



# NEWS RELEASE

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**Release Date:** August 28, 2009

**Contact:** Tiffani Clements (202) 401-0035

**Release Number:** 09-62

**Internet Address:** [www.sba.gov/news/](http://www.sba.gov/news/)

## **South Carolina Firm Named National Minority Small Business of the Year at MED Week 2009 Conference**

*New York Firm, SBA Chicago District Director, GSA & Homeland Security Officials Also Honored*

**WASHINGTON** – Cyrus Sinor, P.E. and Lawrence Kai-Yun Yeh, P.E., co-CEOs of International Public Works, LLC (IPW), were honored today as *Minority Small Business Persons of the Year* during the 27th Anniversary of the National Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week conference in Washington, D.C.

“I’m honored to be part of this important event with these extraordinary entrepreneurs. These business leaders provide innovative products and services to the federal government and commercial market, create jobs and stimulate economic growth,” said SBA Administrator Karen Mills, who made the announcement during her keynote address.

“President Obama has made a commitment to ensuring that minority-owned small businesses have the tools they need to succeed, grow and create jobs and it’s a commitment shared across the Administration,” Mills said.

The Obama Administration recently reaffirmed its commitment to making sure minority-owned small businesses have access to federal contracts. The President stated that it is essential our nation’s small businesses are provided with the maximum practicable opportunity to participate in federal government contracting. As part of the President’s initiative federal agency procurement officials will hold or participate in more than 200 events to share information on government contracting opportunities, including those available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The award-winning, South Carolina-based engineering and construction firm is owned and operated by registered professional engineers, and reports revenues totaling more than \$19.5 million with commercial and residential projects ranging from \$3,000 to \$6 million throughout South Carolina and North Carolina.

SBA Administrator Mills also recognized Sundra L. Ryce, President of SLR Contracting & Service Company, Inc. of Buffalo, N.Y. Rice was the recipient of the 8(a) *Graduate Firm of the Year Award*.

Mary Parks, acting associate administrator for the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization at the General Services Administration and Kevin Boshears, associate administrator for the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization at the Department of Homeland Security both received the *Administrator’s Leadership Award* for their tireless efforts and unwavering commitment on behalf of the nation’s minority small business community.

Judith Roussel, district director for SBA’s Chicago District Office received the *Abe Veneable Legacy Award for Lifetime Achievement* from the Department of Commerce’s Minority Business

Development Agency for the integral role she has played in the creative, technical or professional progress of minority business development over the course of her life.

This morning's award presentation capped a three-day celebration and a week-long recognition of minority entrepreneurship under this year's MED Week theme, "*Energizing the American Economy with Minority Business Enterprises.*" MED Week is an annual event co-hosted by the SBA and the Minority Business Development Agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

## **BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON THE WINNERS**

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

**Cyrus D. Sinor, CEO, International Public Works, (IPW) LLC**

**Lawrence Kai-Yun Yeh, co-CEO**

Sinor and Kai-Yun Yeh founded International Public Works, LLC in 2002. It is now a \$19.5 million engineering and construction firm servicing South Carolina and North Carolina. The firm has significant experience in new construction, renovations, civil engineering, operations and maintenance, electrical, and mechanical services. Other services include design, geotechnical consulting and major and minor renovations. IPW has received numerous letters of recommendation from past clients and continues to perform at the highest level for every client.

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

**Sundra L. Ryce, President, SLR Contracting & Service Company, Inc.**

SLR is a woman-owned, HUBZone-certified general construction and construction management firm founded in 1996 by its CEO, Sundra Ryce. Ryce is a graduate of SBA'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. Under Ryce's leadership, SLR has developed into an innovative and competitive construction company with sales that have consistently doubled each year. The company has now expanded to include new offices in Syracuse and Springville, NY.

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

**Mary Parks, Acting Associate Administrator**

**Office of Small Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)**

**U.S. General Services Administration**

As the acting associate administrator, Parks manages and oversees GSA's small business policies and programs. Her office strives to expand opportunities in federal procurement for small, small disadvantaged, women-owned, HUBZone and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses. In 2007, Parks was the recipient of the Federal 100 Award for her work on the Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Initiative and the award of the VETS Government-wide Acquisition contract.

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

**Kevin Boshears, Associate Administrator**

**Office of Small Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)**

**Department of Homeland Security**

As associate administrator, Boshears is responsible for the overall implementation of the department's small business procurement program. He is a well-known instructor in the federal small business procurement arena. He has conducted numerous training courses, presentations, and briefings on contracting with small, small disadvantaged, 8(a)-certified, women-owned, HUBZone and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses. He has received several awards from the SBA, including the Frances Perkins Vanguard Award for exemplary utilization of women-owned businesses in 2006 and the Federal Gold Star Award for Excellence for his department's

performance in carrying out the aggressive goals and strategic initiatives to ensure that small businesses have a role in the federal marketplace.

**Abe Venable Legacy Award for Lifetime Achievement**

**Judith Roussel, District Director for  
SBA's Chicago District Office & Acting Regional Administrator**

Judith Roussel has a proven track record of advocacy for minority businesses. Recently, Roussel spearheaded a first-ever Minority Business Community Recovery Summit for South Suburban Chicago communities, bringing together over 200 members of the business, faith and political leadership of the communities of Dolton and Robbins, Ill. to make minority businesses aware of the benefits available to them through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Roussel also served as senior executive for Gulf Coast Recovery Contracting following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. She worked with FEMA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other agencies and was instrumental in ensuring the award of nearly \$4 billion in recovery and reconstruction contracts to local small and minority-owned businesses in the four states impacted by the hurricanes.

For more details on this year's MED Week conference, please visit [www.medweek.gov](http://www.medweek.gov) or [www.sba.gov/medweek2009/index.html](http://www.sba.gov/medweek2009/index.html).

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