



## *NEWS RELEASE*

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### **SPRINGFIELD RESIDENT WINS SBA'S VETERANS ADVOCATE AWARD**

**BOSTON** – Donald L. Jernigan, Sr. of Springfield has been named the 2003 Massachusetts Veteran Small Business Advocate by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) according to an announcement made by Elaine Guiney, Massachusetts SBA Director.

The Veteran Small Business Advocate Award is presented annually to an individual who has fulfilled a commitment to advancing small business opportunities for U.S. armed forces veterans.

“The SBA Advocate awards honor the best small business has to offer, and Donald Jernigan is an outstanding choice,” said SBA Regional Administrator Jeffrey Butland. “This is an outstanding testimonial, not only to his accomplishments, but to his commitment and dedication to small business success and community service as well. I join my SBA colleagues in congratulating Donald on this significant achievement.”

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Donald Jernigan has been a veterans' advocate for more than 25 years. Most recently, he was elected Executive Vice President of the Northeast Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Network, Inc. The mission of this organization is to create linkages state by state with other service connected disabled veterans who desire to take advantage of Public Law 106-50, targeting disabled veterans, and veteran business owners as partners. Jernigan is also an active member of the Northeast Regional Council on Small Business. The group, which consists of small business procurement officers from numerous prime contractors throughout the country, sponsors matchmaking events. These events have allowed the members to identify veteran-owned small businesses and have facilitated the emergence of a veteran business-owners support and technical assistance network.

“Mr. Jernigan’s determination to honor and advocate for veterans has truly given them an effective voice in their local communities in business and in education,” said SBA Director Guiney. “He is the link for veterans to small business resources and services and a very effective advocate for veterans, their families and the small business community.”

Jernigan will be honored at an awards luncheon at the Boston Marriott Copley Place at noontime on September 12, 2003. The Massachusetts Small Business Person of the Year, Holly Safford, President of The Catered Affair in Hingham, will be honored along with other small business advocates from throughout the commonwealth. The event is open to the public and those interested in attending should contact Christine Carter at SBA at 617-565-5560.

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*For more information about all of the SBA’s programs for small businesses, call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800 U ASK SBA or TDD 704-344-6640, or locally at 617-565-5590 or visit the SBA’s extensive Web site at <http://www.sba.gov>.*