



News Release

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SBA Technical Assistance Programs Reached A Record 2.44 million People in FY 2004

WASHINGTON – More than 2.44 million people interested in starting a business or expanding an existing one consulted with one of the U.S. Small Business Administration’s technical assistance programs during FY 2004, a record for the agency’s programs.

“The President’s small business agenda seeks to continue expanding business ownership across America,” SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto said. “These numbers show that more and more Americans want to participate in the President’s Ownership Society, and they’re looking to the SBA for help. They also show that the SBA is having a greater impact on entrepreneurship every day, helping to extend prosperity to all parts of America.”

The most popular technical assistance program was the Small Business Training Network/E-Business Institute, which offers 80 free online courses, workshops and resources in a virtual campus setting designed to assist entrepreneurs and other students of enterprise. The Training Network Web site recorded almost 958,000 users during FY 2004.

Under the direction of the SBA’s Office of Entrepreneurial Development, a record 2.44 million entrepreneurs received business counseling and technical assistance through one or more of the agency’s counseling and training programs:

- Small Business Development Centers counseled 725,799 clients;
- SCORE, Counselors to America’s Small Businesses, counseled 468,152 clients, nearly a quarter of them through its innovative online counseling system;
- SBA Business Information Centers reached 168,640 people;
- The SBA Small Business Training Network/E-Business Institute Web site registered 957,921 users;
- SBA Women’s Business Centers provided assistance to 122,712 people.

Along with the records established for the SBA’s technical assistance and business counseling programs, the agency’s small business financing programs produced a record level of investment in FY 2004, as well. The SBA and its lending partners surpassed the previous lending record in both the flagship 7(a) and 504 loan programs, and established volume records in loans to women, minorities, and veterans.

All told, the SBA provided \$19.29 billion in loans and venture capital financing for 87,800 small businesses in FY 2004, compared to \$15.24 billion for 71,200 small businesses in FY 2003.