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WEDA / Metropolitan Atlanta Women's Business Center Launches Franchise Development Program

Atlanta, GA January 24, 2005 – The WEDA / Metropolitan Atlanta Women's Business Center (MAWBC) today announced that it has launched the Franchise Development Program, the overall objective of which is to increase franchise ownership among women. The program also will seek to help entrepreneurs identify potentially suitable franchise opportunities, as well as help franchisors connect with qualified candidates. As part of the program, WEDA / MAWBC will provide franchisee candidates with business training, technical assistance and financier referrals.

“Franchising can be turnkey in nature and, consequently, can represent an excellent business opportunity for certain types of entrepreneurs, whether they intend to work in the business themselves or prefer to assume a more passive role,” said Deardra Green-Campbell, WEDA's Executive Director. “There is such a wide array of franchises available that a franchise can be found for just about any type of business imaginable. Rather than reinvent the wheel so to speak, many entrepreneurs opt instead for a franchise – and our program is designed to help those who may want to make that choice.”

WEDA / MAWBC will offer a free, monthly informational seminar that discusses the franchising concept, realities of franchise ownership, and the financial and other requirements, as well as some of the available franchise opportunities. To learn more about the Franchise Development Program, please contact WEDA or visit their website at www.weda-atlanta.org.

About Women's Economic Development Agency, Inc. (WEDA)

Since its founding twelve years ago, WEDA has assisted more than 10,000 Atlanta-area entrepreneurs. In the last three years alone, the organization's programs and services have helped to facilitate the formation of more than 500 small businesses that range from home-based endeavors like jewelry-making, virtual assisting and home accessories design, to retail and personal services ventures like clothing stores and hair salons, to companies engaged in cutting edge activities like information technology and automotive waste oil recycling. Also included among the organization's client base are franchisees for Bruster's Ice Cream, Smoothie King and others, as well as social entrepreneurs who have chosen to pursue non-profit ventures that provide critically needed services like transitional housing, after school programs and eldercare in response to the needs of disadvantaged families and communities. WEDA is a bi-lingual organization that provides services in both English and Spanish to meet the diverse language and cultural needs of its clientele. Although its services are targeted to women, the organization does not discriminate and serves a gender-diverse clientele.

The WEDA / MAWBC is one of 105 U.S. Small Business Administration Women's Business Centers nationwide and provides training, management and technical assistance to emerging, start-up and established women entrepreneurs living or doing business within the twenty-eight counties that comprise the metro Atlanta area. As an SBA Technical Assistance Provider, WEDA / MAWBC also originates and packages SBA-guaranteed Community Express microloans.

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