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## **Women Business Enterprises Receive Cash Grants to Fund Growth Initiatives**

*Women Business Council - Southwest Presents Awards  
in Honor of Lillie Knox, Founding Member*

**DALLAS—September 14, 2009**— Three expansion-minded women business enterprises are the recipients of this year's Lillie Knox Investing for Growth award, presented by the Women's Business Council -Southwest (WBCS). The three businesses will receive a cash grant of \$5,000 each to be used to advance their businesses.

The 2009 Lillie Knox winners are MEB Construction of Hurst, Texas; Trans-Expedite of El Paso, Texas; and Mitchell Communications Group of Fayetteville, Arkansas. The awards will be presented at the Lillie Knox Memorial luncheon during the WBCS 14th Annual Harvesting Partnerships event on September 14 at the Westin DFW Airport Hotel.

The winning companies were selected based on how they would use the funds to help take their businesses to the next level, as well as their involvement in WBCS. Winners were selected from 29 applicants, the largest number of applications ever received for this award.

MEB Construction, a \$1.3 million women business enterprise, provides general contracting services and facility maintenance services for clients such as the University of North Texas, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Plano ISD and the Carswell Joint Reserve Base. The company applied for the grant to fund the purchase of additional technology to better communicate with its field personnel, subcontractors and customers. "We have experienced substantial growth in the last few years and have outgrown our current communications system," said Eve Fields, president of MEB Construction. "This award will enable us to upgrade our technology infrastructure so we can better meet our customers' needs by communicating in a timely and effective manner."

Trans-Expedite, an \$18 million company, will use the award grant to purchase new explosives and narcotics detection equipment approved by the Transportation and Security Administration's Certified Cargo Screening Program. Trans-Expedite will be the first indirect air carrier in El

Paso, Texas to be certified. Keeli Jernigan, president of Trans-Expedite, explained that “This equipment is essential to ensuring we meet the rigorous security standards required of certified facilities. It will also enable us to broaden our services as an Indirect Air Carrier. By screening shipments, we can reduce the likelihood that customer cargo may be physically opened and bypass the potential delays that can occur if all screening is performed only at the airport.”

Arkansas-based Mitchell Communications is a rapidly growing public relations and communications firm serving companies such as Walmart, Tyson Foods and J.B. Hunt Transport Services. “The Lillie Knox award will be used to help us fund a new service capability we are in the process of developing,” said Elise Mitchell, president of Mitchell Communications. “This new service will allow us to compete on a larger scale, as well as give our clients the ability to better assess how they are perceived throughout the U.S. in order to improve their overall reputation and achieve their business goals.”

The Lillie Knox Investing for Growth award began in 2005. Since then, including this year’s recipients, 11 women-owned businesses have received cash grants. WBCS established the award as a tribute and memorial to founding member Lillie Knox. Lillie passed away in November 2003 after a long and courageous battle with cancer. The award is an annual cash grant, open to a certified woman-owned WBCS member, to fund a critical growth or business development need.

“Each of these businesses is indicative of the type of successful women business enterprises that Lillie Knox sought to develop,” said Debbie Hurst, president of the Women’s Business Council - Southwest. “This award will help take these businesses to the next level of success.”

The awards will be given at a luncheon held during the Harvesting Partnership event, which is sponsored in part by Alcatel-Lucent, American Airlines, Colonial Bank, Energy Future Holdings, ExxonMobil, Walmart and WE Magazine. Harvesting Partnerships, which includes a variety of business development workshops and networking, is open to all women business enterprises. To register for the event and luncheon, visit [www.wbcswest.org](http://www.wbcswest.org) and click on “upcoming events.”

### **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 850 WBE members and 80 corporate sustaining members, WBCS is in its 14<sup>th</sup> year of providing national certification to women-owned businesses. To find out more about the WBCS please visit [www.wbcswest.org](http://www.wbcswest.org) . WBCS is a regional affiliate of

Women Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) covering Oklahoma, north Texas, Arkansas and New Mexico. Founded in 1997, WBENC has become a powerhouse organization for women entrepreneurs across the country, women-owned businesses, corporations, businesses, government entities, institutions and other organizations.