



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARIA DE LOURDES SOBRINO TO SPEAK AT SMALL BUSINESS FAIR FOR HISPANIC ENTREPRENEURS ON JANUARY 27 *Institute for Women Entrepreneurs Hosts Free Event*

(Santa Ana)—Maria de Lourdes Sobrino, founder and CEO of Lulu's Dessert®, is the keynote speaker at the "Feria para Empresarios en Español" on Saturday, January 27 at Santa Ana College. The "feria" is expected to draw hundreds of small business owners seeking to launch or expand their businesses. This free event is hosted by the Institute for Women Entrepreneurs (IWE), the first women's business center in Orange County funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration and the Rancho Santiago Community College District Foundation. At this event, Sobrino will unveil the IWE's outreach services for the Spanish-speaking small business community.

"The most important thing that an entrepreneur can do, either woman or man, is educate themselves and obtain the necessary information and resources to develop a sound business plan, one that will allow them to reach their goals," said Sallie Salinas, IWE director. "That is why the Institute for Women Entrepreneurs is proud to be the host of the seventh annual 'Feria Para Empresarios en Español.'"

Sobrino understands the challenges and opportunities small- and medium-sized businesses face. She recognized a need in the U.S., filled it and revolutionized the food industry by creating the first-ever ready-to-eat gelatin category, based on her own mother's recipe in Mexico. Having overcome all obstacles, LuLu's Dessert® is ranked among the largest and fastest growing Hispanic-owned businesses in the United States.

"The 'feria' gives Spanish-speaking entrepreneurs a unique opportunity to network with business experts and organizations," said Sobrino, an IWE and RSCCD Foundation board member. "We know of no other event of this type presented in Spanish in Southern California and it's offered free to the community with the hope that these resources will lead to increased success for hundreds of businesses."

Currently, Sobrino is on the advisory board for *Latina Style Magazine* and NAFIN (Nacional Financiera, an investment bank in Mexico). She also serves as an advisor to NAWBO Enterprise Institute, NFIB, NHBW in Orange County, BWN (Business Women Network) in Washington DC, US-Mexico Chamber of Commerce California Chapter, and *Enterprising Women Magazine*. She has received countless honors for her enterprising spirit, including National Foundation for Women Legislators and Business Women's Network's Woman Entrepreneur of the Year Award, SBA Small Business Person of

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the Year, Avon Women of Enterprise, and the *Orange County Business Journal's* Outstanding Business Leader Award. Most recently, she was invited to be one of the speakers at President George W. Bush's economic forum at Baylor University.

The “Feria Para Empresarios en Español” offers a range of workshops in Spanish, including access to business capital, business planning, new laws that affect small business, regulations about salaries and hours, international business, and attracting and retaining customers. Participants will also benefit from networking with business leaders and accessing important community resources.

The “Feria” organizing committee includes the US Small Business Administration (SBA), the National Hispanic Business Women's Association (NHBWA), the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Orange County (OCHCC), the Center for International Trade Development (CITD), the Orange County Small Business Development Center (OCSBDC), the City of Santa Ana, the Employment Development Department (EDD), Rancho Santiago Community College District, the Institute for Women Entrepreneurs (IWE), Latinos for Progress, Santa Ana College, Santa Ana Empowerment Corporation, and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Sponsors include Wells Fargo, Staples and Sam's Club.

The “Feria” is slated for 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Santa Ana College, César Chávez Building (A Building), 1530 W. 17th Street in Santa Ana, California. Attendance is free; pre-registration is requested as space is limited. Registration includes a continental breakfast and lunch. For more information and to register, call (714) 687-4830 or visit www.ocsbdc.com.

About the Institute for Women Entrepreneurs (IWE)

The IWE, an economic development program of the Rancho Santiago Community College District (RSCCD) Foundation, is hosted by Rancho Santiago Community College District. One of 99 Women Business Centers nationwide and 13 in California, the Santa Ana center is the first women's business center in Orange County funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. The Institute's mission is to broaden the reach of business training and consulting to help women start, grow and expand their small businesses. The IWE offers one-on-one business consulting, technical assistance, mentoring and key business workshops tailored to meet the unique needs of women entrepreneurs. Services will also include outreach to socially and economically disadvantaged women. The IWE is located in the RSCCD Operations Center, room 330.

About the Rancho Santiago Community College District

The mission of the Rancho Santiago Community College District (RSCCD) is to respond to the educational needs of an ever-changing community and to provide programs and services that reflect academic excellence. Santa Ana College and Santiago Canyon College are public community colleges of RSCCD, which serve the residents of Anaheim Hills, East Garden Grove, Irvine, Orange, Santa Ana, Tustin and Villa Park. Both colleges provide education for academic transfer and careers, courses for personal and professional development, customized training for business and industry, and programs to train nurses, firefighters and law enforcement personnel.

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