



NEWS RELEASE

PRESS OFFICE

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SBA Honors Emerging 200 Initiative Graduates - - Small Businesses Who Are Impacting Milwaukee's Inner City

Milwaukee – The U.S. Small Business Administration recognized 15 small businesses today in a graduation ceremony in Milwaukee at the Metropolitan Milwaukee Sewerage District. The goal of the SBA Emerging 200 initiative, started last Spring, was to identify 200 inner-city businesses across the country that show a high potential for growth—and to provide them the network, resources and motivation required to build a sustainable business of size and scale within a designated inner-city geographic location.

Milwaukee was selected to participate in the SBA's Emerging 200 Initiative (e200), a jobs and growth stimulation effort targeting promising inner-city small businesses.

The CEOs and small business owners who have graduated from the program have produced a three-year strategic growth plan with benchmarks and performance targets. They were trained to target their business strategies to accelerate growth, explore financing, diversify markets and expand their networking.

“We were very pleased, along with our co-sponsors, to bring Emerging 200 and its MBA-style environment and program, to small businesses in Milwaukee,” Eric Ness, director of the SBA's Wisconsin District Office, said. “We had a fantastic Class of 2008 and we appreciate their dedication to the program. We feel that each one of them will have a brighter future as a result of their participation, and that the economy of the Milwaukee area will benefit as well.”

The cornerstone of the e200 in Wisconsin was an in-depth educational program, which ran from June through December 2008, focusing on topics such as organization management, growth strategies and management, market development, and strategic planning. Graduating businesses recognized for completing the program include:

- Buveck Consultants LLC, Thomas L. Burse
- Companion Natural Pet Food, Bill Conroy
- Cross Management Services, Inc., Carla Y. Cross
- Holliman Laster Plumbing, LLC, Marilyn Laster
- Maures Development Group, LLC, Melissa Goins

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- McDowell Construction, Sean L. McDowell
- Phoenix Electric, Carlton Butts
- Penebaker Enterprises, LLC, Khary Penebaker
- Pinnacle XL, Inc., KeleMarie Lyons
- Prism Technical, Randy Crump
- Ramirez Restoration, LLC, Karl Ramirez
- Reynolds Pasty Shop, Yinka Adedokun
- Spann & Associates, LLC, Bruce A. Spann
- Wild Flour Bakery, Josh Mertens
- Zoe Engineering, LLC, Daphne M. Wilson

The selection of Milwaukee as an e200 city was a prestigious one. There were 23 cities nationwide that applied to take part in this initiative. Along with Milwaukee, other e200 cities chosen included Albuquerque, Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Des Moines, Memphis, New Orleans, and Philadelphia.

Those partner organizations joining the SBA District Office in Milwaukee to bring e200 to Milwaukee were:

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| • City of Milwaukee | • Greater Milwaukee Committee |
| • SCORE – Southeast Wisconsin
(Counselors to America’s Small Business) | • Small Business Development Center
(SBDC) through University of
Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM |
| • Manpower, Inc. | • Milwaukee Urban Entrepreneur
Partnership |
| • Wisconsin Women’s Business Initiative
Corp. (WWBIC) | |

Participation in e200 was free to qualifying businesses. Criteria for participation included having been in business for a minimum of three years, \$400,000 or more in gross annual revenues, and a business location within the geographic boundaries defined by the SBA. Participation was limited to only 200 businesses nationwide.

SBA’s Emerging 200 initiative will be continued in the 2008 selected cities and expanded in the spring of 2009 to include five new cities – Detroit, Dallas, Denver, Jacksonville, and Portland, Oregon.

“We launched the Emerging 200 initiative to identify and support inner-city small businesses that have substantial potential for growth and provide them with high-level training, networking, and other resources necessary for success,” said SBA Acting Administrator Sandy K. Baruah. “By helping them prepare for the challenges of today’s economy, SBA is tapping into the power of local entrepreneurs to transform their communities, generate new jobs, and make real and lasting changes.”



2008 Wisconsin e200 Graduates