

Press Release



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Florida SBDC Network Employees and Volunteers Recognized for Performance Excellence

On June 7, more than 125 Florida SBDC Network staff, volunteers and conference attendees gathered together to recognize fellow employees and volunteers for performance excellence in supporting and fulfilling the Network's mission to help entrepreneurs start and grow successful businesses in Florida. FSBDCN State Director Jerry Cartwright and the SBDC Directors presented the Performance Excellence Awards at a Recognition Luncheon held in conjunction with the Annual FSBDCN Professional Development Conference in Naples, Florida.

The award categories include: State Star; State Volunteer; Regional Volunteer of the Year; Regional Certified Business Analyst (CBA) Award; and Regional Employee of the Year. In addition, the Association of SBDCs honors an outstanding SBDC employee from every state as a Star Performer. For Florida, the State Star Award winner from the preceding year is automatically nominated for the Star Performer Award.

Those recognized for their excellence this year were—

State Star: Carrie Duvall from the SBDC at UCF. The State Star Award recognizes the FSBDCN employee whose contribution to the SBDC program is exemplary in terms of new program development, innovative special projects, client impact and/or overall performance. Carrie was selected as the State Star for her efforts and success with the SBDC at UCF's Advisory Board Council. In 2004, Carrie coordinated boards for 50 Central Florida companies. The Council has had many successes since its launch in September 2003. The Council's 300+ Advisors volunteered for 4,700+ hours resulting in over \$646,000 of donated services. The first three graduating companies averaged a 27% revenue growth representing \$1.6 million of additional revenue while creating 17 new jobs and securing over \$2 million in commercial and SBA loans. In September 2004, the Advisory Board Council was named Program of the Year for areas with a population greater than 200,000 by the International Economic Development Council.

Nominees for the State Star Award were Daniel Scott from the SBDC at USF; Marty Zients from the SBDC at FAU; Julio Estremera from the SBDC at FGCU; and Carrie Duvall.

State Volunteer: Mary Jo Joseph from the SBDC at UWF. Mary Jo is Vice President and SBA Specialist of Small Business Loan Source, LLC, an affiliate of First Bank. For more than 8 years, Mary Jo has been an unflagging advocate of small business and SBDC at UWF clients. She has funded over \$20 million in loan requests for SBDC clients making possible over \$25 million in projects. Mary Jo conducts training for SBDC staff, speaks at SBDC seminars and workshops, provides materials and resources for the SBDC, and refers clients and businesses to SBDC resources.

Regional Volunteers of the Year: Mary Jo Joseph from the SBDC at UWF; Felina Martin from the SBDC at FAMU; Elizabeth Barron from the SBDC at UNF; Susan Evander from the SBDC at Brevard Community College; John de Lage' from the SBDC at UCF; John G. Griffith from the SBDC at the Central Florida Development Council/Polk County; Kristina J. Sommerkamp from the SBDC at FAU; and Nancy Reynolds from the SBDC at FGCU. The Regional Volunteer Award recognizes volunteers from each region for contributions to the SBDC program in terms of advocacy, program development or special projects; excellence in presenting workshops; and/or excellence in counseling clients as a volunteer.

Regional Certified Business Analysts (CBAs): Ingrid Hewette from the SBDC at UWF; Cathy Hagan from the SBDC at UNF; Carrie Duvall from the SBDC at UCF; Daniel Scott from the SBDC at USF; Gary Cole from the SBDC at FAU; and Dan Telep from the SBDC at FGCU. The CBA Award recognizes professional staff whose contributions are exemplary in terms of special projects, resource utilization and client impact.

Regional Employees of the Year: Kilty Spoke from the SBDC at UWF; Alesia Christian from the SBDC at FAMU; Nancy Boyle from the SBDC at UNF; Kristene Manning from the SBDC at USF; Yasser Khan from the SBDC at FAU; and Millie Class from the SBDC at FGCU. The Regional Employee of the Year Award recognizes employees with the greatest contribution to operations or special projects.

ASBDC Star Performer Award: Ken Stephanz from the SBDC at Indian River Community College.

Each year, FSBDCN staff—from Clerical to Certified Business Analysts to Directors—meets at the Conference to recognize the best of their staff and their top volunteers, along with immersing themselves in to three days of intense training in technical to behavioral seminars. At this year's Conference, the FSBDCN celebrated the kick-off to its 30th Anniversary year. Nuby Fowler, Region IV SBA Administrator, was a guest speaker at the celebration.

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