



## Charleston County News Release

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**See award photo:** <http://www.charlestoncounty.org/NewsImages/sbeaward.htm>

**See SBE workshop photo:** <http://www.charlestoncounty.org/NewsImages/sbe.htm>

## County's Small Business Enterprise Program Wins State Award

*Charleston County receives the Outstanding SBE Strategy Award from the South Carolina Minority Business Enterprise Center*

On Tuesday, Sept. 30, the [Charleston County Small Business Enterprise \(SBE\) Program](#) was recognized in Columbia during Minority Enterprise Development Week.

The County received the Outstanding Small Business Enterprise Award, given by the South Carolina Minority Business Enterprise Center. The award recognizes the aggressive strategies and joint venture efforts that help continue the success of local and statewide minority-owned businesses.

The South Carolina Minority Business Enterprise Center is a statewide organization that provides services to help increase the exposure and visibility of minority-owned businesses within South Carolina, helping to build market presence and stability.

"For over 15 years we have helped hundreds of firms reach their business goals. We could not have done this without help from Charleston County," said Diane E. Sumpter, Project Director of the South Carolina Minority Business Enterprise Center, in a letter dated Sept. 15, 2008, to Charleston County Administrator Mack Canterbury.

In the letter, Sumpter praises Charleston County's program for winning the award and having such a successful program.

"This year, we are celebrating the success of the state's minority-owned businesses and honoring organizations like Charleston County who help make their success possible," Sumpter said. "We also want to personally thank Mr. Steven Taylor and Mr. Barrett Tolbert for their tremendous amount of support."

### **SIDEBAR – Background Information on Charleston County's SBE Program**

- Charleston County's Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program is a small business development component of the Charleston County Contracts and Procurement Department.
- The SBE program is race and gender neutral, with an emphasis on growing and enhancing small companies. The program's concept was developed through a disparity study commissioned by County Council in 2006.
- Charleston County's SBE program has many features to aid small businesses, and is the first of its kind in South Carolina.
- The SBE program has certified more than 320 small business enterprises. A total of eight specialized seminars and workshops have been conducted to help these businesses become ready to participate in county, state and federal contracts.

- The following are requirements for certification under the SBE program:
  - Gross revenues of \$7.5 million or less (as averaged over the previous three years)
  - Actively in for-profit business for the preceding 12 months
  - Eligible owner is involved in the daily operations of the business
- Additional features of the program aim to:
  - Enhance contract competition
  - Establish goals and requirements for SBE firms' participation on County contracts
  - Conduct an outreach program that will aid small businesses in development and ready them for contract competition

For more information on the South Carolina Minority Business Enterprise Center, visit [www.SCMBEC.com](http://www.SCMBEC.com).

For more information on [Charleston County's SBE Program](#), contact Barrett Tolbert or Susan Hogan with the Charleston County Procurement Office by phone at (843) 958-4750 or by e-mail at [btolbert@charlestoncounty.org](mailto:btolbert@charlestoncounty.org) or [shogan@charlestoncounty.org](mailto:shogan@charlestoncounty.org).