

November 8, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Dave Wellman
Diversified Marketing Strategies
219-226-0300
dave@3dms.com

Regional Development Company Presents Awards, Welcomes New Board Members

Certified Development Company celebrates small business lending success at its Annual Membership Meeting.

Valparaiso, IN (November 8, 2011) – The Regional Development Company (RDC) held its Annual Membership Meeting Thursday, October 27 at Gamba restaurant in Merrillville. The RDC, one of five Certified Development Companies in Indiana empowered to administer the U.S. Small Business Administration's 504 lending program, reviewed its performance in 2011 and welcomed new members at the gala event.

For the fiscal year ended September 30, 2011, the RDC approved 32 loans for a total of \$11,738,000. These loans fueled \$33,063,132 in total project dollars and leveraged investment, and created 224 jobs in northern Indiana.

Erica Passauer, President & Executive Director of the RDC, said that loan volume had had increased noticeably in the last 60 days of fiscal 2011, which she believes is a sign that businesses are feeling increasingly confident about the economy. "In the last two months, we had several million dollars in loan approvals, and for fiscal 2012 we already have \$5 million worth of loans in the pipeline," she said.

The RDC's performance in 2011 reflects a national trend. "We have seen great growth in SBA lending," Passauer said. "In fact, nationally SBA lending is at its highest level ever." While the SBA 504 Loan Program is always an excellent choice of financing for borrowers, providing a 20-year fixed interest rate and 10 percent down payment, tough economic times make its use even smarter. "It's the wisest choice a business can make for the purchase of owner-occupied commercial real estate and equipment," Passauer said. "Borrowers can retain more of their cash for working capital needs with the low down payment. Banks look to the program during and after a recession as a way to lower their overall portfolio risk. It's a win-win for both banks and borrowers."

At the meeting, the RDC also honored two of its partner banks for their work in 2011. Centier Bank was recognized with Most Active Bank Partner of the Year Award, and Paul Thiel and Jack Esala, both also with Centier Bank, were named Lenders of the Year.

Centier Bank has been the RDC's top referring bank for the past 15 years, Passauer noted. "Centier truly appreciates the advantages of the 504 loan program and their loan officers include it as an option to their borrowers on all qualified loan requests," she said.

In addition to announcing its annual results and awards, the RDC elected two new Board Members, John Matthiesen of Clifton Gunderson LLP, and Keven Jennings, Lafayette Savings Bank, as well as two new Members, Bert Cook, Portage Economic Development Corporation and Don Koliboski, Northwest Indiana Forum.

Note: Photos from the event are available upon request. Contact Dave Wellman at dave@3dms.com.

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About the Regional Development Company

The Regional Development Company (RDC) is a Certified Development Company (CDC). CDCs are regional economic development organizations that are licensed by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). CDCs cover various geographic regions that can range from a single county in a state to a multi-state region. The RDC makes loans under the SBA 504 loan program to assist small business. The RDC processes, approves, closes and services all loans. Funding is arranged by the RDC through the Central Servicing Agent whom issues a bond. In all ways, the RDC is the direct lender for the SBA 504 loan program. There are over 300 Certified Development Companies nationwide.