



PRESS RELEASE

Third Annual **PRODUCT EXPOSITION** Luncheon & Reception *A Capitol-Business Experience*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FSBDC Highlights Successful Entrepreneurs and Presents Dividend\$ Award to Senator Clary and Representative Waters at Third Annual Exposition at The Capitol

Honorary Chairs

- Representative Jeffrey Atwater
- Senator Anna Cowin
- Representative Mike Haridopolos
- Representative Chris Hart IV
- Representative Bev Kilmer
- Senator Ron Klein
- Representative Bruce Kyle
- Representative Carlos Lacasa
- Representative Jerry Maygarden

Co-Sponsoring Partners in Business GOLD



SILVER

- Florida Chamber of Commerce
- Florida Drug Screening, Inc.

Product Exposition

Wednesday, February 27, 2002
22nd Floor of The Capitol
10:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Awards Reception

5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

*Governor Jeb Bush and Lt. Governor Frank
Brogan are invited to present awards*



L-R: Irene Hurst, USF SBDC Director; Representative Leslie Waters; Eileen Rodriguez, USF SBDC Assistant Director; Jerry Cartwright, FSBDC State Director



L-R: Jerry Cartwright; Senator Charlie Clary; Raul Ledford, Executive Vice President, Florida Chamber of Commerce

Pensacola, FL: On February 27, the Florida Small Business Development Center Network held its Third Annual Product Exposition, Luncheon & Reception: A Capitol-Business Experience, on the 22nd Floor of The Capitol. More than 20 successful entrepreneurs from Pensacola to Key West traveled to Tallahassee to participate in this extraordinary event. An additional 22 companies were represented at the Exposition by providing products for their local SBDC to display. The FSBDC implemented this annual event three years ago to recognize the achievements and contributions of Florida's most dynamic entrepreneurs and demonstrate the essential role of the SBDCs in promoting a favorable climate within which entrepreneurs can start and grow successful businesses.

A unique aspect of this annual event is the recognition of a member from both the Florida House and Senate for advocating on behalf of business and economic development issues that broaden and enhance the chances of small business success. Dr. Morris Marx, President of the University of West Florida (FSBDC host institution); Paul Ledford, Executive Vice President of the Florida Chamber of Commerce; and FSBDC State Director Jerry Cartwright presented the 2002 Small Business Dividend\$ Award to Senator Charlie Clary and Representative Leslie Waters. During the 2001 Session, Senator Clary championed an economic development bill to correct

aspects of the 1994 Florida Enterprise Zone Act that failed to achieve the goal of economic development and investment in distressed areas of the state. As Chair of the House Insurance Committee, Representative Leslie Waters championed the business community's cause to find a solution to the ever-escalating Workers' Comp Insurance problem.

The event attracted approximately 60 Florida State Legislators and small business staff members. The FSBDC State Director's Office, as well as Directors and professional staff from the 29 SBDCs located throughout the state, represented the Network at the Product Exposition. Other attendees included representatives from the Governor's Executive Branch, including the Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development, Enterprise Florida, Department of Revenue and the Department of Community Affairs; key officials from the State University System of Florida; representatives of the U.S. Small Business Administration; members of the FSBDC Statewide Advisory Board; and representatives of partner associations and organizations including the Florida Chamber of Commerce and Florida Economic Development Council.

The SBDC Network also presents an annual Dividend\$ Award to a member of Florida's Congressional delegation, recognizing their efforts at the federal level to improve the prospects of business success. The 2002 award recipient is Representative C.W. "Bill" Young. Representative Young will be presented the award at the FSBDC's Third Annual Capitol-Business Briefing & Reception on March 20th at the Florida House in Washington, D.C. The 2001 award recipient was Congressman Connie Mack and the inaugural recipient was retired Congressman Andy Ireland.

The FSBDC Network is the largest and most successful entrepreneurial assistance program in Florida -- featuring 29 college and university-based centers strategically located throughout the state, with additional outreach provided at partner locations.

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A statewide service network in partnership with the U.S. SBA, sponsored by the State University System of Florida, and administered by the University of West Florida