



NEWS RELEASE

North Florida District PRESS OFFICE

Release Date: April 13, 2004

Contact: Lola Kress (904) 443-1933

Release Number: 04-05

Internet Address: www.sba.gov/news/

SBA Prepares to Celebrate Small Business Week 2004

North Florida – The U.S. Small Business Administration’s annual National Small Business Week commemoration, SBA Expo ’04, will be held in Orlando, FL., May 19-21 at the Orange County Convention Center. The celebration honors America’s leading entrepreneurs, and includes the announcement of the *National Small Business Person of the Year*. Special events this year will include a small business expo, a business matchmaking event, business seminars, a town hall meeting, and award ceremonies honoring women entrepreneurs and state and national small business winners. Other highlights will include business industry leaders and speakers from trade associations, and state level and federal government.

“SBA Expo ’04 will celebrate the many contributions of the small business men and women whose hard work and perseverance have created opportunities for millions of Americans,” said Administrator Hector V. Barreto. “The SBA is proud to honor the entrepreneurial spirit that has helped strengthen the nation’s economy.”

SBA Expo ’04 is the culmination of national and regional events held to commemorate the SBA’s 50th anniversary, which was launched in September 2003, at the SBA’s National Entrepreneurial Conference & Expo in Washington, D.C. More than 3,000 participants from across the nation marked the agency’s 50th anniversary. A highlight of NECE was the inauguration of the SBA’s “Hall of Fame,” which honored nationally known companies that started with SBA assistance.

Regional events to note the agency’s 50th anniversary, *SBA’s Economic Growth Tour:*

Listening to America’s Job Creators will continue from January to April in locations throughout the country. The tour enables local entrepreneurs to discuss small business issues with Administrator Barreto, as well as their local bankers, venture capitalists, resource and trade partners, and local SBA office.

The North Florida District is comprised of 43 counties, including Orange County where the SBA Expo ’04 will be held. The North Florida District Office will help host the Expo along with SBA’s Headquarters Office in Washington, and SBA’s Regional Office in Atlanta. We will be honored to have small business week winners from across the country in Orlando. Several other small business week events will be happening across North Florida to celebrate the great success of small business. For more information on these events, please contact Lola Kress at (904) 443-1933 or lola.kress@sba.gov.

For more information and to register for SBA Expo ’04, visit the SBA Web site at www.sba.gov/50

For more information about all of the SBA’s programs for small businesses, visit the SBA’s extensive Web site at www.sba.gov.

###