



# NEWS RELEASE

## MAINE DISTRICT OFFICE

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### **JANE SEARLES NAMED HOME-BASED BUSINESS CHAMPION FOR MAINE AND NEW ENGLAND**

Augusta, Me -- M. Jane Searles, Regional Manager for the Maine Centers for Women, Work & Community (MCWWC), has been named the Home-Based Business Champion by the U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) for Maine and New England. "Maine's home-based business community is fortunate to have Searles. The New Ventures Program, instructed by Searles since 1991, has provided a ten-week entrepreneurial education program to countless numbers of individuals," said Charles Summers, New England Regional Administrator of the SBA.

The New Ventures Program, developed by Eloise Vitelli, Director of Program and Policy Development at MCWWC, offers guidance to those seeking to overcome personal adversity and to improve their financial security by starting a business.

Since 1985 many home-based and small businesses have been started with the help of Searles. As Regional Manager for the North Central and Downeast Regions, she provides entrepreneurial training, teaches self confidence building skills, and provides a safe environment for entrepreneurs to explore ideas and build camaraderie.

In addition to her work at MCWWC, Searles serves on the Penobscot County Transition Team, which provides assistance to laid-off paper mill workers, through the course 'Introduction to Self-Employment'. She teaches business classes and helped organize a Professional Clothing Room for women needing new clothes for job interviews.

"Jane is an inspiration to all she meets," said Renee Hudgens, President of Chez Renee Home Furnishings and nominator of Searles. "Jane gives of her time to mentor women entrepreneurs and glows in seeing the successes of the women she has assisted. She is a shining example of a business champion." added Hudgens.

Searles was born and raised in Bangor, a graduate of the University of Maine in Orono, and received her graduate degree in Community Economic Development from Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, New Hampshire.

Jane Searles will be recognized at the SBA awards celebration on May 30th at the Waterville Elks Lodge.