



# News Release

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## *SBA Honors National Small Business Champions For Their Support for Small Businesses*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Nine small business owners and leaders of small business support organizations from across the country were recognized today by the U.S. Small Business Administration for their outstanding achievements on behalf of small business. SBA Champion Awards were presented at an evening reception on April 12 in Washington, D.C. as part of the annual observance of *National Small Business Week*, April 9-15.

“The SBA takes great pride in honoring people who are among the true champions of small business and whose tireless efforts have provided tangible and significant support to small businesses and their communities,” said SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto. “They provide the tools, information and support that small business owners need; and most of all, help to create an environment in which the spirit of entrepreneurship can flourish.”

The award winners are recognized for their efforts and excellence in many different aspects of small business. SBA Champions can be, but are not limited to, small business owners, supporters of small business, women, minorities, families, exporters, journalists, veterans, or young entrepreneurs.

This year’s Champion Awards recognize winners from California, Illinois, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Carolina, Utah, Vermont and Virginia.

The winners are:

**2006 Financial Services Champion**

Rita Mitchell, Vice President, Regional Sales  
Wachovia Small Business Lending  
Thousand Oaks, California

**2006 SBA Young Entrepreneur Champion**

Genevieve F. Thiers, CEO & Founder  
Sittercity.com  
Chicago, Illinois

**2006 Veteran Champion**

Andrew Douglas Davis, Chairman & Co-Founder  
Comfort for Courage  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

**2006 Exporter Champion**

John Miller, President  
Oxbow Pet Products  
Murdock, Nebraska

**2006 Jeffery Butland Family-Owned Business Champion**

Pedro A. “Tony” Fernandez, President  
Albuquerque Printing Company  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

**2006 Journalist Champion**

Jerry Chautin, Business Writer, columnist, and SCORE Volunteer, Cherokee Scout  
Murphy, North Carolina

**2006 Minority Champion**

Elaine K. Bland, General Manager  
Lickity Split Chocolate Studio, LLC  
Blanding, Utah

**2006 Women in Business Champion**

Janet Bullard, Office and Program Manager  
Vermont Commission on Women  
Montpelier, Vermont

**2006 Home-Based Business Champion**

Rosemin A. Mohammed, Owner  
ABC 123 Academy  
Dale City, Virginia

Selected from nomination packages submitted to SBA field offices in their communities, the awardees are being recognized on the basis of having met one or more of the following criteria:

- Demonstrated entrepreneurial potential necessary for long-term business success and economic growth.
- Showed evidence of success, if a small business, as measured by sales and profits.
- Displayed voluntary efforts beyond business/professional responsibilities to advance small business interests within the small business community, state and/or nation.
- Provided support of the small business community as a whole, not solely for individual personal advancement.
- Engaged in other accomplishments demonstrating the nominee's effective support of small business.

Small Business Week 2006 is co-sponsored by the following organizations: Sam's Club, Intel, Microsoft, SCORE, Raytheon, the Kauffman Foundation, Nationwide, IBM, Verizon Communications, Johnson & Johnson, BAE Systems, KBR, Cisco Systems, Fiducial, Aetna, Administaff and Symantec.

For additional information on Small Business Week 2006, including a full schedule of events and information on all award winners, go online to [www.sba.gov/sbw](http://www.sba.gov/sbw).

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*For more information about SBA's programs for small businesses,  
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