



# NEWS RELEASE

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### ***VICE PRESIDENT ADMINISTERS OATH OF OFFICE TO NEW CHAIR OF THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S BUSINESS COUNCIL***

**WASHINGTON** – Marilyn Carlson Nelson, chairman and chief executive officer of Carlson Companies, was sworn in today by Vice President Dick Cheney at the White House as the new chair of the National Women's Business Council (NWBC).

Nelson, a prominent woman business owner in Minnesota, will serve as the NWBC's chief adviser to the President, the Administrator, Congress and the Interagency Committee on Women's Business Enterprise on economic issues, policies and programs that encourage women's business ventures.

**“Marilyn comes to this position as one of the most successful CEOs,”** said Vice President Cheney. **“Under Marilyn’s leadership, the council will continue to be a source of common sense, practical advice.”**

Established in 1988, the NWBC serves as an independent source of advice and counsel on matters of importance to women business owners and on the effectiveness of programs and policies designed to support women-owned businesses.

**The National Women’s Business Council has always played an important role in amplifying the voice of women business owners,”** said SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto. **“I am committed to increasing opportunities for women and I look forward to working with Marilyn Nelson in implementing our shared vision for success into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”**

Nelson added: **“I am thrilled to be chosen to lead the National Women’s Business Council. Helping women establish and grow their businesses throughout the country is an opportunity that is immensely important to me, personally and professionally.”**

As chair and chief executive officer of Carlson Companies, Nelson has direct management responsibility for one of the largest privately held corporations in the world. The company's brands and services, which include Radisson Hotels & Resorts, T.G.I. Friday's restaurants, Radisson Seven Seas Cruises, Carlson Marketing Group and Carlson Wagonlit Travel, employ more than 188,000 people worldwide. *Fortune Magazine* has named Carlson Companies one of the "100 Best Companies to Work for," *Working Mother Magazine* has included the company in its 2001 "100 Best Companies for Working Mothers" list, and *The Business Journal of Minneapolis* recently named the company a "great place to work."

Carlson Companies was founded in 1938 as the Gold Bond Stamp Company. Nelson served in various management positions with the company and was named chief executive officer in 1998.

A second generation American of Swedish ancestry, Nelson is an active proponent of healthcare reform. She serves on numerous boards of major corporations, including the Exxon-Mobil Corporation and the Mayo Clinic Foundation. She served as the past president of the United Way of Minneapolis, and on the board of the United Way America. In 1984 she became the first woman to chair a United Way annual fund drive in a major city — Minneapolis.

Nelson is currently a member of the Council of the World Economic Forum and serves on the Forum's Board of Governors for Travel and Tourism. She served as the chair of the Travel Industry Association of America in 2000. Nelson graduated with honors from Smith College in international economics.

The NWBC's charge, relative to women's business enterprise, includes:

- Reviewing, coordinating and monitoring plans and programs developed in the public and private sectors that affect the ability of women-owned business enterprises to obtain capital and credit;
- Promoting and assisting the development of a women's business census and other surveys of women's business enterprise;

- Monitoring and promoting plans, programs, and operations of federal departments and agencies that contribute to the establishment and growth of women's business enterprise;
- Developing and promoting new initiatives, policies, programs, and plans designed to foster women's business enterprise, and
- Advising the Interagency Committee on its activities, functions, and policies and making annual recommendations for its consideration.

The SBA has been instrumental in helping small businesses succeed in a competitive marketplace. In FY 2001, the SBA backed 9,967 loans worth \$2 billion to women entrepreneurs under the 7(a) and 504 loan programs.

Women entrepreneurs have become a significant force that is shaping the new economy of the country. There are 5.4 million women-owned businesses in the United States according to U.S. Census Bureau data. They employ 7.1 million people and generate nearly \$820 billion in revenues. The Center for Women's Business Research estimates that, as of 2002, there are 6.2 million women-owned businesses employing 9.2 million workers and generating \$1.15 trillion in revenues.

Additional information about the NWBC can be found online at [www.nwbc.gov](http://www.nwbc.gov).

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*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, or visit the SBA's extensive Web site at <http://www.sba.gov>.*

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