

NEWS RELEASE

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Subject: Small Business Growth Corporation's Annual Meeting & Awards Presentation

Small Business Growth Corporation (Growth Corp) held its Annual Meeting at Soldier Field in Chicago, Illinois on March 6, 2008. Growth Corp, a not-for-profit corporation, is the Midwest's largest Certified Development Company (CDC) authorized by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to deliver the SBA 504 Loan Program.

At the Annual Meeting, Growth Corp elected its Board of Directors and Officers for 2008.

Officers elected were:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Elected Office</u>	<u>Institution</u>
Karen Lee	Chairperson	Balas, Inc.
Jerry Furby	Vice Chair/Treasurer	National City Bank
Douglas Kinley	President	Small Business Growth Corporation
Barbara Roberts	Secretary	P.E.C. Communications

Directors continuing office for 2008 include:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Institution</u>
Donald Brookhart	Brookhart Financial Consulting
R. Dennis Cody	Southern Illinois University
L. Jay Cole	AXA Advisors
Dennis Duke	Trinity Regional Health System
Rick Hanselman	Real Estate Group
Robert Lincoln	Lincoln Consulting
Michael Milligan	Hinsdale Bank
Mark Papoccia	Harris Bank
John Smith	JLS Associates
Jack Lavin	IL Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
David Wood	
David Lahl	Private Bank & Trust
Dave Mayer	Midwest Industrial Services
Carter Huhta	Leaders Bank

As part of the annual meeting, Growth Corp announced the 2007 Lender of the Year. This award is given to the financial institution participating in the highest volume of SBA 504 loans. The award was presented to Harris Bank for participation in ?? projects totaling over ?? million in project financing. Emilia DiMenco accepted the award on behalf of Harris Bank. Also receiving awards were Chase Bank and American Chartered Bank.

In addition, the following individuals were awarded Outstanding Lender Awards:

- Steven W. Cook, Farmers State Bank
- Chris Schneiderman, State Bank of Freeport
- Christine Yoon, Foster Bank
- Peggy Swanberry, The PrivateBank

Also attending the meeting was Robert Esquivel, SBA Finance Chief.

The SBA 504 Loan Program was created especially for expanding businesses. The 504 loan program, through coordination with a participating financial institution, provides small businesses with long-term, fixed-rate financing for the acquisition or construction of fixed assets. Currently, the 504 rate is averaging below prime, creating an attractive financing option for small business owners. For more information on the 504 loan program, please contact Small Business Growth Corporation, 217-787-7557.

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For more information, please contact:

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