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Press Release

Source: Project Tsunami

Women's Entrepreneurship Tops Agenda at June Conference in Istanbul

Tuesday May 25, 9:00 am ET

Washington-Based Project Tsunami Plays Key Role

WASHINGTON--(BUSINESS WIRE)--May 25, 2004--Women's entrepreneurship will top the agenda at an international conference in Istanbul, Turkey, June 5-7. The event is being co-hosted by the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development (OECD) and Washington, DC-based Project Tsunami, a global accelerator for women's entrepreneurship (www.projectsunami.org).

The women's entrepreneurship event is part of an OECD ministerial conference expected to attract delegates from 87 countries. Founded in 1961, the OECD works to build strong market economies, expand free trade and contribute to development in industrialized as well as developing countries.

Project Tsunami, a non-profit corporation, was founded in October 2002 with a seed grant from the Kansas City-based Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. Project Tsunami grew out of the 50-country OECD Conference on Women Entrepreneurs held in Paris in November 2000.

The Istanbul conference will include a discussion of the importance of women-owned businesses to economic growth and job creation as a vehicle to drive economic growth. The United States is sending a large delegation of government and private sector representatives. The U.S is generally considered

the most advanced country in the world for women's entrepreneurship. America's 10.6 million women-owned and equally-owned firms employ 19.1 million workers and generate \$2.46 trillion in revenues.

Virginia Littlejohn, President and CEO of Project Tsunami, says: "The event will serve as a forum for experts from around the world to share research, strategies and best practices to accelerate women's entrepreneurship on a global basis. Once the event is over, Project Tsunami will be organizing online forums as a way of sharing best practices in an ongoing way."

Melanie Sabelhaus, Deputy Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration, will lead the U.S. delegation in Istanbul, both at the women entrepreneurial forum and at a parallel OECD Ministerial Conference. Sabelhaus says: "Government and private sector participants from the U.S. are looking forward not only to learning from other countries, but to sharing some of our best practices."

The Washington, DC-based National Women's Business Council (NWBC) will be unveiling two new reports in Istanbul - one focused on the public policy history of women's enterprise development in the U.S., the other highlighting a number of "best practice" organizations and initiatives that help support women's entrepreneurship.

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