



**Louisiana Small Business Development Center
For Immediate Release**
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Louisiana Small Business Development Center Applauded for Excellence

September 17, 2007 (Denver) – Small businesses have always been the economic engine for Louisiana, and the Louisiana Small Business Development Center is honored as one of the best in the nation in helping small businesses get started and grow. On behalf of the LSBDC network, LSBDC State Director, Mary Lynn Wilkerson accepted the award of excellence from the U. S. Small Business Administration at a conference in Denver for “achieving a high quality of excellence in small business service delivery.”

Over the past six years, the LSBDC has counseled **20,520** entrepreneurs. With LSBDC assistance, our clients have created **6,778 new jobs** and obtained nearly **\$359 million dollars in financing**.

An economic impact study by the Association of Small Business Development Centers shows during a four year period from 2000-2005 the LSBDC helped small businesses **save 3,188 jobs**. During that same period, the state tax revenue generated by LSBDC clients and their employees totaled more than **\$7.2 million dollars** and the federal tax revenue totaled nearly **\$12.2 million dollars**.

The LSBDC is network of nine centers in every market statewide. The program helps entrepreneurs and existing businesses start, develop, and grow by providing high quality individual counseling, business education classes, information resources, and specialized services. The LSBDC is a partnership between the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Louisiana Economic Development, and participating host universities.

The award came about as a result of a comprehensive reaccreditation process conducted by the Association of Small Business Development Centers (ASBDC). After a four-day review, LSBDC was reaccredited with no conditions. Reaccreditation is required to maintain private, state and federal funding.

In the report, the accrediting agency notes: *“the Louisiana SBDC has made a commendable contribution to the disaster recovery efforts in the State of Louisiana and undergone a dramatic and significant advancement of the program in a relatively short period of time.”*

In its unconditional approval of the LSBDC, the accreditation team found:

- “strong leadership, provided by the State Director’s Office and the host institution (ULM)”
- “competent and dedicated staff at the centers throughout the state”
- “real commitment to the SBDC network”
- “exceptional recovery activities and international trade”
- “a partnership with (LED) Louisiana Economic Development in which the contribution of the small business sector is recognized”

“We are very excited about receiving the SBA award and our reaccreditation from the ASBDC, because it validates that we are a quality program,” said LSBDC State Director Mary Lynn Wilkerson. “We focus on being an economic development program for the state. We help new and existing small business owners build their businesses and create jobs in their community.”

“This milestone is a team effort. It wouldn’t have been possible to get where we are today without everyone being engaged and focused on creating a quality program that helps small businesses,” said Wilkerson.

LSBDC centers are supported by host institutions in Monroe (ULM), Shreveport (LSUS), Alexandria/Natchitoches area (NSU), Lake Charles (McNeese), Lafayette (ULL), Baton Rouge (SUBR), Hammond (SELU), and the Greater New Orleans/Thibodaux area (a collaboration of UNO, SUNO, Loyola, and South Louisiana Economic Council). A Technology Center is also located in Baton Rouge (LSU). To find a center near you, log onto www.lsbdc.org.

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