

**"America's Small Business Resource"**

## Entrepreneurial Success to be Honored in Seattle

### WASHINGTON STATE SBA SMALL BUSINESS AWARDS

The SBA and SCORE will honor the 2004 small business award winners April 8 at the Bell Harbor Conference Center on Pier 66 in Seattle from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. The complete list of winners is on page 3.



National Small Business Week "SBA Expo '04" is May 19-21 in Orlando, Fla. Highlights include naming of the *National Small Business Person of the Year*. Other activities include a trade show, business matchmaking event, seminars, and presentations by business industry leaders and speakers from trade associations, and state level and federal government. Register at <http://www.sba.gov/50/>.

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All of the SBA's programs and services are provided to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis.

### Washington State Small Business Person of the Year Helps Pilots Fly, Soldiers Shoot

A picture hanging on the wall in the reception area of Rocky Wens' business in Lynnwood tells much of the story about the SBA's 2004 Small Business Person of the Year for Washington.

The picture was taken in the 1930s in Indonesia. In the foreground is a table with drafting tools sitting atop what appear to be some engineering drawings. In the background sitting or standing around a drafting table are several men, in the center of which stands Loduvicus (Louis) Wens – Rocky's grandfather.



**Rocky Wens, Owner, ESP, Inc.**

(photo by John Wolcott, Snohomish County Business Journal)

"Engineering is in my blood," said Wens, whose brother, Glenn and father, Jean – now semi-retired – also work at the modest headquarters of ESP. Rocky's grandfather on his mother's side, Lambertus Jean Lodewijk Bax, was also an engineer and Wens's wife of 20 years, Ardis, also works part time in the Lynnwood office.

From this heritage Wens created a firm that employs more than 300 people at 38 sites in 17 states and in Okinawa, Japan. By assembling a team of highly skilled management, engineering, technical and administrative service professionals, Wens has developed a niche in an industry that is dominated by large Fortune 500 defense contractors.

Wens has owned and operated a small business in the Seattle area since 1983. He started out by running a sole proprietorship, Seattle Drafting. In 1990 he created ESP by combining his drafting business with his father's engineering firm. The goal was to provide entire project teams to local aerospace and manufacturing companies, including Boeing, which needed on-site workers.

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# SBA AND PARTNER NEWS AND TRANSITIONS

## SBA Seattle District Office Staff News

**Conrad Lee**, regional administrator for the SBA in Seattle for Region X, has resigned his position effective March 22 to run for the U.S. House seat being vacated by Rep Jennifer Dunn, R-Mercer Island. Boise District Director Tom Bergdoll will act as regional administrator until a replacement for Lee is chosen.



**Dian Swift** is the new receptionist for SCORE "Counselors to America's Small Business" and one of the first people who will greet a visitor to the SBA district office in Seattle. As a mom and a grandmother, Dian describes herself as a "professional person in training." She first came to work at the office through the AARP program. Her skills quickly warranted her hire as the new full-time receptionist.

In March, **Coralie Myers**, Spokane Branch Office Economic Development Specialist and Business Information Center manager, was recognized as a "Community Star - Bridge Builder" by the Inland Northwest Chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners for her work creating alliances and forming coalitions that link women to area business resources.

Coralie is coordinating the 4th annual Small Business Month for the Inland Northwest in May by bringing together a network of organizations and government entities that support entrepreneurs. During May, the Spokane office will offer loan briefings, procurement matchmaking events, award presentations and more. Listings of workshops, resources, and venues for Inland NW businesses online can be found at [www.SmallBusinessSpokane.org](http://www.SmallBusinessSpokane.org), or call the Spokane Area BIC at 509-353-2800.



After more than 10 years with Washington State University and the Small Business Development Center, **Warner Wong** is retiring. Wong will be honored for his work at the state gathering of the SBDC network in Seattle April. SBDC State Director **Carolyn Clark** said Warner has done some wonderful work with his small business clients over the years. "Johnnie Albertson (former Administrator of the SBDC program in Washington, D.C.) said a few years ago, when she visited Seattle and met with a number of Warner's clients, that she'd never known an SBDC counselor who worked so well with such a wide variety of clients," Clark said.

Meanwhile, the location of Warner's office in Seattle at 3600 15th Ave. W. has closed and a new SBDC site has been located across the hall from the downtown Seattle office of the SBA's 504 Community development Company lending partner, **Evergreen Community Development Association** at 900 4th Ave., Seattle. The ECDA serves Alaska, Washington and Oregon.



The other CDC in the state, the **Northwest Business Development Association** headquartered in Spokane, has opened a new branch office in Western Wash. at 1400 Talbot Rd. Suite 105, Renton, 98055, phone # 425-235-9917. In addition to the Spokane office the NWBDAN also has an office in Yakima and serves five counties in North Idaho.

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Wens became a certified contractor in the SBA's 8(a) Minority Enterprise Development program in June 1995. In 1998, recognizing his limited growth potential, he broadened his company's focus and began to pursue – and win – government engineering, operation, and maintenance contracts. Today, ESP contracts to operate and maintain the most sophisticated military simulators and trainers throughout the U.S. and in Japan account for about 95 percent of the firm's revenue.

ESP's clients include aerospace and industrial companies, state and local government agencies and the U.S. Department of Defense. But Wens doesn't see these bureaucracies as his clients, rather, he says his end customers are the men and women of the armed forces.

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## 2004 Washington State Small Business Award winners

In addition to Rocky Wens, the following small business owners and advocates will be honored on April 8:

### Small Business Awards:

- **Garry Struthers**, owner, Garry Struthers Associates, Bellevue, *Small Business Exporter*;
- **Laszlo and Victor Szalvay**, owners, Danube Technologies, Bellevue, *Young Entrepreneurs*;
- **Carlos Herrera**, President, Herrera Environmental Services, Seattle, *Entrepreneurial Success* (small business that has grown into a large one);

### Leadership Awards:

- **Nina Auerbach**, CEO, Child Care Resources, Seattle, *Home-based Business*;
- **Cheryl Jones**, National Accounts Director, Starbucks Coffee Co., Seattle, *Minority Small Business*;
- **Carole Butkus**, director, Women's Business Center, Community Capital Development, Seattle, *Women-owned Business*;
- **Shirley Osborn**, Vice President, Whidbey Island Bank, Burlington *Financial Assistance*;
- **Lawrence F. "Lary" Coppola**, President and CEO, Kitsap Peninsula Business Journal, Port Orchard, *Small Business Journalism*;
- **Ubaldo Perez**, Green Tree Reforestation, Grandview, Wash., *Region X Prime Contractor of the Year*.

### Partnership Awards:

- Washington State University Small Business Development Center;
- Seattle and Spokane Chapters of SCORE "Counselors to America's Small Business";
- Spokane Regional Chamber of Commerce.

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"If we do not perform our operation and maintenance of these sophisticated simulators and trainers, our warriors do not get properly trained," Wens said. "As we perform our services, we know we can make a difference in saving American lives. We recognize this awesome responsibility and accept it with pride."

Wens and ESP have had success outside of his military contracts. One of Wens' completed projects included drafting the engineering drawings for the drive system on the retractable roof for the Seattle Mariner's baseball stadium, Safeco Field.

When he was only 11 months old Wens, who is of Dutch-Indonesian descent, immigrated to the United States in 1960 from his birthplace, The Hague, Netherlands. His father landed a job at the Western Gear Company as a mechanical draftsman and it was with this position that the family tradition of working in engineer-related fields would be passed on to a third generation.

"I owe a debt of gratitude to my dad," said Wens, not only for mentoring his son as an engineer, "but for having the courage to pursue the American Dream, moving his family to America with only a hundred bucks in his pocket."

Wens has won other awards and accolades for his business in the past, including prior recognition from the SBA as the state and regional 2002 Minority Small Business Person of the Year and the 2003 Snohomish County CEO of the Year.

**SBA Deputy Administrator Melanie Sabelhaus** was in Seattle February for an SBA-Staples Town Hall meeting. Sabelhaus was joined by Staples CEO **Tom Stemberg**, who hosted the event at the Staples store in Ballard. About 300 people attended for a first-hand perspective on the opportunities and challenges facing them in this new technology-driven economy. Attendees heard from other panelists including **Tony**



Don Rich, Tom Stemberg and Tony Naughtin listen to Deputy Administrator Sabelhaus address the audience.

**Naughtin**, CEO, Network Clarity Inc., **Martha Choe**, Director, Office of Trade and Economic Development, **Don Rich**, CEO, Aculight Corp., **Roxy Vuong**, President, Vuong Information Technologies. **Kevin Ebi**, Business Reporter, KIRO Radio, was the moderator.

The Staples/SBA partnership includes an electronic newsletter, *SBA Solutions*, which is available for free: <http://www.sba.gov/sbasolutions/>. Monthly subscriptions are free, too, at <http://web.sba.gov/list/>.

# UPCOMING: WHAT TO WATCH FOR ...

## *7(a) loan cap moves closer to being lifted; 504 loan program extended thru May 21; resolution of other programs pending*

There's a lot going on in the SBA: transformation, loan caps, guaranty limits, zero subsidy rate, program reauthorization ... "Whew." Just as this newsletter was ready for distribution the House and Senate had agreed on legislation to lift the \$750,000 loan cap on the 7(a) program for the rest of FY 2004. Loan fees have been adjusted, too. (The press release from SBA was not yet loaded on the SBA Web site but should be available soon at [www.sba.gov/news](http://www.sba.gov/news). The earlier House version was reported at (<http://www.sba.gov/news/04-13.pdf>). Meanwhile, Congress is also considering the agency's proposed FY 2005 budget that recommends no government subsidy of the 7(a) loan program (<http://www.sba.gov/news/04-06.pdf>).

## *504 loans to be transferred by April 12*

Transformation of lending functions is continuing as the Seattle District and Spokane Branch offices work to meet an April 12 deadline to transfer 504 loans to a new 504 loan processing center in Sacramento, Calif. Seattle is in the second of three groups of district offices that are transferring their 504 portfolios.

## *Disaster loans are available*

Drought-affected small businesses in Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania, Wahkiakum, Klickitat, Lewis, Pacific and Yakima counties may apply for assistance due to drought and excessive heat May 1 - Aug. 31, 2003; and in Island, San Juan and Skagit Chelan, Okanogan, Snohomish and Whatcom counties due to drought May 1 through Sept. 6, 2003. For information and application forms, write or call the SBA, P.O. Box 419004, Sacramento, CA 95841-9004, (800) 488-5323.



## APRIL – JUNE TRAINING SCHEDULE

Each day-long workshop is \$60. The entire series is \$300 or any three classes for \$160. For more information or to register, call 206-553-7320 (toll free (877-732-7267) or go online to [www.seattlescore.org](http://www.seattlescore.org).

The six-week curriculum takes the prospective business owner – or an existing business owner who wants to brush up on their skills – through the essentials of starting and running a small business, including:

<b>Starting a New Business:</b>	April 7, May 5, June 9	<b>Marketing &amp; Sales:</b>	April 21, June 23
<b>Building a Business Plan:</b>	April 14, May 12, June 16	<b>E-Business:</b>	May 6
<b>Making Money Work for You:</b>	May 19	<b>E-Commerce:</b>	April 15

In addition to these classes, private, no-cost counseling is also available at one of 28 locations in Western Washington, including the newest one, in **Bremerton**, located at Olympic College. Call 877-732-7267.

**IT OUTSOURCING: CLARIFYING THE LEGAL ISSUES** is the subject of an April 22 "Business Briefing," to be held 8:15 – 10 a.m. in the Meydenbauer Center, Room 401, 11100 NE 6th St., Bellevue. A panel of five local experts will explore ways for businesses to identify and manage risks arising from the outsourcing of activities such as software development, data processing and customer service. Phone 206-543-2164 to register for this free program or go online at [www.law.washington.edu/lct/businessbriefing.asp](http://www.law.washington.edu/lct/businessbriefing.asp).

A free workshop on **EXPORT FINANCING FOR SMALL BUSINESS** will be presented June 24, 2004 by Pru Balatero, Regional Manager of International Trade Programs at the U.S. Export Assistance Center in Seattle. The presentation will be held at noon at the Seattle Women's Business Center. To register, contact Carole Butkus, WBC director, (206) 324-4322 ext. 102, or online at [www.seattleccd.com/classes/](http://www.seattleccd.com/classes/).

## 2004 WNET SCHEDULE – APRIL – JUNE



Upcoming for SBA's highly successful and popular Women's Network for Entrepreneurial Training program are the following:

**The Dreaded "S" Word - Sales for the Non-Sales Person (April 9); Making Great Presentations (May 14); Marketing on a Shoestring (June 11).**

Advance registration is \$20. For more information on the entire WNET schedule in Seattle, and for meetings scheduled in Everett, Fife, Bellevue and Bremerton, go to [www.sba.gov/wa/seattle/seawnet.html](http://www.sba.gov/wa/seattle/seawnet.html) or call Carol Anderson 206-553-7315 to be placed on the mailing list.

The program is a partnership of the SBA, SCORE, Community Capital Development/Women's Business Center, Cut to the Chase Marketing, Business Network International, US Bank and Banner Bank.