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**Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development
Receives Multiple MI-SBTDC “Recognition of Excellence” Awards**

The Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center (MI-SBTDC) provides a full range of services for small businesses throughout Michigan. Assistance is available for new ventures, existing small businesses, those ready to expand and also companies working to launch new technologies and innovations. Funded through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, there are 12 regional headquarters and more than 30 satellite offices located throughout Michigan. Services include one-on-one consultations with certified business counselors, a full range of training programs and assistance in conducting research about industry characteristics, marketplace trends, issues related to competition and foreign trade, and a wide range of demographical statistics.

Each year, MI-SBTDC sponsors a “Recognition of Excellence – Leadership Awards” program to acknowledge and reward outstanding service that benefits small business clients, partners and the community. This year, the Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development has captured three of these prestigious awards to be presented at an event in Traverse City later this week:

- **Recognition of Excellence – Leadership Award for Intake/ Administrative Personnel** will be presented to Ms. Lisa Hunter, a Business Counseling Aide with the department for six years. Ms. Hunter is recognized for the work she does above and beyond the call of duty. As the first point of contact for potential clients – an average of 240 per month – Hunter developed a system for quickly helping clients learn which of the many SBTDC services would best meet their needs. Her methods became part of a state training program for intake workers, which she helped to develop and deliver.

- Robert Tess, Program Manager for Economic Development, will receive the distinctive **Special Recognition for Excellence Award** for his incredible successes in helping Macomb County businesses to thrive. Mr. Tess holds a Masters in Public Administration and has been with the department for 19 years. Over the last two years, he has worked directly with companies that ultimately invested over \$95 million in Macomb County while retaining or creating a total of more than 1,630 jobs. Under his guidance, there have been six “Tool & Die Recovery Zones” established in the county, an especially useful incentive program to help local manufacturing firms stay competitive in a global marketplace. Mr. Tess was also recognized this year by as **Partner of the Year** by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) for the impact his expertise has on manufacturing firms throughout the region.

- The Macomb County Department of Planning & Economic Development is being recognized as the **Outstanding SBTDC Partner/Host for 2005**. As one of the only governments in Michigan to host a regional office, the department has an exemplary record for helping to develop and expand small businesses. Also viewed as impressive is the department’s ability to cultivate regional cooperation with critical partners including Detroit Regional Economic Partnership, Macomb Community College, Michigan Business and Professional Association, Michigan Works!, US Dept of Commerce; Export Assistance, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Michigan

Manufacturing Technology Center, Michigan Minority Business Development Council,
Automation Alley and the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG).