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Albuquerque Woman is State's SBA Small Business Person of the Year

By John Woosley, U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) New Mexico District Director

Albuquerque entrepreneur Tamara Marquez-Nugent is New Mexico's Small Business Person of the Year and that puts her in the running for national recognition by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) at the National Small Business Week celebration May 23-25 in Washington, D.C.

Marquez-Nugent is president & CEO of Moving Solutions Inc. of Albuquerque, a wholly woman-owned company founded in 2006. The company assists companies in developing comprehensive relocation plans to minimize downtime and get on their feet quickly and efficiently in new surroundings. In four years, Moving Solutions has grown from a one-woman venture to an enterprise with 30 employees.

"I've worked hard at this business, in an industry dominated by men," said Marquez-Nugent. Breaking into the industry was especially tough, she said, given that many of her top competitors were national moving companies with far greater resources. "For a lot of those companies, the money (they make) doesn't stay here," Marquez-Nugent said, whereas she said she buys what she needs for her business from local suppliers and vendors and all her employees live in New Mexico.

The New Mexico Small Business Administration will honor Marquez-Nugent and other small-business standouts and their advocates from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. June 3 at the state's Small Business Week Awards Celebration luncheon at Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town, 800 Rio Grande Blvd. N.W.

This year's award recipients represent the excellent entrepreneurial character of America's small businesses. The SBA New Mexico district office is especially pleased that three of New Mexico's winners have also been named Region VI winners and two New Mexico winners are national winners. (Region VI includes the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.)

Lloyd Calderon, director of the state Department of Veterans' Services' Veteran Enterprise and Training Program will receive the National Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year award. The award recognizes individuals who have distinguished themselves by increasing business opportunities for veterans, demonstrated success in obtaining community support for

veteran-owned businesses and improved awareness of business opportunities among veteran business owners. Calderon was first selected as New Mexico's award winner and then went on to compete at the regional level among the ten districts in Region VI. He was declared the national winner after competing against representatives of the 68 districts in the 9 other SBA regions. The second national award winner is the Roswell, N.M. office of WESST. The office, led by director Anthony Urquidez, received the Women's Business Center of Excellence Award in recognition of its assistance to women entrepreneurs. WESST, which provides a wide variety of training and counseling services, is also one of the state's two SBA microlenders.

The two regional winners are Small Business Exporter of the Year David Ramahi, president & CEO of Albuquerque-based Optomec Inc. and Women in Business Champion of the Year Sandra L. Cody, president of Resources for Excellence Inc.

The New Mexico Small Business Week Celebration is sponsored by the Small Business Administration, the New Mexico Small Business Development Center Network and the New Mexico Department of Veterans' Services. The event begins with six morning training sessions that include the following topics: Marketing to Government Agencies; Doing Business with General Services Administration; Networking Effectively; Government Agency Personnel Training; Financing & International Trade Opportunities; and Facilitating Teaming Arrangement Strategies, with special emphasis on opportunities for veterans. The concurrent training sessions begin at 8:30 a.m. and 10 a.m. followed by the awards luncheon at 11:30 a.m. A Matchmaking Expo follows the luncheon from 2 to 5 p.m.

Attendance to the daylong event costs \$35 per person. Register by calling 505-428-1362 or 1-800-281-7232 or 505-248-8225. The registration form is available for downloading on the SBA website at www.sba.gov.nm.

Finance New Mexico is an initiative of the New Mexico Small Business Investment Corporation (NMSBIC) and its partners to assist individuals and businesses in obtaining skills and funding-resources for their business or idea. To learn more, go to www.FinanceNewMexico.org.

