

**Testimony of Darryl Hairston
Deputy Associate Administrator
For
Management and Administration
US Small Business Administration**

**Hiring Policies and Minority Recruitment
At the SBA**

Chairman Gonzalez, Ranking member Westmoreland, members of the committee my name is Darryl Hairston, Deputy Associate Administrator for Management and Administration at the US Small Business Administration. Thank you for inviting me here to testify on SBA's hiring policies and our continuing efforts at minority recruitment. SBA takes seriously both the spirit and the intent of federal guidelines regarding the promotion of diversity in the federal workplace and SBA is committed to addressing the diversity of our workforce and to increasing the representation of women, minorities, and persons with disabilities.

As of September 30, 2007, the Agency's workforce totaled 5,056 which include our temporary disaster workforce. Minority groups which accounted for 39.63% of the total workforce, decreased in number by 631 from 2,635 in FY 06 to 2,004 in FY 07, due mostly to losses in our temporary workforce that was hired to service disaster loans from Hurricane Katrina.

SBA had a population of 48.22% male and 51.78% female employees. 7.61% are Black males, 18.39% are Black females, 3.72% are Hispanic males, 4.75% are Hispanic females, 1.76% are Asian males, 2.41% are Asian females, 0.40% are American Indian/Alaska Native American males and 0.53% are American Indian/Alaska Native American females.

Of these groups, Black males, Black females, Asian females, American Indian/Alaska Native American male and female representation are above the Civilian Labor Force. Reviews of the grade levels for permanent employees indicate that a significant number of the employees (28.88%) at the SBA are at the GS-12 level or above.

Current FY 2008 data indicates that SBA's total staffing is 5,034, of which 2,307 are other than Disaster employees. Of this group, 1,220 are at the GS 13 level or above. 58.9% are male, 41.1% are female, 21.88% are Black Americans, 8% are Hispanic Americans, 5.49 are Asian Americans, and 0.73% is American Indian/Alaska Native American.

SBA has a total of 39 career employees at the SES level, of which 41% are minorities. Of these senior executives, 12.8% are Hispanic, 25.6% are Black American and 2.56% are Asian. Most SES positions at SBA are located in our headquarters offices here in

Washington, DC. However, seven SES positions are located in our major metropolitan district offices.

The SBA is a small Agency and does limited hiring on an annual basis. For example, in FY 06 SBA hired 113 permanent employees and 128 in FY 07. When hiring, SBA's Office of Human Capital strives to ensure diversity on our ranking panels. We have found that this strategy pays off in increasing diversity in our workforce.

In FY 07, through the Office of Human Capital Development, the Agency employed several recruitment strategies to build a diverse workforce. One of the most effective tools we use to accomplish this is to actively participate in job fairs and Federal career days at colleges and universities, and we often target schools that are likely to help us establish a pipeline of diverse and highly-qualified individuals. We continued to target community colleges because of their strong ties to their local communities and their potential for providing a diverse applicant pool.

Some of the events SBA participated in are the Presidential Management Fellows Job fair, the Congressional Black Caucus Diversity Fair, the LatPro National Society for Hispanic Professionals, and the Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund Recruitment Event.

These efforts only reflect efforts here in DC, but nationwide our staff participated in Job Fairs and networked with colleges, universities, and professional organizations to broaden SBA's reach to attract a diverse group of high caliber applicants for its mission critical positions. Additionally, we also utilize USA Jobs as a recruiting tool. Because of the technical nature of many of our mission critical occupations, (lending, government contracting) we found that the best recruiting tool is and has been word-of-mouth. By utilizing our network of resource partners, educational institutions and other professional organizations, we have achieved great success in attracting a diverse group of highly qualified applicants.

SBA's recruitment initiatives are complemented by two things, training and succession planning. The Administrator has made training a major priority at SBA and has instituted a new personnel-focused training program called SBA University. This initiative came as a direct response to employee surveys that showed that this was one of their top needs as a workforce. Through training, SBA seeks to develop a more highly skilled workforce with the tools they need for advancement and career development.

This training is directly tied to succession planning, which is an essential method for SBA to nurture and retain a diverse workforce that will serve as a foundation of the senior executive ranks. This is critical as SBA notes an increasing number of employees who are reaching retirement eligibility. The Office of Personnel Management has been re-evaluating the federal Human Capital Scorecard, including those for leadership succession and for diversity, and SBA is working hard to achieve a "green" in all categories.

SBA also has an SES candidate development programs (CDP) to facilitate leadership succession.. The last SBA SESC DP was completed in FY 04. A total of 18 individuals were selected to participate in this program of which 14 graduated. Of the 18 selected to participate, 2 were Hispanic Americans and 3 were Black Americans, and 6 were females. Of the graduates, 8 have been placed in SES positions within SBA.

Be assured that SBA has been and will continue to be proactive with its recruitment efforts by building and strengthening external partnerships; eliminating barriers that may be exclusive; and, providing challenging and rewarding career opportunities. Thank you for inviting me to testify, I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.