



U.S. Small Business Administration

South Carolina District Office

# *MEDIA RELEASE*

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## **S.C. Women's Business Center in Columbia to be honored for service to entrepreneurs statewide**

The Small Business Administration (SBA) South Carolina District Office is recognizing the South Carolina Women's Business Center (SCWBC) on Wednesday, April 29, at the SBA's small business awards luncheon. The SCWBC is the state's nominee for the national 2009 SBA Women's Business Center of Excellence award. The awards luncheon is part of the 6<sup>th</sup> annual Salute to Small Business at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center.

The SCWBC began in 2003 as part of the S.C. Manufacturing Extension Partnership. The Center's initial focus -- helping women explore manufacturing and assisting with manufacturing processes -- quickly expanded to include serving the business needs of any entrepreneur seeking assistance. The SCWBC serves clients from its main office in Columbia and from satellite locations in Charleston, Darlington and Greenville.

Since its inception, the SCWBC -- one of only a handful of statewide Women's Business Center programs in the nation -- has worked with thousands of clients. Its core services include training seminars and one-on-one business counseling. SCWBC counselors view each client relationship as one for the entire life of the client's business. The counseling they provide includes assistance with business plan, marketing, financing, loan packaging, strategic business planning, product development, prototyping, contract manufacturing and grant writing.

Over the past six years, the SCWBC has continued to commit its resources to the growth and expansion of small businesses in South Carolina. In 2008 alone, the Center provided 2,906 hours of counseling to 1,004 clients; held 95 training events with 777 attendees; served 209 existing businesses and 709 aspiring entrepreneurs; and helped 67 businesses get started.

Haidee Stith, Executive Director of the SCWBC, will represent the Center at the awards luncheon.

*All SBA programs and services are provided on a non-discriminatory basis.*