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Kalamazoo Businesswoman Elected to Board of International Association

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Sandra Cochrane, technology business consultant for the Michigan Small Business and Technology Development Center, has been elected to the board of directors of the National Business Incubation Association. Her three-year term begins October 1.

Before joining the SBTDC in 2008, Cochrane was chief operating officer and acting CEO of the Southwest Michigan Innovation Center, a technology business incubator in Kalamazoo, for more than seven years. During her time at SMIC, Cochrane supervised two feasibility studies, secured more than \$1.5 million in grant funding and conducted two benchmarking studies. Under her leadership, the incubator’s clients created approximately 156 jobs and had an economic impact of over \$12.7 million.

Business incubation programs like the Southwest Michigan Innovation Center catalyze the process of starting and growing companies by providing entrepreneurs with the expertise, networks and tools they need to make their ventures successful. NBIA estimates that in 2005 alone, North American incubators assisted more than 27,000 start-up companies that provided full-time employment for more than 100,000 workers and generated annual revenue of more than \$17 billion.

An NBIA member since 2001, Cochrane has served on the association’s membership committee, presented at many training events, contributed to several NBIA publications and earned a Certificate of Incubator Management from NBIA. Cochrane currently serves on the Michigan Incubation Association Board of Directors.

Based in Athens, Ohio, the National Business Incubation Association is the world’s leading organization advancing business incubation and entrepreneurship. Since 1985, NBIA has provided industry professionals with information, education, advocacy and networking resources to bring excellence to the process of assisting early-stage companies.

NBIA’s board of directors, made up of representatives from leading business incubation programs, governs the organization. The group meets three times a year to discuss association business, including educational programming, finances, member recruitment/services and publications.

About MI-SBTDC

The Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center provides counseling, training and market research for Michigan’s new business ventures, existing small businesses, expanding new businesses and new technology companies. The MI-SBTDC headquarters is located at the Grand Valley State University Seidman College of Business in Grand Rapids, Michigan. As host of the MI-SBTDC State Headquarters, the Seidman College of Business oversees the twelve-region MI-SBTDC network. Entrepreneurs and small business owners may access the services of their nearest MI-SBTDC by calling (616) 331.7480 or visiting www.misbtdc.org.

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