



For Immediate Release
May 22, 2009
Contact: Chris Bailey
404-586-8448
cbailey@macoc.com

Nancy Freeman Balkcom Named 2009 Small Business Person of the Year As Awards Event Marks 23rd Year

ATLANTA –Nancy Freeman Balkcom, president of MySupplies, was named metro Atlanta’s 2009 Small Business Person of the Year today at the 23rd Annual Small Business Person of the Year Awards.

The event, which for 23 years has honored one outstanding small businessperson for their contributions to Atlanta's civic and business community, is co-hosted by the Metro Atlanta Chamber and *Atlanta Business Chronicle*.

“Though each of the five finalists were truly outstanding in their own right, Nancy stood out clearly above them all,” said Mike Gomez, president of Allegro Consulting; chair of the selection committee for the 2009 Small Business Person of the Year; and chair of the advocacy committee of the Chamber’s Small Business Growth Council. “Nancy is a candidate who is clearly a model that other small business owners should aspire to emulate in the way she manages and runs her company.”

Small businesses are a critical sector. Of the more than 143,000 businesses in metro Atlanta, nearly 95 percent employ fewer than 50 people. Metro Atlanta had the highest entrepreneurial activity rate among the 15 largest metropolitan areas of the country last year, and Georgia led all states, according to a study from the University of California, Santa Cruz.

MySupplies was established in 1970 as an independent business forms distributorship. Since becoming president in 1986, Balkcom has developed MySupplies into a multimillion-dollar, full-line office products sales organization, guided the company through many industry challenges, and been nominated for numerous awards.

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Balkcom is now at the helm of one of the oldest independent office products and furniture distributors in the state of Georgia. Her ingenuity and business savvy have helped MySupplies grow in spite of competition and downturns in the economy.

Other finalists for the 2009 Small Business Person of the Year Award were:

- Jeff Albert, principal, World Logo
- Hicham Bouani, CEO, Bouje Publishing and GlobalProjeX
- Lola Carlisle, co-owner and executive creative director, Tailfin Marketing Communications
- Mike Russell, president, Elite Telecom Services

To qualify, nominees were required to be a primary owner or a major shareholder of a business that has been locally established for at least three years with gross annual revenues not exceeding \$40 million and with fewer than 100 employees. They were also required to be a member of the Chamber and an active member of the community.

This year's sponsors included AT&T, Airtran Airways, Bank of America, 920AM WGKA, and ExactTarget

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Metro Atlanta Chamber -- The Metro Atlanta Chamber brings the best together to help Atlanta thrive. We mobilize and connect the business community to drive economic development and public policies that promote sustainable growth. Our board draws from Atlanta's top business leaders. We have a professional staff of 90 and serve 4,000 member companies who employ nearly a million workers. In Economic Development, our project managers attract the best companies and the best jobs. In Public Policy, we tackle crisis issues and critical quality-of-life challenges such as transportation, water and education. In 2009, the Chamber celebrates 150years of bringing Atlanta leaders together.