

NEWS RELEASE

PRESS OFFICE

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Minority Small Business Person of the Year to be Announced During This Year's National MED Week Conference

*Annual Event Consists of Workshops, Networking Sessions and Recognition of
Top Minority Enterprises and Advocates*

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Small Business Administration will select and announce this year's national *Minority Small Business Person of the Year* during National Minority Enterprise Development Week (MED Week) conference, Sept. 11-14.

The national winner is selected from among 11 regional winners this year representing Massachusetts, Puerto Rico, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Mississippi, Wisconsin, Texas, Missouri, Colorado, California and Washington. The regional award winners have businesses that offer services ranging from environmental remediation and restoration projects to digital mapping solutions and assembly of military equipment.

The 23rd annual MED Week conference will take place Sept. 11-14, in Washington, D.C., at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. MED Week is an event hosted by the Minority Business Development Agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

"According to the latest data released by the U.S. Census Bureau, minority-owned businesses and women-owned businesses have been increasing at a rate much faster than the national average," SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto said. "These businesses are leading the way in economic growth and today we join MBDA in honoring minority-owned and women-owned businesses."

One of this year's highlights at MED Week will be the participation of Kwame Jackson, first runner-up from the first season of NBC's "Apprentice" reality show. Jackson will be a panelist in the opening business session, "The Art of the Deal: Making it Happen." During last year's MED Week conference, Jackson accepted an entrepreneur award for his achievements during the competition for the coveted executive position of one of Donald Trump's successful companies. Jackson is a native of Washington, D.C., and holds an MBA from Harvard University. He was formerly an investment manager for Goldman Sachs and he currently serves as chief executive officer of Legacy Holdings LLC.

MED Week, held annually since 1983, recognizes minority businesses' contributions to the nation's economy. In a proclamation this year, 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 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.

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This year's conference theme is "*The Art of the Deal: Making it Happen.*" The conference will feature:

- A social capital power networking reception with George Frazer, founder of the PowerNetworking Conferences;
- An Emerging Business Leaders Summit for youth and business plan competition;
- Workshops on how to protect your business assets and operations, and;
- Two panels moderated by the SBA to discuss the art of forging strategic business alliances and fostering business growth through government certifications.

Senior staff from the Bush Administration will be present each morning for the *Meet Your White House* breakfast sessions. The conference will also provide opportunities to network at the MED Week 2005 Business Expo. There also will be award ceremonies to honor minority entrepreneurs, minority business advocates and leaders in the corporate community.

Demand for the MED Week conference has been extremely high and registration is now closed. The conference is an invitation-only event. No walk-in registrations will be permitted and all events will be ticketed, except for the Business Expo which will be held on Sept. 13 from 9:00-12:00 and 2:15-5:00.

The 11 Regional Minority Small Business Persons of the Year are:

REGION I

Robert L. Delhome
President
Charter Environmental, Inc.
Wilmington, MA

REGION VI

Angel Renaldo Almodovar
President
Intuitive Research and Technology Corporation
Grand Prairie, TX

REGION II

Irving Aranda
& Eric Rodriguez
Partners
ARGA, S.E.
San Juan, PR

REGION VII

Byron L. McIntosh
President
Greenleaf Construction Company, Inc.
Kansas City, MO

REGION III(Tie)

Debra Ruh	Craig T. Williams
President	President
TecAccess	Pride Enterprises Inc.
Rockville, VA	Norristown, PA

REGION VIII

Lori Lynn Nevarez
President
Innovar Environmental, Inc.
Littleton, CO

REGION IV

Allen R. Hines
President
Applied Geo Technologies, Inc.
Choctaw, MS

REGION IX

Cynthia A. Liu
President
Engineering/Remediation Resources, Inc.
Concord, CA

REGION V

Jean Marie Thiel
President
Belonger Corporation, Inc.
West Bend, WI

REGION X

Joseph D. Lane
President
Pacific Tech Construction, Inc.
Longview, WA

For more details on this year's MED Week conference, please call 1-877-MEDWEEK or visit www.medweek.gov or www.sba.gov.