

Lunch and Keynote Remarks (Regency Ballroom) Awards Presentation and Ceremony

Announcer: Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome back to the podium acting chairman and President of the Export-Import Bank of the United States, Charles J. Hall.

Charles J. Hall: Good afternoon. I hope you've enjoyed your lunches, and more importantly, enjoyed the last day and a half. I certainly have found it very interesting. I hope you have as well. I just wanted to make a few introductory remarks. We are very honored to have with us today the administrator of the Small Business Administration, Linda McMahon. She will be coming out to make a few remarks as well. Just in preface to that, I would just say that I know you're all very well aware that small business has been a prominent theme throughout EXIM Bank's 84-year history. In fact, 90% of our transactions directly support small business. Our congressional mandate, of course, is that 25% of our financing amounts go to direct support of small business. As acting Vice Chair Scott Schloegel said today in his opening remarks, there are literally thousands of additional small businesses that are benefited indirectly by EXIM Bank's transactions, even the larger ones such as the supply chain suppliers to the larger manufacturers.

The Small Business Administration and EXIM Bank share a joint commitment to supporting small and medium sized business by facilitating the export of US-made goods and services and helping to mitigate the risk of growing a business. Together the US Small Business Administration and EXIM Bank support the entire supply chain that includes both direct and those indirect small company producers that are in fact the engine of economic growth in the US, just as Jim Clifton was saying in the panel earlier today.

As I say, we are very honored to have SBA Administrator Linda McMahon with us today. She is the 25th administrator of the US Small Business Administration, and as a member of President Trump's cabinet, she advocates on behalf of the 28 million small businesses in America. Administrator McMahon is an entrepreneur and business leader herself. She is a co-founder and former chief executive officer of Women's Leadership Live, LLC, a company that educates women to launch and expand their own businesses, advance their careers toward executive roles, and pursue opportunities for leadership in public service. She is also a co-founder and former chief executive officer of WWE based in Stamford, Connecticut. She helped grow WWE from a small regional operation to a publicly traded global enterprise with more than 800 employees in offices worldwide.

On a personal note, I would just like to say I was very interested to see that, and we were just chatting back in the greenroom, that Administrator McMahon founded her company with her husband sharing a desk in their basement. I would just like to say that I know what that's like because my wife, Gina, who's sitting here in the audience, and I founded a food manufacturing business in Britain sharing a desk as well. I wasn't in the basement but close enough.

Anyway, with that, please join me in welcoming SBA Administrator Linda McMahon.

Linda McMahon:

Thank you very much, CJ. Good afternoon, everyone. It's a real pleasure to be here to speak to all of you just for a few remarks. I certainly reiterate the cooperative spirit that SBA has with EXIM Bank and look forward to continuing our relationship. I'm so proud to represent US Small Business Administration and advocate for entrepreneurs of our nation. As you know, they are the innovators and they are the job creators. They're the engines of our economy. Small businesses create two out of every three net new jobs in the United States each year. More than half of all Americans either work for a small business or own a small business. As the SBA administrator, I feel a tremendous responsibility to each of them. I understand their concerns because I've walked in their shoes.

As you may know, I'm an entrepreneur myself. My husband and I started our business sharing a desk. We slowly expanded by adding one market at a time. What was once Capitol Wrestling Corporation, named Capitol because it actually was here in Washington DC, at 1332 I Street, which once was the old Franklin Park Hotel. From there we grew to include the Northeast region and then the rest of America, and today has customers in 180 countries worldwide and is translated into 25 languages. In fact, the company, World Wrestling Entertainment, certainly encompasses and embodies the fact that it has world in the title, let you know that I understand the unlimited potential of a global marketplace.

How does a small business even start to think about exporting, expanding to a new market. Especially one with different currencies, tax laws, and regulations, certainly can be daunting. It may be a risk small businesses don't feel prepared to take. I believe US Small Business Administration and EXIM Bank can work together to change that, to lend a helping hand to entrepreneurs who want to grow from local entrepreneur to global exporter. Entrepreneurs by their very nature are risk takers, but they have to be able to manage that risk. They have to be confident what their downside is going to be, so they have to understand the rules and the regulations before they actually take that risk. I know SBA and EXIM Bank have a history of working together to help small businesses mitigate their risk and to making expanding to the inner national marketplace just a little less scary.

Here are just a few programs SBA offers to do that. First of all, small businesses need capital. Not just small business but all businesses need capital. Whether they're starting up or scaling up, they can't succeed without cash. SBA's Office of Capital Access offers specific programs, Export Express, Export Working Capital, and International Trade Loans to provide financing solutions to small businesses who want to reach the global market. We also offer counseling through our International Trade Office and resource partners like Small Business Development Centers, SCORE, and Women's Business Centers that are located

all across America so that we can have easy access. These centers help small businesses learn how to access markets, deliver products, and use online tools.

SBA is a major partner for small businesses looking to export. We don't open markets for trade, but we assist small businesses who want to access them. We want to build awareness of our programs and hope we can work with our partners at EXIM to do that. The potential to grow our economy and create jobs is in our hands, and I do believe that potential is limitless. As you know, today 96% of all consumers and over three quarters of the world's purchasing power lives outside the United States, but only 1% of America's 28 small businesses are selling to them. Imagine that opportunity to be able to open up that global market. One of our goals at SBA is to increase the number of small businesses selling into global markets. This will become increasingly important to maintain America's economic growth and its leadership in the global economy.

My goal as administrator is to raise awareness of our programs and in turn revitalize a spirit of entrepreneurship in America. My hope is that as many more people learn about the services SBA provides, they will have the confidence, the skills, and the resources they need to start their own businesses, to expand to new markets, to create jobs with the result of growing our economy and contributing to the global economy. I'm confident that we can work together to get American made products and services to customers around the world and ensure that small businesses that create those products can also succeed here at home. Thank you so very much for letting me come and just offer some brief comments to you today. Again, SBA looks forward to continuing its partnership with EXIM Bank. Thank you so much, and enjoy your afternoon.

Announcer: Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome EXIM Bank acting Vice Chairman and First Vice President Scott Schloegel.

Scott Schloegel: Thank you. Those were some great remarks. We have worked very closely with SBA over the years, and we look forward to that continued partnership. I need CJ here for just one minute to begin the process for our awards. I hope everybody has enjoyed their lunch. It was a delicious lunch, made my suit a little bit snuggier. We are pleased to have you continue eating and continue with your desserts if you haven't had a chance to finish up here yet.

Every year EXIM recognizes a select handful of organizations and exporters that have equipped US exporters to boost sales abroad and support US jobs here at home. The difficult decisions we face in selecting this year's five award recipients are a testament to the thousands of exporters, brokers, lenders, and regional export promotion programs that do so much to fortify the American economy and create export-backed jobs. We're proud to be associated with these dedicated organizations and companies that we'll recognize today.

The first award is the Broker of the Year Award, and our winner is Export Insurance Services, Incorporated. I'll have you hold your applause right till the

end, if you would. Ed Coppola, Director of Broker Relations and Product Relations at EXIM, will receive the award for Angela Johnson, who is the president and owner of Export Insurance Services. Export Insurance Services, or ESI, is a Georgia-based broker licensed in 20 states that specializes in trade credit insurance and political risk insurance. They have consistently ranked as one of EXIM's top producers. In FY 2016, EIS recorded the fifth largest authorization dollar amount and the sixth largest total authorization count. Of equal importance, small business accounted for 82% of their authorization dollars and 93% of their total authorizations. EIS posted similar impressive results in the three prior fiscal years as well. The company's customer base is diversified and includes representatives from numerous industries. EIS also won Broker of the Year Award both 2005 and 2007. Next up is the Community Lender of the Year Award.

Charles J. Hall: [inaudible 00:13:56] presentation.

Scott Schloegel: Okay. Get the picture?

Charles J. Hall: We obviously haven't choreographed this.

Scott Schloegel: Right. Next up is the Community Lender of the Year Award. The winner is the Provident Bank. Chuck Withee, President of the Provident Bank, is here to receive the award. Established in 1828, the Provident Bank is an independent bank that focuses on commercial lending and business services. They have nine offices throughout Massachusetts and New Hampshire. The Provident Bank is an active user of EXIM Bank's Working Capital Guarantee Program and short-term insurance and has recently signed a master guarantee agreement for the medium term program. The bank was granted delegated authority under the Working Capital Guarantee Program in 2015 at the community level, which empowers the Provident Bank to approve up to \$1 million for each facility and up to \$10 million in total facilities. In 2016, the Provident Bank hosted a successful international financing event at the University of New Hampshire that drew 288 small and medium size businesses and built awareness of EXIM products.

This year we're introducing a Regional Export Promotion Program of the Year Award, and the winner is the Florida Export Finance Corporation. Accepting the Award is John Stephen, President and CEO, along with Daisy Ramos-Winfield, who is their executive vice president. The Florida Export Finance Corporation, or FEFC, is a not for profit corporation with a mandate to expand employment and income opportunities for Florida residents. Created in 1993, FEFC teamed up with EXIM for more than two decades to boost Florida's exports. In 2016 alone, FEFC hosted 43 EXIM seminars and workshops that led to 69 export credit insurance referrals. Their efforts also resulted in four medium and long-term guarantee applications.

Now the two Small Business Exporters of the Year Awards. First up is CECA Supply and Services Incorporated. Maher Touma, CECA's CEO, will receive the award on behalf of the company. CECA Supply and Services of Houston, Texas has relied upon EXIM Bank's Working Capital Guarantee Program for nearly a decade. They export oil field equipment including piping, drills, and compressors to Algeria. Founded in 2002, CECA currently employs nine people in Houston. Since taking advantage of EXIM guarantees of working capital loans extended by Amegy Bank of Texas, a member of the Zions Bankcorp, the company has increased its sales from \$5 million to more than \$60 million today, all of which are export related. In FY 2016 alone, CECA exported \$52 million of goods and services with EXIM support.

Our second Small Business Exporter of the Year Award goes to Preferred Popcorn, LLC. Kelly Grossnicklaus, CFO, will receive the award. Preferred Popcorn is a small business vendor based in Chapman, Nebraska. They export popcorn, concession supplies, and coconut oil to Mexico and other international markets. Founded in 1998, the company currently employs 80 people in Nebraska, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Washington, and Kentucky. Since its founding, the company has relied upon EXIM Bank products and now fills orders in 70 countries across the globe. As a consistent policyholder of EXIM's export credit insurance, Preferred Popcorn has watched its sales grow to more than \$60 million, 50% of which are export related. In FY 2016 alone, Preferred Popcorn shipped nearly \$15.7 million of goods under its EXIM insurance policy. This EXIM Bank support has translated into 25 new jobs at the company. Please join me in one final round of applause for all of our winners here today. Thank you.

Speaker 5: Get closer.

Speaker 6: Get closer. We're good?

Speaker 5: Thank you very much.

Speaker 6: Thank you.