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## Second class of entrepreneurs completes SBA program

Atlanta Business Chronicle

Eleven Atlanta-area companies completed the Emerging 200 Initiative.

Atlanta is one of 10 cities selected to participate in the intensive e200 training program designed to assist existing inner-city businesses develop their growth strategies for the next stage of development. This year's e200 program has been a collaboration of the **Small Business Administration Georgia District Office**, the Atlanta Development Authority, the Atlanta Workforce Development Agency, and SCORE-Counselors to America's Small Business.

"The basic goal of our Emerging 200 Atlanta initiative was to help promising inner-city firms step up to the next level," said SBA Georgia District Director Terri Denison. "Assisting firms in developing an effective growth strategy will not only help their bottom line but also generate economic benefits for the neighborhoods in which they are located."

The Atlanta companies selected for the initiative were those with a threshold of approximately \$400,000 in annual revenue and an operational track record of at least three years.

The e200 training is based on the case study model used in many universities with examples drawn from the participating entrepreneurs' businesses. The program, providing more than 40 hours of advanced training, was focused on financials, marketing, human resources, exporting, government contracting and capital access. Through their course work, the participants worked with professionals from banking and other sectors of the business community. One objective was for participants to draft a three-year strategic growth plan for their businesses.

The SBA will expand the e200 Initiative in 2010 with the current participating cities being joined by new programs in 12 additional communities. The new cities will have an emphasis on Native American business owners.

This expansion coincides with the president's recent appearance before tribal leaders in Washington, D.C., during which he promised that his administration would work with the Native American community to help build economic prosperity.

Atlanta's inner city is home to more than 5,600 establishments, which collectively employ 141,000 workers. Some 96 percent of Atlanta inner-city businesses employ fewer than 100 people, while 83 percent employ fewer than 20 workers. Atlanta's largest business clusters, local commercial services and local hospitality establishments, are responsible for 25 percent of inner-city employment.

### **Breakthrough**

These companies are Emerging 200 participants in Atlanta:

**Enrichment Bookstores Inc.**

**Brown & Pipkins** LLC

**Bryant Auto & Towing Service**

**The Coleman Group Inc.**

H&G Construction Concepts

HA Office 515 Inc.

**Kronberg Wall Architects** LLC

**Prestige Design Group Inc.**

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Atlanta Cargo Transportation

**Kera Enterprises Inc.**

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