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Women-Owned Businesses Optimistic about 2010

DALLAS – January 11, 2010 –Women Business Enterprises (WBEs) are definitely optimistic about the 2010 business climate, following a year that saw marginal growth. In an annual survey by the Women's Business Council - Southwest (WBCS), 60 percent of WBEs say they plan to expand their business this year, both in terms of revenue and employment, while 34 percent believe their headcount and performance will at least remain stable.

While 2009 proved difficult for many businesses, 42 percent of WBEs surveyed said the year was better than 2008. A few WBEs even reported revenue performance up 50 percent or more over 2008. In terms of headcount, 2009 employment within WBEs was relatively stable; 34 percent reported no change in their numbers of employees in 2009, while 28 percent reported adding nine employees or fewer during the year.

Looking at the new year's business challenges, 46 percent of WBE survey respondents said the prospect of reduced margins and profit was their biggest concern. Also, access to capital and increased competition, each named by 18 percent of respondents, are other pressing issues for their businesses in 2010. That represents a significant change from the survey a year ago, in which 45 percent of WBEs reported the top 2009 business challenges were access to potential clients/customers, while 31 percent were concerned about reduced margins and profit and 12 percent cited access to working capital as their biggest worry.

“Despite the perception that 2009 was a year of poor performance, our members reported \$5.6 billion in gross revenues in 2009, which is a 38 percent increase over 2008,” said Debbie Hurst, president of WBCS. “In both up and down years, WBEs have proven to be solid business partners. That positions them well for growth as companies continue to turn to WBEs as trusted and reliable suppliers and vendors.”



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In 2009, Hurst added, WBCS corporate members reported doing more than \$486 million in business with WBEs, a 27 percent increase over 2008.

WBCS members in Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Arkansas responded to the annual survey, which is conducted to gauge the level of success of WBEs each year.

About WBCS

Headquartered in Arlington, Texas, WBCS is dedicated to increasing mutually beneficial procurement opportunities between certified woman-owned businesses, corporations, businesses, government entities, institutions and other organizations. With more than 730 WBE members and 80 corporate sustaining members, WBCS is in its 14th year of providing national certification to women-owned businesses. To find out more about the WBCS please visit www.wbcsouthwest.org. WBCS is a regional affiliate of Women Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) covering Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas and New Mexico.

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