



NEWS & VIEWS
WISCONSIN DISTRICT OFFICE
Issue 4 - FY 2010
Helping small businesses **Start, Grow and Succeed**

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FUNDING AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT REGIONAL CLUSTERS, JOB CREATION

The U.S. Small Business Administration has announced the availability of funding to support economic development and job creation through existing regional clusters. As part of its Regional Cluster Initiative, SBA will accept proposals from local and regional cluster initiatives beginning July 7 for funding of up to \$600,000 per cluster to support up to 15 projects across the country. Proposals should be submitted by the cluster's coordinating entity.

SBA's Regional Cluster Initiative focuses on accelerating small business growth and job creation through clusters that leverage and align a region's economic, business and workforce assets. Regional clusters are networks of organizations and businesses in a geographic area that grow through increased collaboration, efficiency, and innovation.

SBA is launching two programs within its Regional Cluster Initiative: Regional Innovation Clusters (RICs) and Advanced Defense Technologies (ADTs). Prospective offerors for both solicitations may find additional information through the Federal Business Opportunities website (www.fedbizopps.gov). Information on the RIC solicitation (SBAHQ-10-R-0021) is available at https://www.fbo.gov/index?s=opportunity&mode=form&id=7e3fa820644db3b29f99bb14adec6b5b&tab=core&_cview=0.

Information on the ADT solicitation (SBAHQW-10-R-0022) is available at https://www.fbo.gov/index?s=opportunity&mode=form&id=78cf4bab7dd00d2c2e4754d857ad59ab&tab=core&_cview=0.

Clusters may apply to only one program.

Regional Innovation Clusters

Successful offerors will receive a one-year contract with an option for an additional year to provide business training, commercialization and technology transfer services, counseling, mentoring and other services that support the growth and development of small businesses in the cluster area and its industries.

SBA will select clusters across the country that meets specified criteria. In each initiative, interested offerors will be asked to demonstrate that they have the partnerships, technical capacity, and local assets to support their existing regional cluster.

Regional Innovation Clusters will be assessed on the impact they will have on the region's economic growth, creation of sustainable jobs and the opportunities the cluster provides for small businesses.

Advanced Defense Technologies

SBA is working with the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) to identify areas around the country where regional innovation clusters can help meet critical defense technology needs. Successful offerors that meet specified criteria will receive a one-year contract with an option for an additional year to provide business training, counseling, mentoring, matchmaking, and other services to small businesses that focus on critical DOD technologies.

Areas of high-growth potential critical to DOD include, but are not limited to, advanced robotics, advanced defense systems, power/energy innovations, cyber-security and applied lightweight materials. In each project, interested offerors will be asked to demonstrate that they have the partnerships, technical capacity, and local assets to support developing or existing regional clusters.

Experience working with DOD's Small Business Innovative Research program and defense technology development programs is preferred. Offerors with Defense Security Service Facility Clearances who can hold security clearances and discuss classified material on site are also preferred but not required.

HOMEOWNERS, RENTERS AND BUSINESSES URGED TO PREPARE FOR THE UNEXPECTED

SBA Partners with Agility Recovery Solutions to Provide Disaster Preparedness Tools for Businesses

The U.S. Small Business Administration and Agility Recovery Solutions are launching a new Web site to help small businesses develop an emergency preparedness plan before disaster hits, and reminding homeowners and renters to plan as well.



“Regardless of where you live, it’s a good idea to be ready for any kind of crisis,” said SBA Administrator Karen Mills. “Every threat, from wind storms, floods, wildfires and earthquakes, to power outages and computer system failures, reminds us to be proactive when it comes to building strategies to survive a disaster and recover quickly. Recent disaster events demonstrate the need for preparedness to reduce the risk to life and property.”

In an effort to encourage businesses to plan, the SBA has teamed with Agility Recovery Solutions, a firm that has provided business continuity and disaster recovery tools to small companies for 21 years. The SBA and Agility have launched the *Prepare My Business* (www.preparemybusiness.org) Web site. *Prepare My Business* provides tips on how small business owners can develop their own disaster preparedness plans, and features interactive tools such as monthly webinars on business continuity planning.

Disaster preparedness for homes and businesses should include:

A written emergency plan. Find evacuation routes from your home or business and establish meeting places. Make sure everyone understands the plan beforehand. Keep emergency phone numbers handy. Business owners should designate a contact person to communicate with other employees, customers and vendors. Ask an out-of-state friend or family member to be your “post-disaster” point of contact, a person to call to provide information on your safety and whereabouts.

Adequate insurance. Disaster preparedness begins with having adequate insurance coverage, at least enough to rebuild your home or business. Homeowners and business owners should review their policies to see what is not covered. Businesses should consider “business interruption insurance”, which helps cover operating costs during the post-disaster shutdown period. Flood insurance is essential. To find out more about the National Flood Insurance Program, visit the website at www.floodsmart.gov/.

Making copies of important records. It is a good idea to back up vital records and information saved on computer hard drives, and store those items at a distant offsite location. Computer data should be backed up routinely. Copies of important documents should be kept in fireproof safe deposit boxes.

A “Disaster Survival Kit.” The Kit should include a flashlight, a portable radio, extra batteries, a first-aid kit, non-perishable packaged and canned food, bottled water, a basic tool kit, plastic bags, cash, and a disposable camera to take pictures of the property damage.

In addition to the *Prepare My Business* site, more preparedness tips for businesses, homeowners, and renters are available on the SBA’s Web site at www.sba.gov/disasterassistance. To learn more about developing an emergency plan, visit the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Web site Ready.gov at www.ready.gov, or call 1-800-BE-READY to receive free materials.

The SBA makes low-interest loans to homeowners, renters, and non-farm businesses of all sizes. Homeowners may borrow up to \$200,000 to repair or replace damaged real estate. Individuals may borrow up to \$40,000 to cover losses to personal property.

Non-farm businesses and non-profit organizations of any size may apply for up to \$2 million to repair or replace disaster damaged business assets and real property. Small businesses and non-profits that suffered economic losses as a direct result of the declared disaster may apply for a working capital loan up to \$2 million, even if the property was not physically damaged.

To learn more about the SBA’s disaster assistance program, visit the Web site at www.sba.gov/disasterassistance.

SBA AWARD WINNERS HONORED AT 25TH ANNUAL SMALL BUSINESS AWARDS BREAKFAST



On June 4, over 300 individuals joined the SBA, SCORE and our sponsors to celebrate the 13 small businesses and small business champions selected as the 2010 SBA award winners. They were congratulated by our District Director, Eric Ness, and Senator Herb Kohl. *(In addition to state honors, MCL Industries of Pulaski was recognized as the National Family Owned Small Business. Dave Latona of Milwaukee Economic Development Corp. and Wendy Baumann and the WI Women's Business Initiative Corp. received recognition as Region V winners).

Roy Reiman, founder of Reiman Publications, humorously shared his story of growing a new model for magazine publications. He also explained how his team approach contributed to the success of his magazines.

As the program concluded, Eric encouraged the audience to submit nominations for the 2011 Small Business Awards program. Watch an upcoming newsletter and website www.sba.gov/wi for more information.

21ST ANNUAL WISCONSIN LENDERS CONFERENCE



The 2010 Lenders Conference was held on May 20 & 21 at the Kalahari Resort & Conference Center in Wisconsin Dells and was attended by over 250 lenders. Every year SBA looks forward to the Lenders Conference and this year was no exception. Thursday, May 20th proved to be a very busy day starting at 9:00 a.m. with registration and coffee followed by opening remarks from Wisconsin SBA District Director Eric Ness and SBA Region V Administrator Marianne O'Brien-Markowitz. The rest of the morning consisted of workshops covering a variety of SBA programs and related topics.



The keynote speaker at the luncheon was SBA Associate Administrator of Field Operations Jess Knox. Jess Knox and Marianne O'Brien-Markowitz handed out SBA awards to volume lenders. The luncheon was followed by more afternoon workshops. A Networking Reception was held that evening and on Friday, the ever popular golf outing took place at the Trappers Turn Golf Course. The last workshop of the Conference entitled "Get Acquainted with SBA 7(a) Lending," was sponsored by NAGGL. Once again, the Lenders Conference proved to be a big success so, until next year!

WISCONSIN SBA'S NEWEST PLP LENDERS

First National Bank—Fox Valley

On May 7, 2010, SBA District Director Eric Ness presented Wenda Roycraft, First National Bank-Fox Valley Senior Vice President with a plaque in recognition of First National Bank-Fox Valley's attaining Preferred Lender Status with SBA.



First National Bank-Fox Valley has a 123-year history of providing a secure place for their customers to deposit funds that provide a solid return for their investment. The Bank remains a solid fixture in the community while creating ways to meet the changing needs of their customers. One of those ways was by utilizing all avenues of banking practices and providing banking professionals that work with customers to identify their needs and help them reach their financial goals.

SBA is pleased to welcome First National Bank-Fox Valley into the SBA Preferred Lender family.

State Bank of Cross Plains

On June 30, 2010, SBA District Director Eric Ness presented Jan Hogan, State Bank of Cross Plains President and CEO (left in picture), and David Earll, Vice President -Business Relationship Manager (right in picture) with a plaque in recognition of State Bank of Cross Plains attaining Preferred Lender Status with SBA.



State Bank of Cross Plains has been dedicated to providing financial advice and dedicated service to residents, businesses and the communities of Dane County for over 100 years. The success of the Bank's longevity and continued growth is based on core values that were established at the beginning and are still followed today. Values like commitment, being an active participant in the community, insisting on confidentiality, honesty, & integrity, recognizing that the bank family is the most important asset and remaining an independent community bank.

Welcome to SBA's Preferred Lender family.

WISCONSIN SBA NAMED 2010 SMALL FEDERAL AGENCY OF THE YEAR

Public Service Recognition Week has been celebrated since 1985 and is a time to honor the federal, state, and local government employees who serve America. This year, Wisconsin's Small Business Administration employees were honored at an awards ceremony on May 6 where they accepted the Greater Madison Federal Agency Association's **2010 Small Federal Agency of the Year** award.

This award goes to the organization that has best achieved their mission objectives as defined by their Agency while presenting and promoting a positive image of the federal government in their daily operations and in the community.



The downward spiral of the economy proved harmful to small businesses throughout the nation as well as Wisconsin. On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to address the economic crisis. SBA has been an essential part of the Recovery Act and Wisconsin SBA employees took on the challenge of helping small businesses understand and utilize the programs and services that were created and enhanced through the Recovery Act. Employees became more proactive with small businesses by advising and counseling numerous lenders and small businesses requesting assistance. Staff members did multiple training sessions on loan programs to lenders and small businesses.

Wisconsin SBA took the ARRA program "on the road" throughout the state. Numerous press conferences were held advising the media about SBA programs and the ARRA enhancements. Federal Congressional members were also briefed enabling them to better assist their constituents on the merits of ARRA.

Since March of 2009 through July 2, 2010, 2,377 7(a) and 504 loans have been made to small businesses for \$935, 011,800. This is an all time lending record for SBA in Wisconsin. SBA created a new program to keep businesses in business called the American Recovery Capital Program (ARC). As of July 2, 2010, the ARC program in Wisconsin resulted in 597 loans to small businesses for \$20,122,158.

SBA Ready-Talk Sessions

Servicing the SBA Loan
July 13th and July 15th
1:00 pm—3:00 pm

Both sessions will cover lender's unilateral authority, notification and approval requirements, how to submit a servicing request and E-Tran basics. All sessions will be presented by Michelle Serrano, Supervisory Loan Specialist, SBA Servicing Center in Fresno, CA.

Sessions require phone and computer.
Dial 866-740-1260 Access Code 3056301
On Web www.readytalk.com
Use same access code number.

(Bogs) North 2010 Workshop

Potawatomi Casino Hotel, Carter, WI
Thursday, July 29, 2010

Government Certification
Bonding & Financing
Using the Web to find Opportunities
Construction Opportunities
DOT Opportunities
Selling to Tribal Governments
Where Can I Go for Help After Today

Pre-Registration required at
<http://bogs.wi.gov>

Contracting Conference

August 25-26 at Camp Douglas, WI

Overview of the government marketplace Contracting with federal, state and local government. Briefings from prime contractors.

Workshops are designed for both new & experienced federal contractors. There will be opportunities to meet one-on-one with government Agencies.

Event contact is Aina Vilumsons at 414-270-3600. Email: info@b2qconnect.org

Loan Approvals can be viewed (by month and year-to-date) on our Website at

<http://www.sba.gov/localresources/district/wi/news/index.html>