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Business Matchmaking and SBDC team to help entrepreneurs access contracts
Statewide small business stimulus program headlines Bayfront Expo

NATIONAL CITY — On July 16 the Bayfront Expo and Job Fair will be the second stop in a 15-city, California tour aimed at increasing small business readiness to access stimulus-funded contracts through President Obama’s Economic Recovery Plan.

The program, Stimulus Opportunities for Small Business, is free for participants and will be presented by California Small Business Development Centers and Los Angeles-based nonprofit Business Matchmaking, in cooperation with the Small Business Advocate in the governor’s office.

“The National City Bayfront Expo is now an even more valuable resource for the community with the addition of the Stimulus Opportunities Program,” said Jacqueline Reynoso, National City Chamber of Commerce president/CEO. “We will have employment information, community resources, and now, vital information local businesses need to secure government contracts.”

Victor Castillo, director of the Southwestern College SBDC said, “Our center has been working with small businesses on surviving the economic downturn. Knowledge about stimulus programs is another tool for small business owners as they take on the difficulties of operating in this economy.”

Castillo added that one of the most exciting parts of the program is that participants will get firsthand insight from state and federal government buyers, and corporate representatives from American Airlines, American Express OPEN and Hewlett-Packard. Aside from capitalizing on stimulus opportunities, these events will connect small businesses with free consulting aimed at helping entrepreneurs survive or thrive in the current economy.

Marty Keller, director for the Office of Small Business Advocate, said that the California SBDC and Business Matchmaking partnership for these stimulus events is important because it offers important tools that can ease small businesses through the procurement process. “There will be incredible opportunities for both large and small businesses to work with state agencies on an exciting variety of projects as a result of the stimulus support California is receiving,” Keller said.

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The Stimulus Opportunities for Small Business event will also include updates for small businesses on new Small Business Administration (SBA) lending programs, and Workforce Development roles under the economic stimulus plan. The event will be held from noon to 4 p.m. at the new Marina Gateway, 740 Bay Marina Dr., National City. Admission to the event is free, but space is limited and registration is required. To sign up, go to <http://californiasbdc.org/stimulus> or call the National City Chamber of Commerce at (619) 477-9339 for more information.

National City Chamber of Commerce and the Southwestern College SBDC will co-host this event.

Stimulus Opportunities for Small Business has been made possible by underwriting from sponsors HP, American Express OPEN and American Airlines. Business Matchmaking specializes in small business procurement with a track record of facilitating more than 70,000 face to face buyer-seller meetings throughout the country. California Small Business Development Centers provide free business consulting and low-cost training for thousands of California small businesses annually. Go to www.businessmatchmaking.com or www.californiasbdc.org for more information.