

# Robbinsville Woman is honored as SBA's 2010 NJ Minority Small Business Person of the Year

**K**iran Gill went from being a summer intern to becoming the owner of the very same company in 2003. Recently, the President of PARS Environmental, Inc. a Robbinsville-based environmental consulting firm was honored as the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) 2010 New Jersey Minority Small Business Person of the Year.

The announcement was made at the company's laboratory at the Environmental Protection Agency's Urban Watershed Management Branch in Edison. During a ceremony celebrating the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual National Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week (August 22-August 28<sup>th</sup>), SBA's New Jersey District Director, James A. Kocsi said that Gill, an Asian-American, was chosen for the award based on criteria that included the company's **Overall Financial Strength, Growth in Sales and Profits, Growth in Number of Employees, and Participation in Community and Charitable Events.**

Gill, a 2002 graduate of NYU, had worked summers at PARS Environmental learning all aspects of the business, from sales and project management to operations and finance. Upon graduation, she joined PARS Environmental full-time. A year later she purchased the company with her own savings and a loan from her entrepreneurial uncle. When Gill took over the company, it had six employees and sales of \$500,000.

That all changed in 2004, when Gill applied for and received SBA's 8(a) Certification. The certification has played an important role in the company's growth. Under SBA's 8(a) Program, participants who are socially and economically disadvantaged are eligible to receive sole-source contracts from federal government agencies for up to \$3.5 million for goods and services and \$5.5 million for manufacturing. Contracts higher than those amounts must be competitively bid on among 8(a) firms.



**MED Week Winner, Kiran K. Gill, president of Pars Environmental Inc. (center) proudly displays her MED Week Award. Joining in the celebration from left to right are SBA's Assistant District Director for 8(a) Business Development, Richard Zilg, SBA's New Jersey District Director, James A. Kocsi and SBA's Business Opportunity Specialist, Sanford Gerber.**

Since becoming a certified SBA 8(a) company, PARS Environmental has received nine contracts totaling \$4 million from four federal government agencies. Today, the company employs over 45 people and generates \$6 million in annual revenue by providing its customers environmental services that include: remedial investigations, risk assessments, industrial hygiene, and treatment system design, construction and maintenance. The company's customers include EPA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Navy and General Services Administration, as well as manufacturers and major utilities.

"As we celebrate the many achievements of minority small business owners throughout the country, it is great to see a New Jersey-based company enjoying this level of success," said Kocsi. "Kiran Gill is a prime example of how SBA programs can assist in the growth of minority small businesses like PARS Environmental. What amazes me is that Kiran purchased a well-established company where she worked as a summer intern and took the company to another level. Even more amazing is that she accomplished this a year after graduating from NYU and then turned the company around in a short amount of time."

In accepting her award Gill said, "When I purchased PARS Environmental, I wanted to focus on developing innovative remediation technologies for environmental applications and building the company into a consulting firm that would specialize in solving difficult environmental problems. I attribute our rapid growth to our proprietary technologies for environmental applications and our willingness to take on difficult remediation projects."

"To get the attention of new clients, we continue to develop new technologies that cleanup sites better, faster and less expensive than our competition," said Gill. "Environmental consulting is still largely a man's field; competing for work as a woman and young entrepreneur can be a challenge. However, after making a presentation and beginning discussions with a new client, the fact that I am a young woman is no longer an issue."

In 2007, PARS Environmental was recognized with a Success Award from the New Jersey Small Business Development Center. NJSBDC has helped the company receive state certification as a woman, minority and small business enterprise, in order to do business with the State of New Jersey.

Under Gill's direction PARS Environmental has been involved in numerous community projects and charities, including Red Cross – Haiti Relief Fund, The Special Olympics, Manavi, an organization which assists South Asian Women who are victims of domestic violence, and Anchor House, a multi-service agency for runaway, homeless, abused and at-risk youth and their families. Gill also serves as a girls' volleyball and basketball coach for girls ages 7-16 for the Central Jersey Sikh Association recreational sports league.