



News Release

PRESS OFFICE

Release Date: August 15, 2008

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Release Number: 08-77

Internet Address: <http://www.sba.gov/news>

Ten Small Businesses Vie to be MED Week 2008 National Minority Small Business of the Year

MED Week Conference to feature International Trade Workshop and first-ever podcast

WASHINGTON – One of 10 nominated small businesses from across the nation will be named the National Minority Small Business Person of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration during the 26th National Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week conference in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 3-5.

This year's MED Week event will have a strong emphasis on international trade. MED Week 2008 will be held at the Omni Shoreham Hotel, and is co-hosted by the Minority Business Development Agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce and the SBA.

The theme of the conference, "*The Power of Strategic Alliances in the Global Economy*," will be the focus of the joint SBA and MBDA workshop, where participants will talk about the small business benefits of free trade agreements. Also on the workshop agenda is a discussion on the SBA's and the Department of Commerce's first-ever International Trade Symposium held earlier this year, and SBA's and Commerce's other international trade initiatives. The SBA also unveiled its first-ever podcast about MED Week, which consists of a joint interview with SBA Acting Administrator Jovita Carranza and Ronald Langston, the National Director of MBDA. The podcast can be accessed from SBA's MED Week Web page at: www.sba.gov/medweek2008/index.html.

The national winner is selected from among 10 regional winners this year representing Connecticut, New Jersey, Virginia, North Carolina, Illinois, Kansas, South Dakota, California, and Washington. The regional award winners have businesses that offer services ranging from communications, networking and video distribution technology services to providing structural engineering services for bridges.

"We are celebrating the talented individuals who provide innovative products and services to the private, federal and commercial sectors, create jobs in their communities and stimulate the nation's economy," said SBA Acting Administrator Jovita Carranza. "We already know that small businesses share an entrepreneurial and competitive spirit. During this year's MED Week event, we're going to help minority businesses channel that spirit into business opportunities in the global markets."

Held annually since 1983, MED Week recognizes minority businesses' contributions to the nation's economy. In this year's proclamation, President George W. Bush urged all Americans to join together in honoring minority entrepreneurs across the country in appropriate observances.

In addition to announcing the national minority small business award winner, the SBA will present other awards including the SBA Administrator's Leadership award and the 8(a) Graduate Firm of the Year award.

Other features of the conference include:

- White House Reception for award winners (Invitation Only);
- MED Week Welcome Reception and recognition of Billion Dollar roundtable members;
- *Meet Your White House* breakfast with keynote address by Ambassador Susan C. Schwab, the United States Trade Representative;
- Business-to-Business Linkage Forum where small businesses are paired with government agencies and private sector companies to discuss potential contracting opportunities (pre-registration required and invitation only from 2:30-5p.m. on Sept. 5);
- MED Week Business Expo and Trade Show to provide opportunities to network from 2:30-8p.m. on Sept. 4; and
- Award ceremonies to honor minority entrepreneurs, minority business advocates and leaders in the corporate community, including a closing MED Week awards gala.

The 10 Regional Minority Small Business Persons of the Year are:

REGION I

Lorenzo Cabrera
CEO
Cabrera Services, Inc.
East Hartford, CT

REGION VI

Gabriel Beltran
CEO
Skylia Engineering, Ltd.
Humble, TX

REGION II

Deborah W. Costanza
President
Technology and Management International
Toms River, NJ

REGION VII

Lonnie J. Williams
CEO
L&J Building Maintenance, LLC
Topeka, KS

REGION III

Robert Fitzgerald
President
UAV Communications
Newport News, VA

REGION VIII

Calvin (Larry) Pourier
President/Owner
Silver Creek Construction Corporation
Rapid City, SD

REGION IV

Peter Von Jess
Chairman
USfalcon, Inc.
Morrisville, NC

REGION IX

Kusum Kavia
President
Combustion Associates, Inc.
Corona, CA

REGION V

George Burciaga
President
Sunrise Technology, Inc.
Chicago, IL

REGION X

Santosh J. Kuruvilla, PE, SE, PMP
President
Exeltech Consulting, Inc.
Lacey, WA

For more details on this year's MED Week conference, please call 1-888-836-7647 or visit www.medweek.gov or www.sba.gov/medweek2008/index.html.