



## **Veteran Small Business Champion Receives SBA Regional Honor**

MINNEAPOLIS – Jack Scharrett, CEO and President, The VICTRI (Veterans’ Initiative Center & Research Institute), has been named the Minnesota Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year for the U.S. Small Business Administration’s Minnesota District Office as well as the upper Midwest Region.

The Veterans Small Business Champion Award is presented annually in each state to individuals who have fulfilled a commitment to advancing small business opportunities for Veterans of the U.S. armed forces. Sherri Komrosky, Executive Director of the Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) in Minneapolis, nominated Scharrett for this award.

The regional award winner is selected from among the state winners. In addition to Minnesota, SBA’s upper Midwest Region includes Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin.

Jack Scharrett started and leads The VICTRI, the first business services center and business incubator for small businesses solely for Veterans and their family members in the Twin Cities. Scharrett is the primary fundraiser for the non-profit organization by developing individual contributors and corporate sponsors, discovering and writing foundational and government grant proposals, and generating revenue for the long-term sustainment of the business. He also manages the finances of The VICTRI to ensure program funding, manage overhead costs and prepare for external audit. He is the primary coordinator of staff, volunteers and a wide variety of educational and lending partners whose combined efforts allow The VICTRI to provide its wide array of programs. Scharrett started and manages The VICTRI’s consulting practice currently advising 57 Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSB’s) and is the lead advocate for VOSB’s for The VICTRI to the United States and Minnesota Congresses as well as federal and state agencies.

Scharrett also serves in the United States Army Reserves as a Civilian Affairs Officer and Company Commander in the 407<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion, Arden Hills. While deployed to Iraq in 2005-'06, Scharrett assisted in establishing the Kirkuk Business Center (KBC) which is the flagship Business Center for the Iraq and the model on which 14 other business centers throughout that country are modeled. The Kirkuk Business Center not only provided jobs for local Iraqis, it also established a micro-finance office providing small investment payments to small businesses to help them get started. Through the KBC, Scharrett helped to start 7 Iraqi-owned small businesses including the largest agricultural co-operative in the country with over 750 member farmer families and effecting over 2.5 million hectares in the region south of Kirkuk. This co-operative is still functioning and having a positive effect on over 6 million Iraqis to this day.

Prior to deploying to Iraq, Scharrett had success as an entrepreneur, small business owner and consultant to for-profit companies. Getting early experience in sales and sales management, he was able to expand his experience by starting the regional office for an expanding technology company in San Francisco. Having responsibility for the management of the company's regional business, Scharrett not only was benefitting greatly from the massive on-the-job training he was receiving but also becoming more curious about the multiple disciplines in business. This led him to co-create a new venture with friends: Sportabilities Inc., which provided low-cost, highly marketable 3D motion-capture technology with many applications. After that success, Scharrett went on to start his own strategic business development consulting practice.

Growing up in the Hudson River Valley in New York Scharrett was accepted to the United States Military Academy at West Point and graduated from here in 1991. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Infantry and awarded a Bachelors of Science Degree in Civil Engineering with a second major in Political Science and international Relations.

Scharrett is married and lives with his wife, Kris, and beautiful new twins, Aria and Jackson.

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