



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Sue Hensley (202) 205-6444

Internet Address: www.sba.gov/news/

SBA Announces Plans to Celebrate Small Business Week 2004

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Small Business Administration's annual National Small Business Week commemoration, SBA Expo '04, will be held in Orlando, Fla., May 19-21 at the Orange County Convention Center.

The celebration honors America's leading entrepreneurs, and includes the announcement of the *National Small Business Person of the Year*. Special events this year will include a small business expo, a business matchmaking event, business seminars, a town hall meeting, and award ceremonies honoring women entrepreneurs and state and national small business winners. Other highlights will include business industry leaders and speakers from trade associations, and state level and federal government.

"SBA Expo '04 will celebrate the many contributions of the small business men and women whose hard work and perseverance have created opportunities for millions of Americans," said Administrator Hector V. Barreto. "The SBA is proud to honor the spirit of entrepreneurialism that has helped strengthen the nation's economy."

SBA Expo '04 culminates national and regional events held to commemorate the SBA's 50th anniversary, which was launched in September 2003, at the SBA's National Entrepreneurial Conference & Expo in Washington, D.C. More than 3,000 participants from across the nation marked the agency's 50th anniversary. A highlight of NECE was the inauguration of the SBA's "Hall of Fame," which honored nationally known companies that started with SBA assistance.

Regional events to note the agency's 50th anniversary, *SBA's Economic Growth Tour: Listening to America's Job Creators*, will continue from January to April in locations throughout the country. The tour enables local entrepreneurs to discuss small business issues with Administrator Barreto, as well as their local bankers, venture capitalists, resource and trade partners, and local SBA office.

For more information about SBA Expo '04, visit the SBA Web site at www.sba.gov/50.

For more information about all of the SBA's programs for small businesses, visit the SBA's extensive Web site at www.sba.gov.

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