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# Partnership for Small Business Development

March 21, 2012 5:00 PM By Alan Jaffa, CEO, Safeguard Properties and Charles 'Tee' Rowe, Chairman, Foundation for Small Business Development

*Today, an innovative new collaboration - convened and funded by Citi - was launched to provide support to small minority- and women-owned businesses. Two key members of the partnership, Alan Jaffa, CEO of Safeguard Properties, and Charles 'Tee' Rowe, Chairman of the Foundation for Small Business Development, talk about the need for the new program and how it will benefit entrepreneurs.*

According to the United States [Small Business Administration](#), 65 percent of the new jobs created in America between 1993 and 2009 were in small businesses, with minority-owned businesses leading the way. Between 2002 and 2007, minority business growth outpaced that of non-minority firms in terms of total revenue, employment, and number of firms. Not only are small businesses responsible for much of the economic activity in any community, they are an important way for people to build a secure future for themselves and their families.

Safeguard Properties surveyed its national network of more than 10,000 subcontractors and found that 33 percent of its contracted services in 2010 went to small businesses owned by minorities, women, people with disabilities and veterans. These entrepreneurs represent the great diversity in our subcontractor network. They also represent hundreds of individual business owners eager to expand their businesses and create jobs in the communities in which they operate. They indicated that with opportunity to combine business development training with better access to contracting opportunities, they would be able to move their business to the next level.

That's why we reached out to Citi, which has led the way by convening and funding a working group of national organizations that can help provide those very opportunities. We have teamed up with the Foundation for Small Business Development to create the Partnership for Small Business Development, whose primary goal is to deliver a national "grow your business" program for minority- and women-owned business enterprises.

Through this program, our partners at the Women's Business Enterprise National Council and local chapters of the National Minority Supplier Diversity Council will certify more than 400 of Safeguard's subcontractors across the country by the end of 2012. In addition, these small business owners will attend a two-day, 16-hour training session that will be offered in each of six cities -- Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Ft. Lauderdale, Las Vegas and New York City. Local members of the Small Business Development Center network, which is the largest network of its kind in the country, will conduct this training.

We are excited about how this collaboration will enable minority- and women-owned small businesses to thrive and create jobs. That's good for them and good for their communities.

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*[Safeguard Properties](#) is a national property maintenance and management company that counts CitiMortgage among its clients. Safeguard operates by subcontracting the services of small businesses around the country, including many minority- and women-owned businesses.*

***The Foundation for Small Business Development (FSBD)** is a 501(c)(3) organization established in 1995 and dedicated to the creation of educational material and the support, conduct and promotion of educational activities regarding small business. FSBD exists to support and publish independent non-partisan research and analysis through advances in studies focused on entrepreneurs and small business ownership while supporting the activities and goals of economic development organizations, in particular small business development centers.*