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Cloutier Receives Small Business Leadership Award

By Kathryn Kretschmer-Weyland

George A. Cloutier, founder and CEO of American Management Services, Inc. and Co-Chairman of Partner America, was presented the USCM Leadership Award during the plenary session of the 76th Winter Meeting in Washington (DC). Conference President Trenton (NJ) Mayor Douglas H. Palmer introduced Cloutier as the nation's leading expert on small business, with over thirty years experience working with small businesses.

"For the last 21 years, George has devoted countless time and effort to promote, develop and grow small businesses as founder and CEO of American Management Services. American Management Services has worked with more than 6,000 small businesses in over 400 industries and has provided clients coast to coast savings of over one billion dollars," said Palmer.

"Currently, George serves as the Co-Chairman of PartnerAmerica™ with Conference Executive Director and CEO Tom Cochran. Partner America is a long-standing public/private partnership with mayors nationwide, dedicated to helping small and medium-sized businesses grow and prosper. American Management Services and USCM recently renewed the PartnerAmerica™ program for an unprecedented 20-year extension. We are proud to call him our friend and are honored to bestow this award to him for

his leadership and service to small business," concluded Palmer.

Cloutier thanked Palmer and the Conference for the recognition and also thanked all the mayors for their support of the Partner America program over the past seven years. He applauded the mayors for their work and said, "Mayors are the glue that hold this country together."

In his remarks, Cloutier pointed out that, "Although there are currently 23 million small business owners today, this vast population segment is being virtually ignored. Small businesses continue to be the silent majority-shunted and 'short-sheeted.' Why should we care about small businesses? Small Businesses create 2/3 of new jobs; represent 99.6 percent of all employers; employ over 50 percent of all workers and produce over 40 percent of the gross national product. How can we ignore these longstanding facts and figures, let alone the people who strive each day to make their businesses successful?"

Cloutier announced three proposals he would like to see Congress enact to assist small businesses:

1. The current SBA budget be increased to three billion dollars; having a five-fold increase would provide the ability to write billions more in loans and tens of thousands of new jobs would be created along with some badly needed tax revenues to our cities.
2. Earmark in the current emergency economic plan, 50 billion dollars in

additional loan guarantees at a cost of less than five billion dollars.

3. Develop a small business Peace Corps with business oriented students and volunteer business executives to work for a year, full-time "shoulder to shoulder" with small businesses across the country in order to develop financial, marketing and operational skills. Management assistance on a massive scale is badly needed

in most small businesses and once again, could create hundreds of new jobs annually.

"Small businesses have the need and government has the resources and energy to make this program a reality. All we need now to make this program work is the intent and will power of our really concerned elected officials at all levels. Imagine what we could do with a little help from Uncle Sam," concluded Cloutier.



Left to right, Conference Executive Director and CEO Tom Cochran; Conference President Trenton (NJ) Mayor Douglas H. Palmer; Founder and CEO of American Management Services, Inc. and Co-Chairman of Partner America George A. Cloutier; and Conference Vice President Miami Mayor Manny Diaz present the USCM Leadership Award to Cloutier during the 76th Winter Meeting in Washington (DC).