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Connections

BUSINESS INFORMATION CENTER OPENS

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has announced that a Business Information Center (BIC) is now open in Indianapolis. Located at 2126 North Meridian Street, Indianapolis, the BIC will provide a one-stop location where current and future small business owners can receive assistance and advice Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

BICs combine the latest computer technology, hardware and software, an extensive small business reference library of hard copy books and publications and current management video tapes to help entrepreneurs plan their business, expand an existing business or venture into new business areas. The use of software for a variety of business applications offers clients of all types a means for addressing diverse needs.

In addition to the self-help hardware, software and reference materials, the BIC will have on-site counseling provided by the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE). These former business men and women lend their expertise and knowledge to assist clients with problems and issues confronting those starting, managing and growing a small business.

Counseling provides the one-on-one interaction which guides the small business owners to develop personalized plans of action leading to the right choices for their businesses. The BIC will also host a liaison with the Small Business Development Center Program which offers not only general, but

specialized, counseling and training. Additionally, materials from African-American, Hispanic-American, and Asian-American organizations will be available, as well as counselors from these organizations, on an appointment basis.

Individuals who are in business or are interested in starting a business can use the BIC as often as they wish at no charge. For the prospective business owner, visits to the BIC may be frequent, as they do the basic research necessary to reach the decision to start their business. Existing business owners may wish to use the BIC less frequently, but will find many resources aimed at business growth.

The BIC will add new materials and resources throughout the year as it becomes aware of special needs in the Indiana small business community. The BICs are also used to inform the public about new initiatives and programs offered by the SBA and to reach business owners who might not otherwise take advantage of SBA's programs and services. Every BIC has access to SBA Online, the agency's national electronic bulletin board and most have access to the Internet.



SBA Business Information Center
2126 North Meridian Street
Indianapolis
317-226-1212

Indiana MEDWeek Awards Presented

The U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) Indiana District Office has announced its selection for the state's 2002 Minority Small Business of the Year. David C. Woods, President, Bertram Electric Company, Indianapolis, Indiana, was awarded this honor at the SBA Awards Luncheon held September 5th at The Ashantii Room in Indianapolis.



David Woods

Indiana, was awarded this honor at the SBA Awards Luncheon held September 5th at The Ashantii Room in Indianapolis.

On September 13th, Woods was named the Regional Minority Small Business Person of the Year. Woods' award encompasses SBA's Region V which includes Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

Bertram Electric was formed in 1949 by John and Floyd Bertram. After the company changed hands a few times, David Woods became the majority stock holder in 1992 and then sole stock holder in 1996.

Mr. Woods brought 33 years experience in the electrical industry with him to the company. With David's vast amount of knowledge and skill, Bertram Electric Company has been able to overcome several obstacles, including identity, track record, and access to capital. By establishing and fostering solid relationships with prospective customers, the company has

established an outstanding reputation and track record.

Bertram Electric has also utilized many SBA programs and resources. The company's use of the SBA's 7(a) Loan Guaranty Program and the agency's 8(a) Program has assisted in its growth and success.

SBA Indiana District Director Jan Wolfe said, "David Woods is an outstanding role model for Indiana's minority communities. Mr. Wood's dedication and commitment to his business has served as the driving force to his success."

Additionally, a Rising Star Award was presented to Ifeanyi "Vop" Osili, partner, A2S04 Architecture, LLC, Indianapolis. This award recognizes newer minority entrepreneurs



Vop Osili

The SBA Awards Luncheon served as the highlight of Indiana's Minority Enterprise Development Week celebration. This year marks the 20th annual Proclamation of the President of the United States to recognize and promote the achievements of America's minority-owned businesses.

Albert Chen Receives District Director Award

Each year, since 1995, Indiana District Director Jan Wolfe has presented the District Director's Best Supporter Award during the annual MEDWeek Luncheon, to an individual who has demonstrated



Albert Chen

outstanding

support of SBA's goals and objectives for Indiana businesses.

This year's award went to Albert Chen, president, Telamon Corporation.

In addition to his promotion of SBA, Albert Chen is a strong supporter of education and personal growth and motivates his employees, and through them their children, to become productive citizens of the community. Chen has been a recipient of the Family Life Enhancement Award, presented by the Buchanan Counseling Center of Indianapolis' Methodist Hospital, for offering unique and creative family-friendly policies for its

employees. Chen is a leader in the local Asian community. He is an active participant in the local United Way, Girl Scouts of America, and Pacer Basketball Foundations, which supports inner city youth.



whose businesses have demonstrated innovation of product or service, continuous growth in sales and/or unit volume, and an exceptional ability to remain competitive.

WHAT FREE MONEY?

Frequently, individuals call the U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) asking for grants or "free money" to start their business. In many cases, they have read or heard about this free money and how easy it is to get, through late night talk shows or in some obscure publication. In most cases, the information is incorrect and misleading. In other cases, it is close to a scam, at times asking for money for additional information.

SBA and most other funding organizations in Indiana do not provide grants or "free money" for starting or developing a business. Although there are some grants available, they generally are targeted toward specific groups, types of organizations or activities. Let's take a few minutes to learn what we mean by targeted organizations, groups or activities.

SBA provides some grants, but they are generally provided to organizations to provide specific technical assistance to small business owners. These grants may be targeted to nonprofits or educational institutions. As an example, SBA funded grants and contracts to help small businesses develop and maintain a drug-free workplace. These awards went to nonprofit organizations and Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) who had demonstrated the capability to assist in this effort. More information on this program can be found by visiting the SBA Web Site at <http://www.sba.gov/news/drugfree>.

Other grant programs, such as the Small Business Innovation and Research Grants (SBIR), are coordinated through SBA but provided by other federal agencies including the Departments of Health,

Education and Agriculture. As an example, in 1998 Visual Computing Systems Corporation, of Greenville, Indiana, received a grant to work on the Segmented Electromagnetic Array (SEMA). SEMA technology, an innovation in rotary electric motors, has the potential to alter the way in which engineers design any kind of product that moves. Although a small business received a grant, it was for the development of a product identified by the government, rather than for the start-up of a business. Information on the SBIR program can be secured on SBA's Web Site at <http://www.sba.gov/sbir>.

Additionally, the State of Indiana provides state grant information on their Web Site at <http://www.accessIndiana.net>.

Financing for a small business can often be a confusing and difficult process. We hope that we can provide valuable information that will dispel many of the myths and help individuals position themselves to start or grow a successful small business in Indiana. For additional information on the process of financing, including grants, loans and other SBA resources, contact the nearest SBA Indiana District Office at (317) 226-7272 or visit the SBA's Web Site at www.sba.gov.

SBA LAUNCHES NEW SPANISH-LANGUAGE WEB SITE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

The U.S. Small Business Administration has announced the launch of its new Spanish-language Web Site. The site is aimed at reaching the growing Hispanic business community and the Spanish-speaking community at large with a business tool to help current and aspiring owners to start

and grow their businesses successfully.

The site, www.sba.gov/espanol, responds to the needs of a segment of the U.S. population that, according to the Census 2000, has grown to become the largest ethnic minority in the country, with more than 35 million people. According to statistics gathered by a leading Spanish-language Internet provider, 78 percent of all Hispanics have access to the Internet.

"Reaching the Spanish-speaking small business community is an important priority for the SBA," said Administrator Hector V. Barreto. "Users visiting our new Web Site will find information on how to start and grow a business as well as learn about our valuable programs and services."

Minority-owned businesses account for more than 15 percent of all businesses in the United States. Of those, the largest share, 39.5 percent (or close to 6 percent of the total) are owned by Hispanics. Hispanic-owned businesses employ around two million people and contribute more than \$200 billion annually to the U.S. economy.

The site will initially have approximately 80 pages covering relevant issues such as writing a business plan, starting your own business, financing your business, technical assistance, accessing government contracts, signage and information for women entrepreneurs. Also, the site will include its own search engine to make it easier for users to find information and will provide links to other government Spanish-language Web Sites.

The SBA Spanish-language Web Site is an ongoing project and will continue to add relevant business information as it becomes available. "Our goal is to continue to add more information to the Spanish-language Web site over the next few months so that it complements our main Web Site at www.sba.gov," added Barreto. "The SBA is the nation's small business resource and we intend to be a leading resource for the Spanish-speaking community in the U.S. as well."



VICE PRESIDENT ADMINISTERS OATH OF OFFICE TO NEW CHAIR OF THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S BUSINESS COUNCIL

Marilyn Carlson Nelson, chairman and chief executive officer of Carlson Companies, was sworn in September 17, 2002, by Vice President Dick Cheney at the White



Marilyn Carlson Nelson

House as the new chair of the National Women's Business Council (NWBC).

Nelson, a prominent woman business owner in Minnesota, will serve as the NWBC's chief adviser to the President, the Administrator, Congress and the Interagency Committee on Women's Business Enterprise on economic issues, policies and programs that encourage women's business ventures.

"Marilyn comes to this position as one of the most successful CEOs," said Vice President Cheney. "Under Marilyn's leadership, the council will continue to be a source of common sense, practical advice."

Established in 1988, the NWBC serves as an independent source of advice and counsel on matters of importance to women business owners and on the effectiveness of programs and policies designed to support women-owned businesses.

The National Women's Business Council has always played an important role in amplifying the voice of women business owners," said SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto.

"I am committed to increasing opportunities for women and I look forward to working with Marilyn Nelson in implementing our shared vision for success into the 21st century."

As chair and chief executive officer of Carlson Companies, Nelson has direct management responsibility for one of the largest privately held corporations in the world. The company's brands and services, which include Radisson Hotels & Resorts, T.G.I. Friday's restaurants, Radisson Seven Seas Cruises, Carlson Marketing Group and Carlson Wagonlit Travel, employ more than 188,000 people worldwide. *Fortune Magazine* has named Carlson Companies one of the "100 Best Companies to Work for," *Working Mother Magazine* has included the company in its 2001 "100 Best Companies for Working Mothers" list, and *The Business Journal* of Minneapolis recently named the company a "great place to work."



The SBA has been instrumental in helping small businesses succeed in a competitive marketplace. In FY 2001, the SBA backed 9,967 loans worth \$2 billion to women entrepreneurs under the 7(a) and 504 loan programs.

Women entrepreneurs have become a significant force that is shaping the new economy of the country. There are 5.4 million women-owned businesses in the United States according to U.S. Census Bureau data. They employ 7.1 million people and generate nearly \$820 billion in revenues. The Center for Women's Business Research estimates that, as of 2002, there are 6.2 million women-owned businesses employing 9.2 million workers and generating \$1.15 trillion in revenues.

Additional information about the NWBC can be found online at www.nwbc.gov.

Indiana's Employers Are Small Businesses New Report Shows

Ninety-Seven Percent Of All Employers Are Small Businesses

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Small business continues to be Indiana's employer, according to a new report issued by the Office of Advocacy of the U.S. Small Business Administration

(SBA). The most recent data show that over 97% of the state's employers are small businesses and that they employ close to half of the private workforce.



Thomas Sullivan

"Strong small businesses are vital to the health of Indiana's economy," said Thomas M. Sullivan, Chief Counsel for Advocacy. "It's no wonder that Hoosiers look to Main Street to provide jobs and community support, especially during uncertain economic times," he continued.

Small business dominates several sectors of Indiana's economy. For example, in construction 99.3% of firms are small, while 98.1% of businesses in professional, scientific and technical services are small, as well as 97.9% of the firms engaged in health care and social assistance.

The report, "2002 State Small Business Profiles" also demonstrates how women and minority-owned small businesses contribute to the state's economy. The latest figures show that women own 25.9% of Indiana's firms and minorities own 5.5%.

The complete report, which presents a small business profile of each state, is available from the Office of Advocacy Web Site at www.sba.gov/advo.