



# *News Release*

## **PRESS OFFICE**

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## ***SBA's Disaster Assistance Customer Service Center Honored with National Awards***

**BUFFALO** –Seven employees of the U.S. Small Business Administration's Disaster Customer Service Center received awards last week from Buffalo's Federal Executive Board (FEB), and the center itself was honored at the national Government Customer Service Excellence Awards competition in Alexandria, Virginia.

The FEB's Excellence in Government program is an interagency regional competition that honors outstanding civilian and military Federal employees. SBA's Disaster Customer Service Center captured seven of the 24 awards given by the FEB.

The Customer Service Center also received the FEB's National Teamwork Award and the Overall Excellence Award.

"These awards recognize the Customer Service Center's abiding dedication to excellence and public service," said SBA Administrator Karen G. Mills. "The center serves the needs of home and business owners seeking financial assistance from SBA in the aftermath of national disasters, and complements SBA's overall commitment to recovery following a major economic upheaval."

The following individuals were recognized and received their awards at a luncheon held last week at the Buffalo Convention Center.

- **William E. Leggiero Jr.** won the Chairman's award for his dedication and commitment to the spirit and mission of the agency and public service.
- **Christopher Mercurio** and **Perry Pedini** took the Distinguished Executive award for their leadership, which showed responsibility for significant utilization of human and fiscal resources.
- **Jodi Cohn** accepted the Combined Federal Campaign Volunteer Key Worker award for her contribution of time, talent and energy during the CFC's 2008 campaign.

- **Melanie Connolly** captured the Direct Customer Service award for providing exceptional service to the public via the telephone and through electronic means.
- **Todd Carter** received the Distinguished Team Leader award for ensuring that work assignments of the team were carried out properly and timely.
- **Lawrence Lanza** was recognized with the Electronic Work Enhancement and Telecommunications Award for configuring, maintaining and enhancing the CSC's electronics/telecommunications work environment.

SBA makes low-interest, long-term 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](http://www.sba.gov/disasterassistance).

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