



News Release

PRESS OFFICE

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SBA Honors Massachusetts Business Owners Juan and Luis Yépez for Outstanding Disaster Recovery

ATLANTA –While on a European business trip in May 2006, Juan and Luis Yépez learned that the Merrimack River in Massachusetts was overflowing the riverbanks where their company, Mainstream Global, was located.

When they returned home to Lawrence, the brothers were stunned to find their 100,000-square-foot plant awash in sewage, water and the debris from ruined inventory and \$375,000 worth of computer equipment. The flood damage forced a three-month shutdown of the distributor of integrated circuits and computer products.

While the brothers were able to keep their staff of 12 on the payroll working as part of the “recovery team,” Mainstream Global was not fully operational and the company was hemorrhaging money. The pair received an Economic Injury Disaster Loan from the SBA, which allowed them to keep the business alive. The company not only recovered, but expanded to a staff of 32, with sales that exceed \$8 million annually.

Their display of resilience and ingenuity as they rose above the challenge of overcoming a three-month shutdown, while still managing to flourish in the midst of an economic downturn have earned Juan and Luis Yépez the **2009 Phoenix Award for Small Business Disaster Recovery**.

“The Phoenix Award is an acknowledgment of a business owner’s heroic effort and a recognition of the contributions they make to the economic recovery of their communities,” said SBA Administrator Karen G. Mills. “Juan and Luis Yépez displayed tremendous courage and resourcefulness in the aftermath of the flood, and they exemplify the spirit one must have to rebuild after a disaster like this.”

The Phoenix Award will be presented on May 19, 2009, during the U.S. Small Business Administration’s National Small Business Week celebration, May 17-23 at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Washington, D.C. Events can be viewed virtually through SBA’s free, live webcasting, which will be accessible at <http://www.nationalsmallbusinessweek.com/>. The site also includes additional information on National Small Business Week, including a detailed schedule and registration information.

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Since 1998, the SBA has given the Phoenix Award to business owners, public officials and volunteers who displayed selflessness, ingenuity and tenacity in the aftermath of a disaster, while contributing to the rebuilding of their communities.

The SBA makes low-interest, taxpayer-backed disaster loans to homeowners, renters, businesses and non-profit organizations of all sizes. More information about the disaster assistance program is available at www.sba.gov/disasterassistance.

For more information about National Small Business Week, visit www.sba.gov/sbw.

The U.S. Small Business Administration thanks the cosponsors of National Small Business Week and related events: SCORE, Sam's Club, Symantec Corporation, Ford, Raytheon, Administaff, Visa, Sage, Trend Micro, Lockheed Martin, Moran Media Group, Dun & Bradstreet, the Small Business Entrepreneurship Council (SBEC), the National Association of Development Companies (NADCO), the National Association of the Self Employed (NASE), and the Association of Small Business Development Centers (ASBDC).

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