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NEWS RELEASE
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Maine SBDC Names Mary McAleney Its 30th Anniversary Small Business Champion

Portland, ME: Maine Small Business Development Centers (Maine SBDC) announced today that it has named Mary Elizabeth McAleney as its Small Business Champion. The recognition is being given in celebration of Maine SBDC's 30th anniversary of helping Maine small businesses succeed, and follows in the tradition of the SBDC's twenty-fifth anniversary when similar recognition was given then Governor, Angus King.

As the current District Director of the U.S. Small Business Administration's Maine District Office, McAleney oversees the delivery of SBA programs throughout the State. "All who know Mary, know she goes way beyond her responsibilities at the SBA to truly champion Maine's small businesses and their importance to the State's well-being," said John Massaua, Maine SBDC State Director.

"Be it a plant closing, a major downtown fire, the loss of a military base, a congressional or gubernatorial request, lack of snow, too much rain, or simply a small business in need – Mary's there promoting collaboration, reaching out, leading, making things happen and getting stuff done," said Massaua, "She is tireless and selfless with an incredible sense of humor and a sense of urgency beyond compare; she is a true friend to Maine, a real advocate for its small business."

A native of Maine, growing up in Vanceboro, McAleney graduated from Merrimack College, North Andover, Massachusetts. Prior to her career with the SBA, which started some twelve years ago, McAleney taught school at Catherine McAuley High School in Portland and later worked in the Maine legislature and as a field organizer for the Maine State Employees Association. After the election of U.S. Senator George Mitchell, McAleney joined his staff as scheduler and later served as the Senator's Chief of Staff during his tenure as Senate Majority Leader.

McAleney lives in South Portland, serves on numerous boards and commissions, and likes to spend time with her many Maine friends and her extensive family, enjoying, as she says, "the wonders of Maine."

Maine Senator Lynn Bromley (D-South Portland), who chairs the 123rd Maine Legislature's Business, Research and Economic Development Committee (BRED), commenting on the recognition being given McAleney, said, "There is no one more deserving of this champion recognition than Mary McAleney. She really is the big sister for small business in our State. Mary is well known for collaborative style of working, or as she would say it, for encouraging us all to 'share toys and play well together.' She is one of the treasures of Maine."

McAleney will be honored at an Awards Luncheon during the Maine SBDC's Entrepreneurship and Small Business Symposium on March 15th. At the luncheon, being held in USM's Glickman Library, the Maine SBDC announced earlier this week that it also will honor thirty small businesses (the Maine SBDC '30'). "The Maine SBDC '30' Awards recognize and celebrate not only thirty small businesses chosen as models of entrepreneurship," said Massaua, "they also call to attention the instrumental part played by small entrepreneurial companies in building and maintaining the economy of Maine."

About the Maine SBDC Entrepreneurship and Small Business Symposium: *The Maine SBDC Entrepreneurship and Small Business Symposium, a day of learning, celebration and inspiration, is being held on March 15th, 2007 in the Abromson Community Education Center on the Portland Campus of the University of Southern Maine from 8:30am to 5:30pm to commemorate the Maine Small Business Development Centers 30th Anniversary - marking thirty years of Maine SBDC's helping Maine's small businesses succeed. The Symposium is featuring:*

- *A Morning Plenary Session with Steven S. Little, renowned speaker, accomplished author and senior consultant to Inc. Magazine, on 21st Century Strategies for Building One's Company and Tom Stemberg, office superstore pioneer, founder and chair emeritus, Staples Inc., and named by Inc. Magazine as one of America's 25 most fascinating entrepreneurs, on Doing It Right.*
- *The Maine SBDC 30th Anniversary Commemorative Video featuring Maine small business owners representing the very significant importance of small business to Maine's economy.*
- *A motivational Lunch & Learn Program for small business owners and the USM community, and an Invitational Awards Luncheon for Maine SBDC stakeholders and award winners, including an address by Governor John Baldacci.*
- *The Maine SBDC "30" Awards to thirty Maine small businesses who "tried and succeeded".*
- *One Incredible Afternoon – Ready... Set... Grow!: an intensive hands-on workshop on the seven irrefutable rules of business growth, presented by INC. Magazine and the Maine SBDC.*

The Symposiums is being sponsored in part by Bangor Savings Bank.

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) and other co-hosts, 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 12 service centers and numerous outreach offices located conveniently throughout the state.

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