



# *News Release*

## **PRESS OFFICE**

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## ***Six Lenders and Two Investment Companies Receive Top SBA Recognition at National Small Business Week***

**WASHINGTON** – Three banks, two certified development companies, one credit union and two small business investment companies today received the highest recognition by the U.S. Small Business Administration in Washington, D.C., as they were proclaimed Lenders and Investment Companies of the Year, during National Small Business Week.

The lenders and investment companies from Arkansas, Georgia, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio and Texas were presented their awards at a breakfast session sponsored by Northrop Grumman. AOL founder Steve Case was the keynote speaker.

While portfolio performance played a significant role in the awards, the institutions' continued support of small business, especially in underserved communities during challenging economic times was also a major factor.

“Our partners in lending and investing are pivotal in helping small businesses create jobs and fuel our economic recovery,” said SBA Administrator Karen G. Mills. “One key factor is the financial assistance provided to underserved communities, and these honorees have excelled at that. We honor their commitment as we celebrate our partnership in helping small businesses start up, grow and succeed.”

During National Small Business Week, SBA honors State Small Business Persons of the Year from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam and Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, and recognizes businesses recovering from natural disasters, people who have helped others recover from natural disasters, small business lenders, small business contractors and contracting officers, and advocates for small businesses.

The *Large 7(a) Loan Lender of the Year Award* went to Wells Fargo of Minneapolis, Minn., which was rated SBA's number one dollar volume 7(a) lender in FY 2010, issuing more than \$871.3 million in SBA-guaranteed loans, with \$305.6 million of those going to small business borrowers in underserved areas, a 28 percent increase in SBA gross dollars approved, compared to FY 2009.

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The *Small 7(a) Lender of the Year Award* winner was Peoples Bank of Mendenhall, Miss. In FY 2010, Peoples Bank made 320 SBA loans to small businesses, delivering more than \$21 million to capital-hungry small businesses in Mississippi, with more than \$6.8 million of that total going to borrowers in underserved markets.

Also honored were two Certified Development Companies, or 504 Lenders, and two Small Business Investment Companies, or SBICs. The CDCs receiving awards were Ohio Statewide Development Corporation of Columbus, Ohio, and Clay/Platte Development Corporation of Kansas City, Mo. In fiscal 2010, Ohio Statewide Development Corporation made \$8.5 million in SBA-guaranteed loans, of which \$550,000 went to underserved markets. Clay/Platte Development Corporation achieved SBA's top ranking among small CDCs, making almost \$7.5 million in SBA 504 loans, of which \$865,000 went to small businesses in underserved markets.

The SBICs recognized were Main Street Capital of Houston, Texas, and Diamond State Ventures of Little Rock, Ark. Main Street and its two SBIC funds have invested more than \$447 million in 83 businesses since 2002. The current portfolio includes 55 companies with approximately 12,000 full-time employees. To date, DSV has invested over \$35 million in 18 Arkansas based companies employing over 2,200 Arkansans. When combined with DSV's co-investment partners, SBIC funds have invested approximately \$60 million in DSV's Arkansas portfolio companies.

The award to the *Community/Rural Lender of the Year* went to Centris Federal Credit Union of Omaha, Neb. As a community lender, Centris also has had a significant impact on underserved markets in its area, as the number of loans approved for this segment increased by 83 percent from 2009 to 2010 and the gross dollar amount approved increased by 230.29 percent.

As the recovery of the nation's economy moves forward, exports continue to play an increasingly important role. SBA this year again recognized SunTrust Bank, of Atlanta, Ga., with its *Export Lender of the Year Award* for being SBA's number one export trade finance lender by volume in FY 2010, as it was in FY 2009. In FY 2010, SunTrust made 33 SBA export program loans for \$24.6 million in fiscal 2010 and 17 other types of SBA loans to exporters for \$2.7 million.

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*Small Business Week 2011 sponsors and cosponsors include: Association of Small Business Development Companies, AT&T, AVAYA, CareerBuilder, Dun & Bradstreet, Google, International Franchise Association, Intuit, Lockheed Martin, Microsoft, National Association of Development Companies, National Association of Government Guaranteed Lenders, National Association of Small Business Investment Companies, National Association for the Self-Employed, National Small Business Association, Nomadic Display, Northrop Grumman, Office Depot, Raytheon, Sam's Club, SCORE, The Neat Company, Verio, Visa, the Wall Street Journal, and Women Impacting Public Policy.*

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