



News Release

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President Bush Proclaims National Small Business Week, Small Highlights Business Owners' Hard Work

WASHINGTON – Calling small business the backbone of the nation's economy, President George W. Bush stressed his Administration's efforts to foster "an environment in which the entrepreneurial spirit can thrive" in his proclamation of the week of April 20-26 as National Small Business Week.

The President's proclamation was issued on the eve of the U.S. Small Business Administration's 45th annual observance of National Small Business Week in Washington, D.C. and New York City (April 21-25). The event honors the nation's most outstanding entrepreneurs, and features the announcement of the National Small Business Person of the Year for 2008 from among the 53 state small business winners, including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam.

President Bush will meet with Small Business Week award winners at the White House Wednesday.

"In communities across America, small business owners are working hard to turn their dreams into enterprises," President Bush said. "Small Business Week is a time to celebrate the many achievements of small business owners, entrepreneurs, and employees who contribute to the vitality and prosperity of our Nation and create new job opportunities for our citizens.

"Small businesses are the backbone of the American economy, and my Administration is committed to fostering an environment in which the entrepreneurial spirit can thrive. By keeping taxes low, we leave more money in the hands of Americans to save, spend, and invest. This year, we have also temporarily expanded incentives to help small businesses invest in new equipment and expand their enterprises.

"We have also expanded market access and opened new markets for American goods and services abroad, helping our small businesses compete in the global economy. To make health care more affordable and accessible, we continue to support Association Health Plans so small businesses can band together to get the same discounts that big companies receive.

"The underpinnings of our economy are strong, competitive, and resilient enough to overcome the challenges we face, and in the long run, Americans can be confident that our economy will continue to grow," the President said. "During Small Business Week and throughout the year, we recognize the determination and ingenuity of America's workers and entrepreneurs who play a vital role in building a more prosperous future for our country."

(more)

The full text of the President's National Small Business Week proclamation can be found at:
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/04/20080418.html>.

National Small Business Week 2008 will begin with three days of events in Washington, D.C., at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, where more than 100 outstanding business owners from across the country will be recognized. In addition to the State Small Business Persons of the Year, men and women involved in disaster recovery, government contracting, small business champions as well as SBA partners in financial and entrepreneurial development will be honored.

The event also features a series of executive panel forums on Health Care, International Trade, Energy, and Finance. In addition, there will be a procurement session with corporate buyers and prime contractors who will discuss small business partnering and mentoring opportunities for small businesses seeking government contracts.

Among the featured speakers confirmed are former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, Secretary Mike Leavitt, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Ambassador Susan C. Schwab, United States Trade Representative; David Latimore of the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City; John Bryant of Operation HOPE; Michael Porter of Harvard University School of Business, other prominent business leaders, CEOs and politicians.

The public can "attend" Small Business Week events virtually, via the SBA's streaming video. All events will be available on SBA's free continuous streaming Web video at
<http://www.nationalsmallbusinessweek.com/>.

On April 24, Small Business Week moves to New York, where SBA will participate in the closing bell ceremony at NASDAQ to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Women's Business Center program, which has served more than 650,000 new and growing small business owners in the past five years alone. An awards event celebrating the top small business lenders and a financial forum on community investment, cosponsored with the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City, will culminate activities in New York City.

For more information about National Small Business Week, including a detailed schedule and information on the wide variety of awards and honorees, visit online at
www.NationalSmallBusinessWeek.com.

***Editor's note: All award winners are listed on the Web at
<http://www.nationalsmallbusinessweek.com/awards/>***

The U.S. Small Business Administration thanks the following cosponsors of National Small Business Week and related events: Sam's Club, Administaff, Raytheon, IBM, Chevron, The Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, Cisco, Lockheed Martin, Salesforce, Lowe's, Banco Popular, Minority Business Development Agency, General Service Administration, MyBizHomepage, Dun & Bradstreet, National Association of Development Companies, Direct Selling Education Foundation, Association of Small Business Development Centers, National Small Business Association, Federal Allies Institute, SCORE, Initiative for a Competitive Inner City, National Federation of Independent Businesses, Consumer Energy Alliance, and FedSources.

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