



NEWS RELEASE

MINNESOTA DISTRICT OFFICE

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SBA Honors Emerging 200 Initiative Graduates Small Business Who Are Impacting Minneapolis' Inner City

MINNEAPOLIS – The U.S. Small Business Administration Minnesota District Office will honor 19 small businesses participating in its Minneapolis Emerging 200 Initiative (e200) at a graduation ceremony scheduled for November 17, 2011, at Fredrikson & Byron, P.A., in the US Bank Building from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

In Minneapolis, one of 27 cities nationwide participating in the program, the 19 small businesses attended 13 three-hour training sessions, starting in April and ending in November. They will be the first graduation class of Minneapolis.

“Since small business drives our economy, the Emerging 200 Initiative constitutes one of the several undertakings where the SBA, in cooperation with our co-sponsors, have invested in upgrading the skills of e200 business,” said Nancy Libersky, Director of the Minnesota SBA District Office. “The MBA-style program is aimed at extending new tools and networking contacts to our graduates. They have had a great class experience and we are sure that the Minneapolis economy will benefit from their continued success,” said Libersky.

The program provided a mechanism to identify inner-city businesses nationwide that showed high potential for growth and to provide them the network, resources and motivation required to build a sustainable business within a designated inner-city geographic location.

“Entrepreneurs and small businesses are essential engines of economic activity and job growth in Minneapolis,” said Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak. “In these challenging economic times, programs like the SBA's e200 Emerging Entrepreneur initiative are invaluable to businesses in shaping successful growth strategies. Thanks go to the SBA and to Thrivent for providing the course and the venue to give this boost to 19 Minneapolis businesses, which are already putting the lessons to work.”

Minneapolis City Councilmember Lisa Goodman, Chair of the Community Development Committee said, “This was a great opportunity for Minneapolis businesses and their entrepreneurial leaders to have expert consultants help them shape their business growth plans. It will be great to see how they grow their small businesses in our City.”

The cornerstone of the e200 program in Minneapolis was a free in-depth 80-hour educational program which focused on topics such as organization management, financial management, growth strategies and management, market development and strategic planning. The program

also included CEO mentoring sessions among the participants. SBA contracted with Interise to conduct the executive training.

Glenn Ford, delivered the Minneapolis e200 curriculum. Ford worked with the e200 small business owners to produce a three-year strategic growth plan with benchmarks and performance targets for their individual businesses.

The graduates of the program are:

- Certus EDM LLC – James A. Watson
- CorAzon – Susan Zdon
- Flair Fountains – John Bean
- Gandhi Mahal – Ruhel Islam
- Guaranty Commercial title, Inc. – Wendy Ethen
- IpHouse – Bil MacLeslie
- kp Companies – Miquel McMoore
- Mag Mechanical LLC – Anthony Goze
- Maud Borup Inc. – Christine Lantinen
- Mill City electric, Inc. – Matthew Cina
- Nelson Electric, Inc. – Robert Nelson
- Olu’s Home Inc. – Gloria Freeman
- On-Demand Group, Inc. – Heather Manley
- Pedia Pals – Jonathan E. Powell
- Rani Engineering – Susan Rani
- Saffron Restaurant – Saed Wadi
- The Stratford Companies – Kristin Tongson-Hollander
- Tri-Construction, Inc. – Calvin Littlejohn
- Turkey Guys, Inc. – Andrew Levin

The selection of Minneapolis as an e200 city was a prestigious one. Eight cities nationwide were chosen to take part in this initiative in 2011. Along with Minneapolis, other e200 cities were Youngstown, Ohio; Fresno, Calif.; St. Louis, Mo.; Syracuse, N.W.; Farmington, N.M.; Honolulu, Hawaii; and Helena, Mont.

Those partner organizations joining the SBA District office to bring e200 to Minneapolis were:

- **Metropolitan Economic Development Association (MEDA)**
- **City of Minneapolis**
- **The SCORE Association**
- **Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)**
- **Federal Executive Board of Minnesota - SADBOC**
- **North Hennepin Community College**
- **Thrivent Financial for Lutherans**

Participation in e200 was free to qualifying business. Criteria for participation included having been in business for a minimum of three years, \$400,000 or more in gross annual revenues, and a business location within the geographic boundaries defined by the SBA.

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

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