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Women's Business Enterprise National Council and The Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth Partner to Produce a "First"

Pittsburgh's Abator Information Services President in Graduating Class of First Tuck-WBENC Executive Program

Washington, D.C. – November 3, 2003 – The Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) and The Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth (Tuck) recently celebrated the results of a partnership that began with a discussion with IBM Corporation nearly 12 months ago about the creation of an executive program tailored to the needs of women business owners.

Entitled "The Tuck-WBENC Executive Program, brought to you by IBM," the program was held October 5-10 in Palisades, New York. **Joanne E. Peterson, President/CEO of Abator Information Services, based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**, was among the 49 participants from around the world comprising the inaugural graduating class.

"The Tuck-WBENC Executive Program was an extraordinary experience. We consumed a lot of information and learned a lot during those five days. It was truly time well spent," said Stovell, owner and operator of an eight-year old marketing and public relations firm that specializes in uniting small businesses, corporate America and non-profit organizations in partnerships that focus on business and/or social issues. **"But just as memorable as the courses was the opportunity to network with some outstanding women business owners. Some of whom I know I'll be doing business with in the near future."**

Presented by IBM, and co-sponsored by PepsiCo Foundation, Pfizer and Shell, the **Tuck-WBENC Executive Program** offered a step-by-step curriculum designed to grow small to medium size businesses with a focus on improving strategic planning, organization, resources, and systems and processes.

"This program will serve as a benchmark for the first graduating class of women business owners to credit as having a direct impact on their ability to grow their businesses," said Susan Bari, president of WBENC. **"The feedback from the women business owners has been outstanding, and we are looking forward to offering the program to WBEs again in 2004."**

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“The program was designed to provide women business owners with a systematic way of assessing and improving their businesses,” said Leonard Greenhalgh, Professor of Management at the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth and director of the Tuck-WBENC Executive Program. “The week at IBM’s world-class Palisades facility was both invigorating and informative for all parties involved.”

The Tuck-WBENC Executive Program was open to WBENC-certified women’s business enterprises in operation a minimum of three years and with at least \$300,000 in annual sales. WBENC also extended scholarships to eligible participants. The WBENC Executive Scholarship Fund was supported by the following entities in 2003: Avon Products, BellSouth, BP, Freddie Mac, Intel Corporation, Merrill Lynch, Office Depot, the Principal Financial Group, SBC Communications, and the Women’s Business Enterprise Alliance. Bank of America also established The Dorothy Brothers Endowment Fund to support WBENC’s executive scholarships.

Incorporated in 1984, Abator is a WBE certified organization whose only focus is the staffing and support of information technology and systems projects. Peterson is a 1986 graduate of Pittsburgh’s Chatham College. **For more information, visit www.abator.com.**

Tuck is the nation’s oldest graduate school of business and ranked as the number two business school in the US by the [Wall Street Journal](#). The school is renowned for the quality of its teaching and the degree to which it fosters collaborative learning, inclusion, and community.

WBENC is the nation’s leading third-party certifier of businesses owned and operated by women. With national headquarters in Washington, D.C., WBENC is dedicated to enhancing opportunities for women’s business enterprises. In partnership with women’s business organizations throughout the United States, WBENC provides access to a national standard of certification and provides information on certified businesses to purchasing managers through an Internet database – WBENCLink – and sourcing opportunities through WEbuy@wbenc.org. For more information about WBENC, visit www.wbenc.org or telephone (202) 872-5515.

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