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**MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY ANNOUNCES
2015 NATIONAL MED WEEK AWARD WINNERS**

WASHINGTON (September 22, 2015) — The U.S. Department of Commerce Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) today announced the 2015 National Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week Award winners – 14 organizations, businesses, and individuals who demonstrate leadership and commitment in advancing the minority business community. For more than 30 years, MBDA has led the MED Week Celebration. This year, MBDA is honored to continue the MED Week tradition in partnership with the National Minority Supplier Development Council, Inc. (NMSDC). The awards reception will take place at the 2015 NMSDC Conference and Business Opportunity Exchange on October 20 in San Diego, CA.

“This year’s MED Week awardees exemplify growth, diversity and transformation, and are true champions for the minority business community,” said Alejandra Y. Castillo, MBDA National Director. “We’re very proud of their tremendous achievements in impacting the national economy through innovation, job, and wealth creation.”

The awards are designed to celebrate and recognize outstanding achievements of minority entrepreneurs based on the challenges the business has overcome, total revenue, jobs created and the economic impact the business has had on their community. MBDA also recognizes individuals and organizations that have demonstrated leadership and commitment to the advancement of the minority business community.

The following are the 2015 National Minority Enterprise Development Award winners:

- **Abe Venable Legacy Award for Lifetime Achievement** is granted to an individual who has played an integral role in the creative, technical or professional progress of minority business development over the course of his/her life. This award is presented to **Ms. Della Clark, President of The Enterprise Center** for more than 25 years of continuously expanding a portfolio of programs centered on economic development and business acceleration for minorities and disadvantaged urban communities.
- **Ronald H. Brown Leadership Award** was inspired by the outstanding leadership of the late U.S. Secretary of Commerce and recognizes an individual who has shown exceptional leadership and achieved significant success in supporting diversity in the public or private sector. This year’s award is being presented to The Honorable John Lewis, U.S. Representative for the 5th Congressional District of Georgia. For more than 50 years Congressman Lewis’ activism has laid significant ground work for economic growth by facilitating the removal of obstacles that historically dictated and limited participation in the American socio-political process.

Champions of Minority Business Development:

- **Advocate of the Year Award** is being presented to **Mr. Jimmy Ferguson, Owner and Operator of J-C's McDs, LTD.** for his significant accomplishments in advocating minority business enterprise as an economic force in the global economy. Mr. Ferguson has owned and operated 16 McDonald's restaurants in Austin, Texas for the past 21 years. In addition to his numerous leadership roles that supported the needs, interests, and aspirations of small business owners, entrepreneurs, and corporate leaders he also co-founded the Asian/Pacific Islander American Chamber of Commerce & Entrepreneurship (National ACE) to provide focused support to the growing number of women- and minority-owned businesses in the United States.
- **Distinguished Supplier Diversity Award** is being presented to **Ms. Monetta Stephens, Manager of Supplier Diversity, Toyota Motor Sales, USA, Inc.** for her business practices that have significantly impacted the growth and development of minority-owned firms. With a long-term career at Toyota that spans more than 28 years, Ms. Stephens has been instrumental in developing and implementing a comprehensive strategic supplier diversity plan that ensures Toyota's suppliers reflect the communities where Toyota does business.
- **Access to Capital Award** is being presented to **Mr. Rodney S. Sampson, Founder and CEO of Opportunity Hub, Kingonomics, and the Legacy Opportunity Fund** for his outstanding leadership in the financial community in providing working and investment capital to minority-owned businesses. Mr. Sampson is passionate about reducing our nation's poverty and wealth gap by advancing the cause of innovation, coding, entrepreneurship, investment and capital formation as a way of life for all communities.

Minority-Owned Firms:

- **Minority Construction Firm of the Year** is being presented to **Weeminuche Construction - Ute Mountain Ute Tribe.** The Weeminuche Construction Authority (WCA) is a commercial construction enterprise owned and operated by the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. WCA provides comprehensive construction services to a wide range of clients, including federal, state and local municipalities, oil & gas companies, agriculture concerns, and building and heavy construction. The company employs a 75% Native American workforce, performing construction services in the Western States Region both on and off Native American Reservations.
- **Minority Export Firm of the Year** is being presented to **Shine Electronics Co., Inc.** Established in 1980, Shine is one of the pioneers of reverse logistics of wireless and cell phone products. As mobile phones began to dominate the electronics landscape, Shine began to focus on repairing handsets for wireless manufacturers and other service centers. Today, Shine Electronics recycles used smart phones by refurbishing and repairing pre-owned handsets and selling the products to international markets.
- **Minority Manufacturing Firm of the Year** is being presented to **Production Products Manufacturing and Sales Co, Inc.** Founded in 1978, Production Products is a manufacturer of engineered textile systems; high strength reinforced composite parts, electronic and electromechanical assemblies, and machining. Currently they operate four plants throughout the state of Missouri.
- **Minority Energy Firm of the Year** is being presented to **FCI Management.** Founded in 1998, FCI is a full service energy consulting company offering strategic energy solutions for corporate, residential, commercial and industrial clients, public and private schools, universities, and government and municipal agencies. FCI is a certified, minority woman-owned corporation, headquartered in Long Beach, CA with offices in Atlanta and New York.

- **Minority Technology Firm of the Year** is being presented to **CrossComm, Inc.** Founded in 1998, CrossComm is an app consultancy company that specializes in the conception and implementation of cloud-savvy apps for web, native IOS, and native Android. Based in Durham, NC the company is part of a handful of IOS app developers who have had a presence on the iTunes App Store since Day 1.
- **Minority Health Products and Services Firm of the Year** is being presented to **Nurses Etc. Staffing**, a Service Disabled Veteran owned, minority owned, medical services agency specializing in all aspects of healthcare, logistics, IT and administrative staffing. Located in San Antonio, Texas, Nurses Etc. currently employs over 600 professionals, providing short-term and long-term staffing solutions.
- **Minority Marketing and Communications Firm of the Year** is being presented to **Burrell Communication Group**. A Chicago-based full-service marketing communications company, Burrell Communications Group has maintained a long-standing reputation for being at the forefront in developing innovative strategies and go-to-market approaches that build and cement active relationships between client brands and the African-American community.
- **Minority Professional Services Firm of the Year** is being presented to **Acro Service Corporation**. Acro provides traditional staff augmentation and managed staff augmentation services in information technology, engineering, financial, accounting, professional, industrial, and other disciplines, as well as information technology outsourcing and consulting services to the world's leading organizations including Fortune 500 companies and many government entities. Acro has over 25 offices in the U. S. and additional offices in England and India.
- **Minority Business Enterprise of the Year** is being presented to **Ideal Systems Solutions, Inc.** Founded in 1997, Ideal Systems Solutions, Inc. is a leading provider of information technology products, solutions, and professional services throughout the U.S. to government agencies, contractors, educational institutions and commercial organizations nationwide. Headquartered in Minnetonka, Minnesota, with branch offices in New Mexico, Tennessee and Northern Minnesota.

About the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)

MBDA, www.mbda.gov, is the only Federal agency solely dedicated to the growth and global competitiveness of U.S. minority-owned businesses. Our programs and services better equip minority-owned firms to create jobs, build scale and capacity, increase revenues and expand regionally, nationally and internationally. Services are provided through a network of MBDA Business Centers. After 45 years of service, MBDA continues to be a dedicated strategic partner to all U.S. minority-owned businesses, committed to providing programs and services that provide greater access to capital, contracts and markets. Follow us on Twitter [@usmbda](https://twitter.com/usmbda)

About the National Minority Enterprise Development Week (MED Week)

Since 1983, every president has issued a Presidential Proclamation designating a National Minority Enterprise Development Week to recognize the contributions of the minority business community to the U.S. economy. For more than 30 years, MBDA has led the National MED Week program to convene business leaders, honor outstanding MBEs and advocates, promote business opportunities, and report industry trends.

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