANA, CALIF - Rose Ramirez Girard, President and CEO of Phoenix

Construction Services, and resident of Riverside, CA has been named the Women in Business Advocate of the Year 2004 by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Santa Ana District Office. Ms. Girard was also selected as a Regional Champion for SBA's Region IX which includes California, Hawaii, Arizona, Nevada and Guam. District Director Sandy Sutton said when announcing her selection, "Rose is a leader in the community, a smart business woman, and a strong advocate for women business owners. We salute her achievements."

Girard was nominated by Steve McAdams, Assistant Director at the Inland Empire Small Business Development Center for "her business foresight, motivation and success." Girard had to overcome many challenges in the male-dominated railroad construction industry. By discovering a niche in railroad maintenance Phoenix Construction has impacted the entire industry by changing how contracts are bid. As a result, railroad maintenance is an integral part of the overall scope of the railroad construction industry. With her highly trained workforce, Girard has solidified Phoenix's position in the railroad construction industry today.

Girard believes in giving back to the community. Through her membership in Women Incorporated she is featured as a speaker in a video where she shares her frustrations with the lending process and encourages women to apply for financing, particularly SBA guaranteed loans. With this video she has reached thousands of women at Women Incorporated conventions. Girard regularly speaks at Elementary and Junior High Schools to encourage young women to stay in school and consider the construction industry as a career. Rose was appointed by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors as Commissioner on The Status of Women and works with and mentors welfare to work individuals trying to enter the construction industry.

Girard is politically active influencing policy at the state and national level. She has testified before Congress and various Boards of Supervisors regarding policy changes effecting small, minority and women owned businesses. She has been to the White House for a briefing on the President's priorities regarding the transportation industry and met the Secretary of Transportation Federico Peña and other top administrative officials. She sponsored State Senate Bill SB1959 to correct unfair workers compensation classifications for her industry. She served as the National President of Women Construction Owners & Executives, advocating on behalf of women in the construction business.

Girard's volunteer efforts and activities in the community have been recognized by numerous organizations such as the Latin Business Association, which named her Latina Entrepreneur of the Year 2000 and the National Association of Women Business Owners Hall of Fame.

Girard will be recognized locally at the SBA Small Business Awards Luncheon on May 26, 2004 at The Grove of Anaheim, CA as part of a nationwide salute to small business. For further information on the luncheon please contact the Orange County Small Business Development Center at (714) 564-5200.