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News Release

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Contact: Kelly Mcleod, Marketing Specialist

For Immediate Release

FAU SBDC, Member of the Florida SBDC Network, First SBDC Nationwide to Earn ISO 9001:2000 Designation



L-R: P. N-Chang, N. Young, Senator Atwater

Pensacola, FL: As part of a national network of close to 1,000 Small Business Development Centers, the Florida Atlantic University SBDC, a member of the Florida SBDC Network, is the first SBDC nationwide to earn the designation of an ISO 9001:2000 registered organization. ISO 9001:2000 is a set of quality management system guidelines established by the International Organization for Standardization to create an internationally uniform and recognizable set of quality management requirements.

Two and a half years ago, Nancy Young, Regional Director of the FAU SBDC, had a unique vision. She wanted the SBDC to become an ISO 9001:2000 registered organization, an achievement that would exemplify the Center's dedication

to excellence and continuous improvement. She understood that SBDC employees already were working hard at responding to the small business community by providing the best services possible. The next step was to put that in writing, by designing a documented quality management system that encompassed the requirements set forth by ISO. In December 2002, the Center successfully completed an intensive audit by an independent ANSI-RAB accredited registrar, and is now an ISO 9001:2000 registered organization.

The Florida Atlantic University Small Business Development Center is setting the standard for quality management. "Their achievement is extraordinary," said State Senator Jeff Atwater. Senator Atwater recognized the SBDC for becoming an ISO designated organization during a recent meeting in his Palm Beach Gardens office with Young and Parbatee N-Chang, the Center's ISO management representative. "They are modeling what they counsel and train others to do," he said.

Established to promote the use of international standards, ISO 9001 is often believed to be specific to the manufacturing industry. However, the implementation of ISO 9001, the utilization of clear-cut guidelines for planning and monitoring an organization's internal processes, can result in numerous benefits for many kinds of businesses, regardless of type, size or business structure.

"The commitment by the SBDC to provide quality services is not just through its certification of business analysts, but also through its entire management system. The FAU SBDC has certainly set a high standard mark for the rest of us," says Jerry Cartwright, FSBDC Network State Director. "It is this type of commitment to continuous improvement that keeps the Florida Network as an innovative leader in the National SBDC Program."

ISO counseling is now available at the Florida Atlantic University SBDC for small business owners who wish to implement a quality management system. Training sessions are also taking place in Miami Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Counties. For more information about the SBDC, call (800) 801-6520, or visit Web site www.fausbdc.com.

The FSBDC Network is partially funded by the U.S. SBA and administered by the University of West Florida. With over 25 years of experience helping entrepreneurs start and grow successful businesses in Florida, the FSBDC Network is the First Source for Business Assistance.

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