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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**New *Business Quick Guide* is Business Development Resource for Southwestern PA
Business Owners, Entrepreneurs**

Users Can Efficiently Navigate Regional Agencies That Can Help Businesses Launch, Grow and Prosper

(PITTSBURGH – February 9, 2009) Business owners and entrepreneurs, particularly in challenging economic times, will find in southwestern Pennsylvania a broad network of support from some 150 non-profit agencies offering business development assistance. This network is now easily accessible in a new, online *Business Quick Guide* which allows easy navigation of the spectrum of support services available in the 10-county Pittsburgh region.*

A collaborative project of [Duquesne University's Small Business Development Center](#) (SBDC), [SMC Business Councils](#) and the [Pittsburgh Regional Alliance](#) (PRA), the marketing affiliate of the Allegheny Conference on Community Development; the *Guide* organizes information on assistance for existing or prospective businesses into four categories: management assistance, funding sources, specialized services (e.g., e-commerce, import/export, tax regulations) and business/trade organizations. It is accessible as a searchable database or can be downloaded as a PDF at www.pittsburghregion.org and at www.smc.org. The database and the PDF will be periodically updated throughout 2009 to ensure accuracy.

“This project came about because of a need expressed by manufacturing members of SMC Business Councils, who were seeking information on where to find workforce training and funding sources,” said SMC President Lee Taddonio. “A comprehensive and current one-stop source was unfortunately not available, although a similar guide had been produced some years earlier by Duquesne University. Through the efforts of Duquesne University’s Small Business Development Center, the previous guide was carefully reviewed and brought up-to-date. This cooperative venture resulted in a new *Guide* that’s current and easily accessible—a product that will assist today’s entrepreneurs in meaningful ways,” said Taddonio.

“The array of services to help businesses is really quite impressive: hands-on consulting services, training, funding programs, trade organizations and many other specialized services. The mission of the Duquesne University SBDC is to help prospective and existing business owners attain their business goals through hands-on consulting and training. With our mission in mind, we were pleased to collaborate to make the *Guide* possible. The services provided by the organizations listed in the *Guide* really do make the Pittsburgh region a great place to do business,” said SBDC Director Dr. Mary McKinney.

- MORE -

Page 2 - New *Business Quick Guide* is Resource for Business Developers

Assistance agencies are organized alphabetically and listings include telephone numbers and links to agencies' websites. Color codes identify specific types of help or services offered in four main categories: management assistance, funding sources, specialized services and business/trade organizations. Online users can customize their searches by selecting those assistance areas that interest them.

“The PRA, the region’s official marketing organization, promotes the advantages of the Pittsburgh region across the country and around the world. It serves as a central point of contact that links business opportunities and resources through an extensive network of contacts and partnerships,” said PRA President Dewitt M. Peart. “The *Guide* is one example of the convergence of regional opportunities, resources and contacts. The partners on this project—the SBDC and SMC Business Councils share the mission of promoting and encouraging regional business development. Along with the PRA, they have come together to create and promote a resource that supports business owners and entrepreneurs located here or those considering the Pittsburgh region.”

“Businesses of all sizes, including smaller enterprises, can take advantage of our region’s many advantages—a central location, high-quality workforce and a reasonable cost to do business, for example—and launch and grow their ventures here. Homegrown business remains a valuable part of the economic diversity of southwestern Pennsylvania, It’s our hope that the *Guide* quantifies the support that’s available for the development of businesses of all sizes in the region,” said Peart.

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The Allegheny Conference on Community Development and Affiliates – the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, the Pennsylvania Economy League of Southwestern Pennsylvania and the Pittsburgh Regional Alliance – work in collaboration with public and private sector partners to stimulate economic growth and improve the quality of life in southwestern Pennsylvania. Learn more at www.alleghenyconference.org.

The Pittsburgh Regional Alliance, an affiliate of the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, markets the benefits of conducting business in southwestern Pennsylvania to companies all over the world that are growing, relocating or expanding. Learn more at www.pittsburghregion.org.



A premiere business association, **SMC Business Councils** helps Pennsylvania businesses grow through programs, services and benefits essential to business development. SMC serves Pennsylvania businesses of all types. To learn more about business development, information resources, business advocacy, insurance and products to grow business enterprises, visit www.smc.org.



The **Duquesne University Small Business Development Center (SBDC)** offers no-cost, confidential consulting services and training workshops for small businesses and those who are thinking of starting a business in southwestern Pennsylvania. Services include management consulting, international business operations, environmental management assistance and training workshops. Visit www.sbdc.duq.edu.

* *The 10-county Pittsburgh region comprises Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Washington and Westmoreland counties.*