



News Release

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U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION AND LOS ANGELES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HONOR SMALL BUSINESSES ACCELERATING ECONOMIC RECOVERY

*29th Annual Small Business Awards Recognize 13 Local Entrepreneurs and Small Business
Champions in conjunction with National Small Business Week Observance*

LOS ANGELES, CA. – The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) today announced the Los Angeles District Office winners at the 29th Annual Small Business Awards event co-sponsored by the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce.

This year's competition presents awards to 13 entrepreneurs and small business champions in the Los Angeles area who are helping to drive the regional economy and accelerate economic recovery. The luncheon, awards presentation and networking reception will be held today (**Thursday, June 17**) from **11:00 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel at 506 South Grand Avenue in downtown Los Angeles.**

Entrepreneurs and small business owners from various industries competed from Los Angeles, Ventura and Santa Barbara counties and were nominated by local trade associations, chambers of commerce and business organizations. Local winners continued onto the regional and national level with the finalist honored at the White House with President Obama and SBA Administrator Karen Mills. A full listing of the 2010 award winners with bios is available at: <http://www.sba.gov/ca/la/index.html>.

"The SBA commends the 2010 winners for their hard work and dedication," said Adelberto Quijada, Los Angeles SBA acting district director. "Their success is a testament to the innovative spirit of entrepreneurs everywhere and what can be achieved during trying times. These local small businesses are not only pointing the way to our economic recovery – they are driving our economic recovery."

"Small businesses are a powerful and positive force on our economy," said Gary Toebben, President & CEO, Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce. "The L.A. Area Chamber is proud to serve small businesses, and we applaud this year's award winners for their contributions in helping to drive our economic recovery."

The 2010 Small Business Awards luncheon is made possible in part through the contributions of supporters including:

2010 supporters include: Bank of America; Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses; Beach Business Bank; JPMorgan Chase; Southwest.com; Union Bank; Wells Fargo; Excel National Bank; The Gas Company, a Siempra Energy utility; Long Beach City College; Metropolitan Water District of Southern California; Southern California Edison; U.S. Bank; Verizon and several other supporting organizations.

The 2010 Small Business Award Winners include:

Small Business Person of the Year	Igor Pasternak Worldwide Aeros Corp. (Montebello, CA)
Small Business Exporter of the Year	Viken K. Momdjian Vitamec USA, Inc. (Van Nuys, CA)
Innovation Through Technology Business of the Year	Saskia Strick International Checkout, Inc. (Van Nuys, CA)
Family-Owned Business of the Year	Pete F. Huntsinger Huntsinger Ranch, Inc. (Santa Clarita, CA)
Small Business Journalist of the Year	John Krikorian Business Life Magazine (Glendale, CA)
Women in Business Champion	R. Christine Hershey Hershey/Cause (Santa Monica, CA)
Women in Business Champion (tie)	R. Christine Hershey Hershey/Cause (Santa Monica, CA) Shen Yen Sansonics Electronics (USA), LLC (El Monte, CA)
Veteran Small Business Champion	William M. Connell All American Surf Dogs (Carpinteria, CA)
Financial Services Champion	David M. Mellman USC Credit Union (Los Angeles, CA)
Minority Small Business Champion	Patricia Gracia Power Media Group (Santa Clarita, CA)
Entrepreneurial Success Award	Jay Kim Tornado Air Management (Temecula, CA)
Small Business Development Center Service Excellence and Innovation Award	El Camino College SBDC (Hawthorne, CA) Star Van Buren, Director
Women's Business Center of Excellence Award	Valley Economic Development Center (VEDC) (Van Nuys, CA) Marlen G. Bello, Director

The SBA Los Angeles District Office oversees SBA programs to over 12 million people in Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties. The office manages a total loan portfolio that financed more than 1,747 businesses in the amount of \$674.5 million this past fiscal year and generated annual contract procurements of \$438 million. In addition, the District Office supervises seven Small Business Development Centers, coordinates five chapters of the Service Corps of Retired Executives and oversees four Women's Business Centers.

The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce is the largest business association in Los Angeles County serving more than 1,600 member companies and the interests of more than 235,000 businesses across the county. The mission of the L.A. Area Chamber is to ensure full economic prosperity and quality of life in the region by being the voice of business, promoting collaboration and helping members grow.

The U.S. Small Business Administration's participation in this cosponsored activity does not constitute an express or implied endorsement of any cosponsor's, donor's, grantee's, contractor's or participant's opinions, products, or services. All SBA programs and cosponsored programs are extended to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis. Reasonable arrangements for persons with disabilities will be made, if requested at least 2 weeks in advance, by contacting sbw@sba.gov. Cosponsorship Authorization #SBW2009

The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce represents the interests of business in L.A. County. Founded in 1888, the Chamber promotes a prosperous economy and quality of life in the Los Angeles region. For more information, visit www.lachamber.com.

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