

# News from the District Director

## Fresno District Office U.S. Small Business Administration

July, 2001

<http://www.sba.gov/ca/fresno/>

Antonio Valdez, District Director

### **Weill Institute SBDC Hosts New Export Assistance Center**

Kern County has its own U. S. Export Assistance Center (USEAC), thanks to the efforts of Randy Innis, Director of the Kern County Export Development Program (see photo), Jeff Johnson, Weill Institute SBDC Director, and many others. "We've recognized the huge and growing exporting potential for Kern County business, and the need for such a center to be right here," Innis said.



Randy Innis speaking at the July 3 Kern County USEAC opening ceremony. Congressman Bill Thomas, the event's key speaker, looks on.

Glenn Roberts, U. S. Dept. of Commerce Trade Specialist, is the USEAC's on-site Director. It is one of 16 such centers in California that furnish a full range of export information services and referrals. The USEAC is located at the Weill Institute SBDC offices in Bakersfield's historic Haberfelde Building, 1706 Chester Ave., Suite 200, phone: 661/637-0136.

### **SBA District Director Hails USEAC Opening**

Fresno SBA District Director Antonio Valdez attended the Kern County USEAC opening, calling the center "a great development for Kern County's small business community." Valdez said that the SBA has excellent export financing products tailored to small businesses looking into international sales for the first time, or expanding their already established international markets. "We



Antonio Valdez visits with Congressman Bill Thomas at the Kern County USEAC opening at the Weill Institute SBDC in Bakersfield

will be working very closely with the USEAC," Valdez said, "and we expect to do more export-financing guaranties in Kern County as a result of the USEAC's being here". Kern County is one of 15 central California counties that comprise the Fresno SBA office's service area.

## **Fresno Finance Chief Awarded National Credit Instructorship**

Lynn Knutson, Fresno SBA district's Chief of Finance, has been appointed as instructor of advanced commercial credit for SBA loan officers nationwide. Knutson is recognized for his incisive knowledge of SBA's loan programs as well as industry-wide applications of sound commercial credit processing.

## **Debenture Rates & Increased 504 Activity**

The interest rate for 20-year fixed rate debentures remains fairly flat: 6.34% in May, 6.44% in June, and July, 2001 6.625%.

504 Loans: Comparing June 2000 cumulative figures to those of June 2001, an increase in 504 loan activity is noted in both number and dollar amount. As of June 2000, 70 loans were made in the aggregate amount of \$29.6 million. Through June 2001, 92 loans were made in the aggregate amount of \$36.2 million. This translates into a low effective interest rate on projects, which is at one of the historic lows for this small business lending tool.

"I hope to see this upward trend in lending activity continue and strengthen," District Director Antonio Valdez commented. "It means better access to fixed-asset financing for small-business owners planning to buy land and buildings".

## **HUBZone Happenings**

Marilyn Henderson, Business Development Team Leader, advises that she and her staff are working with the Hanford and Lemoore Chambers of Commerce to put on informational HUBZone and government-contracting workshops. More on these as information and agenda details develop.

Marilyn Henderson can be contacted at (559) 487-5785, x. 103 for information on the HUBZone program.

## **Top Ten District Lenders**

### **The Top Ten June, 2001 Loan Production Rankings**

Lender	Rank	# Loans	Dollar Amount
Imperial Bank	1	33	\$12023.7
County Bank	2	27	\$3861.4
Bank of America	3	27	\$1443.9
Bank of The Sierra	4	25	\$4789.4
Clovis Community	5	24	\$4615.3
Wells Fargo	6	24	\$3143.8
Mission Community	7	21	\$6936.0
Mid State Bank	8	21	\$2938.0
Heritage Bank	9	19	\$12700.4
Monterey County Bank	10	19	\$2737.7

## **Third Quarter Thru June 30, 2001 Overall Lending Activity**

Through the Third Quarter ending June 30, 2001 the Fresno District Office has assisted 526 businesses for a total of \$153.6 million in loans.