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Press Release

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15TH ANNUAL PROCUREMENT EXPO FOCUSES ON MATCHMAKING

North Branch event to bring together purchasing agents with new prospective vendors

(Newark, NJ) – The New Jersey Small Business Development Centers (NJSBDC) network's Procurement Services program has delivered many invaluable lessons over fifteen years of helping small businesses, especially women and minority-owned firms sell to the government and to private sector supply chain diversity purchasers. The program's director, Stephanie Burroughs, has also learned a lot about facilitating valuable introductions to make good matches for her small business clients and large entities that need their products and services.

Burroughs and an experienced organizing committee of private and public sector procurement experts are hosting the NJSBDC's annual Procurement Expo on June 14, 2006 at the Raritan Valley Community College, Route 28, North Branch, from 8 am to 4 pm. The expo is specifically geared for minority, women and small business owners looking for an opportunity to do business with corporations and state and federal government.

The focus is on helping firms enhance their business skills and knowledge; increase business contacts; provide access to contracting opportunities in the tri-state area estimated at \$30 billion; provide information on access to capital and receive training about contracting and the procurement processes.

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“By specifically facilitating appointments on-site between SBDC clients and private and public vendors, we’re opening up new opportunities for business growth and increased revenues for small business owners,” said Brenda Hopper, NJSBDC state director.

“We’re keeping the wealth in-state.” Deborah Smarth, associate state director added. “Our program assistance increases the likelihood of corporations buying products and services they need from in-state small firms and that’s healthy for the State economy.”

Hopper noted that last year, the NJSBDC procurement program helped facilitate about \$64 million in corporate contracts for its small business clients.

The complete conference agenda and registration is online at www.njsbdc.com or through calling Allison O’Neil at Raritan Valley Community College at (908) 526-1200 ext. 8515.

In addition to providing personalized one-to-one management consulting, affordable training, loan packaging and other key services, the Small Business Development Centers throughout the state provide small business owners with information about a host of key topics. Last year, the network helped facilitate \$105.5 million in total loans, procurement contracts and grants for small businesses.

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