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PRESS RELEASE
for Use
May 9, 2006

AUGUSTA – Maine small business owners who completed 36 hours of technical business skills training were honored by Governor John E. Baldacci at a May 9 Blaine House ceremony. Twenty-three current and nascent business owners participated in a 12-week training project called *Calculated Risk*, conducted in Orono, Augusta, and Portland and designed by the Maine Small Business Development Centers (Maine SBDC) for Maine’s food industry including growers, value-added food producers, and grocers.

“In the excitement of starting a business, there’s often a temptation to just get started and then figure out all the things you don’t know but should have known before you opened your doors,” said the Governor Baldacci in remarks at the Blaine House ceremony, “You deserve to be recognized for the work you have done to plan and prepare your businesses for success.”

Calculated Risk was part of a larger effort called *From the Ground Up*, providing training and technical business assistance to Maine’s food industry. The project evolved from research in 2001 by the University of Maine’s Department of Resource Economics and Policy, determining that Maine’s food industry wanted a better understanding of business management principles and related technical assistance. In response to the research, Maine SBDC designed and implemented the training; its certified business counselors provided one-on-one assistance. Both the research and training were supported by the USDA’s Fund for Rural America grant.

“I couldn’t have taken my new product to market without my experience in *Calculated Risk*,” said Alvin Theriault, a *Calculated Risk* graduate who showed the Governor the new flavored fishing fly he handcrafts and currently sells to 15 sporting and outdoor adventure retailers. Theriault, who owns Theriault Family Farm in Sherman Station, said the development of his newest product line known as Theriault Flies is now his farm’s most profitable venture.

“The completion of this 12-week course evidences a remarkable commitment by Maine’s small businesses to improve their skills and opportunities for success,” said Maine SBDC State Director, John Massaua, “Not only did participants attend classes for three hours a week this winter, they also did extensive homework and continued to run their demanding small businesses.”

Small business owners and nascent entrepreneurs who completed *Calculated Risk* include:

Barbara Brooks, *Seal Cove Farm*, Mount Desert
Suzanne Brown, Brownville Junction
Philip Cheverie, *CPK, LLC*, Alfred

Paul Clifford, *PC Systems*, Stockton Springs
Venecia Clifford, *From Venyssa's Heart*
Jessica Decker, Lagrange
Claire Gelinas, *Fare Share Co-op*, Norway
Bernie Huckestein, Bangor
Laura Huckestein, Bangor
Theresa Hyatt, *La Cuisine*, Turner
Dana Jones, *La Cuisine*, Turner
Chris Kravitt, *Tree Stump Leather*, Ellsworth
Pam Longfellow, *Fuller's Market*, West Gardiner
Walt Longfellow, *Fuller's Market*, West Gardiner
Waite Maclin, *Pastor Chuck Orchards*, Portland
Alison Prince, *Prince Specialty Seafood*, Orr's Island
Alvin Theriault, *Theriault Family Farm*, Sherman Station
Mary Thompson, *Beans Corner Farm*, Freedom
Elaine Varney, *Groundhog Gums*, Georgetown
Peter Voigt, *Ovenworks Bagel Company*, Brooklin
Laura Webb, *Downhome Farm*, Parsonsfield
Jayne Whiteside, Augusta
Mathew Williams, *Aurora Mills & Farms*, Houlton

About Maine Small Business Development Centers: *Maine Small Business Development Centers (Maine SBDC) and its tech-focus group, Maine Small Business & Technology Development Centers (Maine SBTDC) provide comprehensive business management assistance, training, resource and information services to Maine's micro, small and technology-based business communities. Business assistance is provided at no cost to business owners by professional certified business counselors who meet rigorous education and business experience standards.*

Maine SBDC/SBTDC is a partnership program of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) in association with the SBA/OSBDC, Maine Department of Economic and Community Development (Maine DECD), the University of Southern Maine (USM), and leading economic and/or community development hosting organizations, including the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments (AVCOG), Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (CEI), Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC), and the Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC); with support from the Maine Technology Institute (MTI), the University of Maine (UMaine), and other contractors, allies and stakeholders.

Accredited by the Association of Small Business Development Centers (ASBDC) and administered by USM's School of Business, Maine SBDC/SBTDC operates a network of 11 service centers and a number of outreach offices located conveniently throughout the state.

More information about the Maine SBDC/SBTDC can be found at www.mainesbdc.org.

