



U.S. Small Business Administration

SANTA ANA DISTRICT OFFICE

News Release

Release Date: April 13, 2017

Release Number: 17-10-SA

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Maria Molina Solano Selected as 2017 Women in Business Champion of the Year

Advocate for women in business helps them start and grow, leveraging partners for entrepreneurial support

SANTA ANA, Calif. - The U.S. Small Business Administration, Santa Ana District Office has selected Maria Molina Solano as the 2017 Women in Business Champion of the Year. Solano resides in Rialto, CA and was nominated for this award by Evelin Martinez, Area President at Wells Fargo Bank in Corona, CA and Rossina Gallegos, Director and Foundation Officer, Union Bank.

Solano has worked in the nonprofit sector for over 25 years, advocating and developing programs to help small businesses start and grow. Solano is passionate about supporting minority, women and veteran small business owners. She leverages and partners with large corporations to recruit funds to support various entrepreneur programs. Her efforts and work focuses on financial education programs, access to capital and procurement opportunities.

Solano's successes include the development of the Latin Business Association Institute (LBAI), a grass roots organization that serves as an advocate for Latino businesses. Solano helped in securing funding via contracts and access to capital for the Latino business community.

As an advocate for the interests of small businesses, Solano serves in different organizations including the California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Los Angeles Unified School District Procurement Advisory Board. She also chaired the Transportation Board Advisory Committee for the Los Angeles County MTA and served as an Advisory Board member focusing on procurement and access to capital for the Women's Transportation Coalition.

Solano is currently the Executive Director of the National Latina Business Women Association, Inland Empire chapter. The organization's mission, to empower Latinas to develop their business and professional goals through education and collaboration, is a mission she takes to heart. Her diverse and well-rounded professional background, with more than 20 years in the banking industry, is well suited to services the organization provides such as training in financial literacy, leadership development, procurement opportunities and others.

As busy as she is, Solano still finds time to volunteer in the community. She serves as Ambassador for the American Red Cross and as an education volunteer for the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach.

Maria Molina Solano will be recognized and receive her award as 2017 Women in Business Champion of the Year at the local Small Business Week Awards program which will be held Friday, June 9, 2017 from 10:30 a.m. until approximately 2:00 p.m. at the Disneyland Hotel Grand Ballroom. The event is being hosted by the Orange County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. For more information on the event or to register, email events@ochcc.com or call 714.953.4289.

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About Small Business Week

Every year since 1963, the President of the United States has issued a proclamation announcing National Small Business Week, which recognizes the critical contributions of America's entrepreneurs and small business owners. More than half of Americans either own or work for a small business, and they create about two out of every three new jobs in the U.S. each year. As part of National Small Business Week, the agency takes the opportunity to highlight the impact of outstanding entrepreneurs, small business owners and others at local events around the country. Every day, these individuals are working to grow small businesses, create 21st century jobs, drive innovation, and increase America's global competitiveness. For more information, please visit www.sba.gov/nsbw/nsbw.