



NEWS RELEASE

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SBA CELEBRATES AMERICA'S BEST ENTREPRENEURS DURING NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK 2002

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Small Business Administration will honor America's top entrepreneurs and name the *National Small Business Person of the Year* during ceremonies in Washington, D.C., on May 5-8, marking National Small Business Week 2002.

The theme for this year's celebration, "**Small Business: Where America Works,**" honors the entrepreneurs contributing to this nation's economy by helping to create jobs.

"The SBA is proud to honor the men and women whose entrepreneurial spirit, dedication and hard work have helped to create jobs and fuel this economy," said SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto. **"Small business represents more than 99 percent of all employers in America. Small business truly is where America works, and these successful small business owners deserve recognition for their achievements."**

This year, National Small Business Week brings together an amazing cross-section of talented and creative small business owners from all over America who come together to celebrate their accomplishments in the nation's capital, from boat builders to IT services to specialty clothing manufacturers. The *National Small Business Person of the Year* is selected from 50 state Small Business Persons of the Year plus one each from the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam. Two runners-up are also selected.

At this year's event, SBA Administrator Barreto will host the forum "*Conversation with Michael Dell*," with Michael Dell, founder and CEO of Dell Corporation.

National Small Business Week 2002 also will offer a series of small business briefings exploring current trends helping to shape the small business economy, including technology, international trade and the regulatory environment. The briefings topics are the following:

- **Small Business Advocates: Easing the Regulatory Burden**
- **Pension Panel: Closing the Small Business Retirement Security Gap for Employers and Employees**
- **E-commerce: Building Enterprise with Technology**
- **Expanding Your Horizons in a Global Economy**

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The SBA also honors *Small Business Advocates*, individuals who have been advocates of minority-owned, women-owned and veteran-owned small businesses. In addition, awards go to a small business journalist and accounting and financial services representatives who contribute to small business development.

Additional special awards honor the *SBA Young Entrepreneur of the Year* and the *Small Business Exporter of the Year*. The *SBA Entrepreneurial Success Award* is presented to a company that has evolved into a large business with SBA assistance. The National *SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) Chapter of the Year* will also be honored.

The sponsors of National Small Business Week are America Online, Cisco Systems, Dell Corporation, FSB Magazine, Office Depot, The Hartford, Toyota Fleet and WorldCom.

Local trade associations, chambers of commerce and business organizations nominate state award winners and recipients of the advocate and special awards. During National Small Business Week, the winners meet with Bush Administration officials, members of Congress and leaders of national business organizations.

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*Additional Information on **National Small Business Week 2002** is available at <http://smallbusinesssuccess.sba.gov/>.*

For more information about all of the SBA's programs for small businesses, call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800-U ASK SBA or TDD 704-344-6640. Also, visit the SBA's extensive Web site at www.sba.gov.

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