

News Release



Small Business Development Center at UCF

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SBDC at UCF Celebrates National Small Business Week

SBDC to Honor Local SBA Champions and Host "Doing Business with Government" Workshop

Orlando, FL – In a salute to the small businesses of Central Florida and the nation that are so important to job creation and the country's economic well being – the veritable heroes of our economy—the Small Business Development Center at the University of Central Florida (SBDC at UCF) is celebrating National Small Business Week (May 20 – 26) with a luncheon and awards ceremony recognizing local Small Business Administration (SBA) Champions and a two-day program and workshop entitled "Government Business Opportunities and Matchmaking" designed to open doors to new opportunities for small business.

Kicking off the SBDC at UCF's National Small Business Week celebration on Tuesday May 15th is the **2012 Small Business Awards Luncheon**, an invitation-only event being held at the Citrus Club in downtown Orlando. Eunice Choi, Regional Director at the SBDC at UCF, is hosting the luncheon which will feature remarks by Dr. Foard Jones, Interim Dean of College of Business Administration at UCF. Subsequent to that, Wilfredo J. Gonzalez, District Director of the U.S. SBA, will present the following awards to local SBA Champion awards recipients in attendance:

- 2012 Florida SBDC Network Regional Outstanding Resource Partner of the Year: Teresa Jacobs [Mayor, Orange County Government]
- 2012 Florida SBDC Network Regional Volunteer of the Year: Anthony (Tony) Ruben [Managing Director, Inflection Point Consulting]
- 2012 Florida Financial Services Champion of the Year: Joanne Jolin [Vice President, Atlantic Coast Bank]
- 2012 Women in Business Champion of the Year: Dr. Kerry Giedd [President, Eola Eyes]
- 2012 Entrepreneurial Success Award: Neal Kimball [President, The Kimball Companies, LLC]

Beyond recognition and appreciation, every small business is looking for ways to obtain more business and grow. To assist in that effort and to celebrate National Small Business Week in a meaningful, dollars-and-cents fashion, on Wednesday May 23rd and Thursday, May 24th, the SBDC at UCF will host an important seminar/workshop event aimed at helping local small businesses gain the knowledge and tools they need to pursue business opportunities with various government agencies primarily, but also some of Central Florida's largest corporations as well. Entitled "**Government Business Opportunities and Matchmaking**," the event features a unique combination of educational presentations and direct, one-on-one business matchmaking, all held over two days by the SBDC at UCF at The National Entrepreneur Center located at the Orlando Fashion Square Mall in Orlando.

On Wednesday May 23rd, presentations by representatives of Orange County Government, Florida's Turnpike and the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority will discuss the best ways for small business owners to approach doing business with government agencies and winning contracts. They will also help attendees prepare for the matchmaking session planned for the next day.

Then, on Thursday May 24th, the SBDC at UCF will host more than 20 government agencies and corporations in a matchmaking workshop that will allow small businesses to discuss procurement opportunities with these agencies and companies. Participating agencies includes Orange County Government, the City of Orlando, Lynx and many more, as well as major corporations such as Walt Disney World, Lockheed Martin and Harris Corporation. The matchmaking workshop will give small business attendees the opportunity to have face-to-face meetings with these government agencies and major corporations to learn about their buying needs and specific contract opportunities.

The two-day "Government Business Opportunities and Matchmaking" event is sponsored by Orange County Government; there is a \$45 fee for Orange County businesses and a \$95 fee for non-Orange County businesses. For more information, or to register, interested parties can go to www.sbdcorlando.com.

Taken together, the events that are part of the SBDC at UCF's celebration of National Small Business Week not only salute small businesses, the heroes of our economy, but works to open doors to new business opportunities for those self-same small business heroes.

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With its main office in the National Entrepreneur Center (formerly the Disney Entrepreneur Center) now located at the Fashion Square Mall in Orlando, the Small Business Development Center at the University of Central Florida (SBDC at UCF) is part of the UCF College of Business Administration and the Florida Small Business Development Center Network, providing business seminars and no-cost, one-on-one business consultation to small business owners. The SBDC at UCF serves an eight-county area that includes Brevard, Flagler, Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Sumter, and Volusia counties and maintains seven satellite service centers. In 2011, the SBDC at UCF helped entrepreneurs create or retain 1,517 jobs, win contract awards worth \$28.9 million, acquire \$17.7 million in capital formation, and increase sales by \$51.9 million. The SBDC at UCF is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.

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