



NEWS RELEASE

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SBA FOCUSES OUTREACH ON AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES

Announces New Head of SBA's Disabilities Initiative

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has renewed its commitment to improve entrepreneurial opportunities for Americans with disabilities with the appointment of Jeanette Harvey to head the Agency's Disabilities Initiative. She will plan and implement activities that provide information, training, counseling and education to prospective and existing small business owners.

“Jeanette brings to the SBA a solid track record as an effective small business advocate for individuals with disabilities,” said SBA Administrator Aida Alvarez. **“I look forward to working closely with her to open new opportunities and to strengthen our outreach to disabled Americans.”**

Ms. Harvey will also work with public and private-sector partners to provide small business owners with information, education and training that is cost-effective, of high quality and reflective of trends in small business development.

Ms. Harvey, who is herself an individual with a disability, previously served as the national director of the United Cerebral Palsy Association in Washington, D.C. She also operated her own small business, developing policies and programs for the advancement of people with disabilities. Ms. Harvey oversaw a graduate program in Management at the University of San Francisco where she created the first global graduate program integrating disability services in a business context. She has lectured internationally on disability rights and served as a consultant to a number of Fortune 500 companies. Ms. Harvey holds a bachelor of science degree from Portland State University.

SBA Deputy Administrator Fred Hochberg announced the appointment while marking the 10th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in Collinsville, Ill., this morning. **“At the SBA, we have come to appreciate that people with disabilities are a key element – and an untapped resource – in sustaining our nation's historic economic growth,”** said Deputy Administrator Hochberg. **“The ADA provides 54 million Americans access to services, programs, benefits, and employment opportunities to level the playing field.”**

While in Collinsville, the Deputy Administrator visited a business owned by Jerry Buck, a disabled Vietnam veteran who started his business in 1989 with a \$200,000 loan backed by the SBA.

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The SBA is a key federal agency in President Clinton's Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities. The task force was created in 1998 to ensure access to services and other resources for adults with disabilities. The SBA and 10 other federal agencies are working together to develop small business and entrepreneurial activities for adults with disabilities.

The SBA's Disabilities Initiative, part of the Office of Entrepreneurial Development, is dedicated to ensuring that Americans with disabilities have full access to the necessary business development and expansion tools available through the Agency's entrepreneurial development, lending and procurement programs.

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*Additional information about SBA's programs and services is available at SBA's Web site: <http://www.sba.gov> or by calling the **SBA's Answer Desk at 1-800 U ASK SBA.***

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