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Women's Business Enterprise Council-West Holds Third Annual Excellence Awards Gala

PHOENIX, AZ — The Women's Business Enterprise Council-West (WBEC-West) celebrated 10 top women-owned businesses, businesswomen and corporations at its Third Annual Excellence Awards Gala on November 4, 2005. Held at the Phoenix Zoo's Stonehouse, the theme of the evening was "Beyond Your Wildest Dreams." The evening started with a reception complete with a few wild animals tended to by zookeepers.

"Our Excellence Awards highlight the dedicated, passionate and successful Women Business Enterprises and the corporations that support them," says WBEC-West President & CEO, Lisa Shevy. "These awards recognize that our members offer outstanding services, products and customer service in addition to bringing diversity to the business world."

Corporate member Rod Lasley, Chairman of the Board and Supplier Diversity Coordinator at Arizona Public Service (APS), agrees: "I believe it is important to showcase the many talented Women Business Enterprises that are members of WBEC-West. It is our goal to ensure that their excellent service and dedication as WBE suppliers to corporations such as APS does not go unnoticed, and I believe we are successful."

Winners gathered honors in 10 categories. Those awarded for individual achievement included WBE Advocate of the Year, Aylin Cankardes of Rockwell Financial Group, Greenwood Village, CO; Corporate Advocate of the Year, Jaymee Lomax of Sempra

Energy Utilities, San Diego, CA; and Board Member of the Year, Cathy Pilato of The Dial Corporation, Scottsdale, AZ. The coveted Chairman's Award went to Eileen Burick, President of Burick Communication Design of Phoenix, AZ.

Four companies garnered Supplier of the Year awards: The Class 1 award (for a company with revenues under \$1 million) went to Colorado's Gasher-Brum Energy Partners; the Class 2 award (for a company with revenues between \$1-\$10 million) went to California-based Beyond Zebra, Inc.; the Class 3 award (for a company with revenues between \$10 million and \$50 million) went to Corporate Interior Systems, a Phoenix Arizona company; and the final supplier award, the Exceptional Supplier, with revenues in excess of \$50 million was given to Denver-based Andavo Travel.

Newport Beach's Arose Recruiting Company received the WBE to WBE Business Award and Chevron Corporation was named Corporation of the Year.

Keynote speaker Nancy D. Solomon discussed the importance of woman business owners and how they bring passion and strong customer service to the business world. Sempra Energy Utilities of California was the title sponsor of the event.

The awards dinner followed "Matchmaker Madness"—a WBEC-West program that provided 53 woman-owned suppliers a chance to meet with representatives from major corporations for 15-minute one-on-one meetings.

About WBEC-West:

WBEC-West is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization bringing together corporations and government entities with certified Women Business Enterprises (WBEs) to promote a shared interest in supplier diversity. As a regional partner of the Women's Business Enterprise National Council, (www.wbenc.org) we are a part of a network of WBEs, corporations and regionally focused organizations for women in business. WBEC-West is headquartered in Mesa, Arizona and provides the WBENC certification throughout Arizona, Colorado, Southern California, Utah, Wyoming and Hawaii.

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