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**MBDA Invests \$1.75 Million to Launch New Federal Procurement Business Center to
Advance the Growth of Minority Businesses**

The Metropolitan Economic Development Association will operate new center

WASHINGTON D.C. (November 9, 2011) - The Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) today announced that the Metropolitan Economic Development Association of Minneapolis, Minn. was awarded a cooperative agreement totaling \$1.75 million to operate a new MBDA Federal Procurement Center (FPC) located in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The cooperative agreement will be for a period of five years, from fiscal year 2011 through fiscal year 2015.

The Federal Procurement Center will serve the minority business community nationwide in order to better position them to access and obtain federal procurement awards, which includes prime and sub contracts. The MBDA Business Centers have garnered great success since being created, and establishing a Minority Business Center focused solely on federal procurement is part of the Obama Administration's commitment to ensuring that all U.S. businesses share in the jobs and opportunities created by federal government activities.

Specific services offered by the center include: research and education on federal agency contract trends, current regulations and contracting requirements, identification of upcoming federal procurement opportunities, matching of minority business client capabilities and procurement opportunities, facilitation of relationships between minority business clients and federal program managers, and linkage of minority business with other companies for potential partnerships.

"The federal government spends more than \$500 billion each year through purchasing goods and services, and there are nearly six million minority-owned firms that are striving to grow. So forging a partnership between the federal government and the minority business community through this new procurement center will inevitably stimulate the nation's economy and create more jobs for more Americans," said MBDA National Director David Hinson.

The FPC is located in the nation's capital to better access federal procurement officials and prime contractors throughout the region and will service minority-owned firms of all sizes, but will target firms with annual revenues of more than \$1 million. Clients in industries in high-growth areas such as green technology, clean energy, health care, broadband technology, and infrastructure will also be targeted.

“Having the center in Washington, D.C. provides a focal point for minority-owned businesses throughout the country to get answers to their questions and resources to help them connect with potential buyers. We look forward to this partnership with MBDA to help federal agencies employ well-qualified, high-potential minority entrepreneurs as suppliers of needed goods and services,” said Yvonne Cheung Ho, president & CEO for the Metropolitan Economic Development Association.

The MFPC is a part of MBDA’s nationwide services network. It is the first MBDA Business Center to solely focus on federal contracting. The program director for the center is Joseph Montes.

About the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)

MBDA, www.mbda.gov, an agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce, promotes the growth and global competitiveness of the minority business community, making them better equipped to create jobs, impact local economies and compete successfully in domestic and global marketplaces. With a nationwide network of more than 45 business centers and strategic partners, MBDA assists minority entrepreneurs and business owners with consulting services, contract and financing opportunities, bonding and certification services, building business-to-business alliances and executive training.

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