



# NEWS RELEASE

## PRESS OFFICE

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## **Virginia Company Named Minority Small Business of the Year During 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of National Minority Enterprise Development Week**

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### **St. Croix Firm, USDA Director and VA Official Also Honored**

**WASHINGTON** – Lani Hay, a native Hawaiian and President of Lanmark Technology, Inc., was named today as *Minority Small Business Person of the Year* during the 25th Anniversary of the National Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week conference in Washington, D.C.

The award-winning firm is a Virginia-based, woman-owned, service-disabled veteran-owned firm that is also certified in the U.S. Small Business Administration's 8(a) Business Development program – a business development program that provides management and technical assistance, and assistance in identifying federal contracting opportunities to socially and economically disadvantaged businesses.

Also recognized by SBA Administrator Steven Preston was Orneth La Corbiniere, President of Kelly's Cleaning Services of St. Croix, a U.S. Virgin Islands-based janitorial company. Ms. La Corbiniere was the recipient of the 8(a) *Graduate Firm of the Year Award*.

Jim House, director of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization at the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Jim Nicholson, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, both received the *Administrator's Leadership Award*. Administrator Preston recognized them for their tireless efforts and unwavering commitment on behalf of the nation's minority small business community.

"This is my second MED Week celebration since joining the SBA and once again, I'm excited to be part of this important event that has been honoring minority businesses for their outstanding achievements for a quarter of a century," said SBA Administrator Preston. "It is my pleasure to recognize Lani, Orneth, Jim House and Jim Nicholson for their leadership, for advancing this nation's entrepreneurial spirit and their contributions to our economy and the small business community. For all of these things, I offer my sincere congratulations."

The award presentation caps off a two-day celebration and a week-long recognition of minority entrepreneurship. MED Week is an annual event hosted by the Minority Business Development Agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce and was originally implemented by proclamation by President Ronald Reagan in 1983. In a proclamation this year, President George W. Bush urged all Americans to join together in honoring minority entrepreneurs across the country in appropriate observances.

This year's MED Week event featured workshops, a White House Reception to honor the 25th Anniversary MED Week award winners, and a Billion Dollar Roundtable Breakfast featuring Fortune 500 companies that provided advice on growing small businesses. The event will conclude with a closing award ceremony gala this evening.

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## **BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON THE WINNERS**

### **National Minority Small Business Person of the Year**

#### **Lani Hay, President**

Lanmark Technology, Inc.

Lanmark Technology, Inc. is an 8(a)-certified, woman-owned, service-disabled veteran-owned firm that provides premier IT, telecommunication solutions and administrative support to federal government and commercial clients. Lani Hay, president of Lanmark Technology is a native Hawaiian who served honorably as an U.S. Navy intelligence officer and an air intelligence officer for a patrol reconnaissance squadron in Hawaii. She is also a recognized tactical intelligence expert in European, Middle Eastern, and Far Eastern military operations.

### **National 8(a) Graduate of the Year**

#### **Orneth La Corbiniere**

#### **Kelly's Cleaning Services, Inc.**

Orneth La Corbiniere, a U.S. Virgin Islands native, established Kelly's Cleaning Services, Inc. on a part-time basis in 1986. In 1996, Kelly's Cleaning Services, Inc. began full operation with only two employees. Today, the firm employs 15 and offers a complete range of cleaning and janitorial services, including stripping, waxing, polishing, buffing and steam cleaning for residential and commercial clients. Ms. La Corbiniere became 8(a)-certified in 1997 and as a result of the certification, she has been awarded four contracts valued at more than \$4 million.

### **Administrator's Leadership Award**

#### **Jim House, Director, Office of Small Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)**

#### **U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)**

Before rejoining the USDA in his current appointment, Jim House was an entrepreneur and economic development consultant for the Eckenberge Group, a professional services firm based in Bowie, MD. The firm provided marketing services to small businesses, large federal prime contractors, state governments and historically black colleges and universities. In 1976, Jim served as a national minority association member of a task force of trade group representatives which drafted the subcontracting provisions of Public Law 95-507. This law amended the Small Business Act and created the OSDBU unit in the USDA and other federal agencies with procurement responsibilities.

### **Administrator's Leadership Award**

#### **Jim Nicholson, Secretary of Veterans Affairs**

#### **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**

Jim Nicholson, a Vietnam Veteran and retired colonel in the Army Reserve, was nominated by President George W. Bush as Secretary of Veterans Affairs on December 9, 2004, and was unanimously confirmed by the Senate on January 26, 2005. As Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Jim is the principal advocate for veterans in the U.S. The VA is responsible for a nationwide system of health care services, benefits programs and national cemeteries for America's veterans and dependents. The agency employs more than 230,000 people at hundreds of VA medical centers, clinics, nursing homes, benefits offices and national cemeteries across the country. The VA has also exceeded the federal government's 23 percent small business contracting goal by more than five percent and has awarded more than \$800 million in contracts to small disadvantaged businesses.

For more information, contact the MED Week 2007 office at 1-877-MEDWEEK or visit the Web site at [www.medweek.gov](http://www.medweek.gov) or to view the list of the 10 Regional *Minority Small Business Persons of the Year Award* recipients, visit SBA's Web page at <http://www.sba.gov/medweek2007.html> .

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