

The Voice

July 2008

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- Research shows that small businesses in the inner cities added nearly three times the number of new jobs than larger companies between 1995 and 2002.
- SBA is joined by two e200 cosponsors, the Atlanta development Authority and the Atlanta Workforce Development Agency.
- The e200 curriculum will focus on developing winning strategies and attracting capital to fuel growth.

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Training starts on July 8 for Inner-City Firms Taking Part in SBA's Emerging 200 Initiative

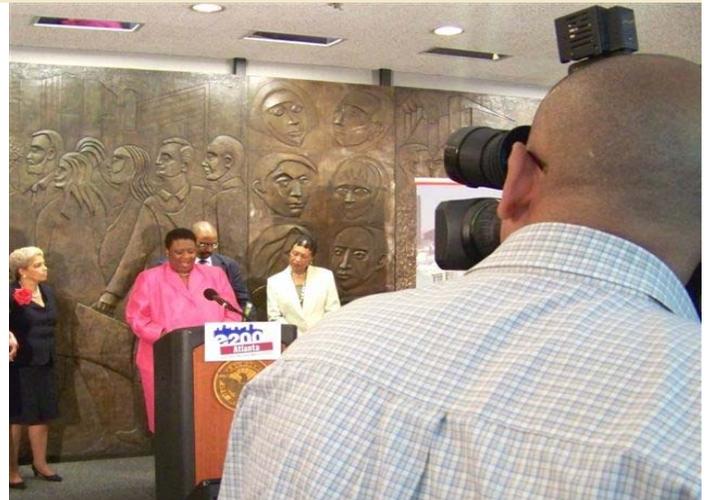
The 20 Atlanta small businesses taking part in the agency's Emerging 200 Initiative (e200) will begin their advanced business training on July 8 at the SBA Georgia District Office in downtown Atlanta.

The e200 Program will provide 13 sessions of advanced management training, along with other resources, to owners of existing inner-city businesses with a high potential for future growth.

The cost of the training is being underwritten by the SBA with no charge to participating firms.

"The goal of the Emerging 200 Atlanta initiative is to help promising inner-city firms step up to the next level,"

Said District Director



SBA District Director Terri Denison, and Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin, at left, announce that the city has been selected to take part in the SBA's Emerging 200 Initiative.

Terri Denison. "Helping these firms adds to their bottom line, while generating economic benefits for the neighborhoods in which they are located."

The kickoff for the e200

Initiative was held at Atlanta City Hall on May 5 at a news conference hosted by Mayor Shirley Franklin. Atlanta is one of 11 cities selected for the e200 Initiative by the SBA.

SBA Acting Administrator Carranza Lauds Stimulus Tax Package at Atlanta Meeting

SBA Acting Administrator Jovita Carranza told a small business Roundtable meeting in Atlanta that the 2008 economic stimulus package contains more than the average \$600 check going to most U.S. taxpayers.

"There are several tax incentives for businesses including a 50 percent bonus depreciation allowance on equipment purchased and

placed in service this year," said Carranza. "The package also has an almost 100 percent increase in the amount (from \$128,000 to \$250,000) that a business can expense for equipment bought and placed in the business tax year beginning in 2008."

Carranza noted that the SBA has created an online tax savings resource center to help

small businesses understand the benefits under the stimulus package.

The online center is located at www.sba.gov/stimulus. The center has a Fact Sheet that explains the tax benefits; a Depreciation Calculator for estimated depreciation provisions; and an Online Seminar that summarizes the tax benefits that a small business will gain from the 2008 package.

SBA Georgia District Office Presents Six Awards At this Year's Small Business Week Luncheon

Dawn Dallaire, founder and CEO of Clearly Fun Soap Inc., in Griffin Georgia, received the SBA Small Business Person of the Year Award at the annual Small Business Week Luncheon.

Georgia District Director Terri Denison presented awards to Dallaire and five other statewide winners at the luncheon hosted by the Georgia Lenders Quality Circle in Atlanta.

Other 2008 Awards went to James J. Adams, Family-Owned Business of the Year; Mary Melissa Evans, Women in Business Champion; Thelma Adams Johnson, Financial Services Champion; Alex C. Habersham, Minority Small Business Champion; and Cody Murray, Young Entrepreneur of the Year.

Dallaire started her novelty soaps company on her kitchen table five years ago. After reaching sales of \$1.8 million in 2006, she projects sales of nearly \$3 million this year with customers nationwide and in eight foreign countries.

Adams is Executive Vice President of Adams Transfer & Storage (ATS). The company has



With their awards, are, from left, Alex Habersham, Mary Melissa Evans, Dawn Dallaire, Thelma Adams Johnson, James J. Adams, and Cody Murray.

been a cornerstone of the Gainesville-Hall County area since it was started in 1949.

Melissa Evans is a Senior Supplier Development Consultant with Georgia Power Company and a leader in the electric utility's supplier diversity program.

Thelma Johnson is President & CEO of Albany Community Together (ACT) a non-profit agency created by the City of Albany and the local banking community. ACT has helped create over 120 jobs

in 14 counties around Albany.

Habersham is President of Habersham Enterprises, a sales and marketing firm that produces the annual Macon Middle Georgia Black Pages & Resource Guide.

Cody Murray is President & CEO of Raw Talent Inc. The company, with a plant in Bethlehem, Georgia, has 35 employee and produces specialty T-shirts for nationally-known customers that include Anheuser-Busch, Yamaha, and Planet Hollywood.

SBA Region IV Administrator Nuby Fowler presented Regional Awards to Alex Habersham and Cody Murray at the 2008 Awards Luncheon

Patriot Express Loan Initiative Delivers \$150 Million to Veterans Community

In just under a year's time, the U.S. Small Business Administration's Patriot Express Pilot Loan Initiative approved more than \$150 million in loan guarantees to nearly 1,500 veterans and others in the military community. They are using the SBA-guaranteed funds to establish and ex-

pand their small businesses.

Patriot Express, launched in June 2007, builds on the more than \$1 billion in loans SBA guarantees annually for veteran-owned businesses, and the counseling assistance and procurement support it provides each year to more than 100,000 veterans,

service-disabled veterans and Reserve members.

So far in Georgia, 48 Patriot Express loans, valued at \$4.1 million, have been approved by the agency.

These loans, for up to \$500,000, can be used for start-ups, expansions, equipment, working capital, and inventory.

SBDC-SBA Programs Help Plastek Werks Expand Its Plant in Cleveland, Georgia

Gary Hopkins and his business partner Mark Kirves are not bashful about the help they have received from the Small Business Development Center in Gainesville.

"Our experience with the SBDC has allowed us to go from a tunnel vision view of our business to look at the bigger picture—not only where we would like to go—but what it will require to get there," says Hopkins, President of Plastek Werks Inc., in Cleveland, Georgia.

Hopkins and Kirves, who is Secretary/Treasurer of the company, asked Ron Simmons, Gainesville SBDC Regional Director, to join them late last year for an all day Strategic Planning Session. Simmons had originally helped the company put together a five-year action plan in 1996. "Looking back, we can see where that plan really helped us grow," noted Hopkins whose company, an industrial plastics fabricator, has seen sales grow by some 30 percent over the last three years.

In addition, both Hopkins and Kirves recently completed the SBDC's six-week "Fast



Mark Kirves, left, and business partner Gary Hopkins

Trac" management course in Lawrenceville.

Plastek Werks, with 16 employees, specializes in manufacturing products and providing consulting services where corrosive chemicals and other safety and environmental issues are concerned. Their product line includes plastic tanks and linings, concrete protective linings, and containment systems.

In 2000, Hopkins and Kirves moved the company from Gainesville to its larger, Cleveland facility financed with a

504 Economic Development Loan. The first loan was financed by United Community Bank of Cleveland and Georgia Mountains Regional Economic Development Corporation, an SBA Certified Development Company (CDC) based in Gainesville.

Last spring, the same bank and CDC approved another 504 Loan of \$538,000 for the company to enlarge its plant/warehouse to 33,000 square feet. Some of these funds were raised through SBA-backed debentures.

Atlanta SCORE Named Chapter of the Year

SCORE "Counselors to America's Small Business" recently honored Atlanta SCORE as the National SCORE Chapter of the Year. Atlanta SCORE earned the award for exceptional growth in services provided to local entrepreneurs and the success of its public outreach to an expanding client list.

Chapter Chair Steve Bloom and Atlanta SCORE were honored by SCORE and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) during Small Business Week 2008 in Washing-

ton, D.C. This is the second time Atlanta SCORE has won this honor. They were previously recognized as chapter of the year in 1995.

Atlanta SCORE provided 11,962 services through counseling and workshops last year—an increase of 50 percent over the year before. The chapter has grown substantially during the past several years with ten branch locations in counties and towns in metro Atlanta.

Last year, the chapter installed Web video cameras in

each Atlanta SCORE office, which allows volunteers to provide face-to-face counseling to clients in more distant areas.

In addition, the chapter recently hosted a highly successful speed coaching event, sponsored by OPEN, a unit of American Express, that "sold out" in 36 hours. Hundreds of local businesses received free evaluation and mentoring sessions with Atlanta SCORE counselors. They also participated in interactive workshops that focused on promoting business growth.

BB&T Bank joined SCORE in receiving a 2008 national SBA award. The bank's SBA Group in Atlanta was named the Export Lender of the Year.

"Atlanta SCORE illustrates the business success that SCORE volunteers help make happen everyday across this country," said SCORE CEO Ken Yancey

U. S. Small Business Administration

We welcome your comments and suggestions regarding this newsletter. Please submit to James Hightower, SBA Public Affairs. Phone: 404/331-0100, x215 james.hightower@sba.gov

SBA Public Hearing in Atlanta Brings Comments on Proposed Regulations

Atlanta was one of eight cities where the SBA held public hearings in mid April to gain comments from lenders and other parties on new proposed lender oversight/credit risk management rules.

Those offering comments included Randy Griffin, President of CSRA Local Development Corporation of Augusta. CSRA is one of 12 SBA Certified Development Companies that do business in Georgia.

Griffin said his CDC is not in favor of the Single Audit Act Requirement that is part of the proposed rules or a Lender Risk Rating system that would be based on a Dun and Bradstreet model. "The burden of complying with the single audit act requirement will be significant," Griffin told the hearing. "There are very few CPAs who do single audits and the cost is going to be high with very low



Randy Griffin gives Comments to SBA Hearing

benefits given the reviews the Office of Lender Oversight already is conducting." He also called for risk based ratings to be "based on facts." He applauded the OLO reviews but said the Dun & Bradstreet system is "broken."

SBDC to Offer "FastTrac" Program To Businesses hit by Plant/Base Closings

Funded by a special SBA grant, the Georgia Small Business Development Center (SBDC) will provide entrepreneurial training to metro Atlanta communities impacted by the closings of Ford and GM assembly plants. The training will also focus on areas around the scheduled closings of Ft. Gillem and Ft. McPherson.

A large percentage of the \$100,000 grant will be devoted to scholarships for participants impacted by these closings.

"This project will include a minimum of four in-depth training programs targeted at both individuals pursuing small business ownership as well as existing businesses that will be harmed by these closings,"

said Georgia State University SBDC Area Director Bernie Meineke, who is heading up the special project.

The SBDC's "FastTrac" training system will be used for the program, Meineke added. The first training session is scheduled to start on July 11 in DeKalb County for those impacted by the GM plant closing. Another session will start in Mid August for those impacted by the pending shut down of Ft. McPherson.

The SBDC is working with local agencies to identify people and businesses that will be affected by the closings, added Meineke. information is available on the web site: www.georgiasbdc.org



Allan Adams, SBDC State Director, recently presented the "Consultant of the Year" award to Suzanne Barnett, Area Director of the Valdosta State University SBDC. The annual ward goes to one consultant within the 18 SBDC offices located throughout Georgia. The SBDC is an SBA resource partner.

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