



St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

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St. Regis Mohawk Tribe - Economic Development Office Receives Award

Akwesasne Territory – The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) awarded Tribal Economic Development Director Steven B. Cook and Economic Development Planner Lindsay Tarbell the Regional 2010 *Minority Small Business Champion of the Year* Award. The region includes all of New York State, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The ceremony was held at a luncheon at the Double Tree Hotel in Syracuse New York on Friday May 7, 2010. The award recognizes efforts “...beyond business and professional responsibilities to advance minority and small business interests...”

“We are honored to receive this award and attribute our success to the many partnerships we have built with agencies which provide training, technical support and financing,” remarked Cook. “I feel that the progress we’ve made is the result of both hard work and strong teamwork, both on the local and regional levels.” Nominees must demonstrate efforts to improve conditions in the minority small business community and efforts to provide professional services to the minority small business community.

The St. Regis Mohawk Tribe’s Office of Economic Development provides a variety of services to the Akwesasne business community through training, publications, consulting and collaboration with other agencies such as local Chambers of Commerce. The private business sector of Akwesasne has been rapidly growing and now numbers over 300 businesses. “We understand that working together with neighboring communities is important. These partnerships help us to promote tourism into the region and develop regional economies,” said Tarbell.

The Office of Economic Development recently established the Akwesasne Employment Resource Center for job seekers and employers, a revolving loan fund for business start-ups and published a business directory giving exposure to local businesses. The office is also collaborating with other organizations to develop a cultural tourism strategy with a focus on development of the artisan’s community in Akwesasne.

The SBA District Director Bernard Paprocki presented the award to Mr. Cook and Ms. Tarbell and Emcee Dan Cummings from NewsChannel 9 Syracuse, commended them for their achievements. Mr. Cook, when accepting the award thanked local and tribal governments, tribal administration, the Akwesasne business community and special thanks to the SBDC center at SUNY Canton for their support. “The success of small businesses is necessary to ensure a vibrant, sustainable and diversified local economy,” Cook noted.

“This shows one of the ways that the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe is continuing on the path of economic self-sufficiency,” said Jamie Bay, Assistant Tribal CEO. “We are proud of the achievements our Office of Economic Development has made under the direction of Steve and Lindsay.”

The SBA has annually awarded the *Minority Small Business Champion of the Year Award* since 1953 to recognize outstanding individuals for the dedication to small businesses. Local banks and economic development agencies hosted this 12th annual Small Business Excellence Awards luncheon.

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The St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly elected and federally recognized government of the St. Regis Mohawk People.