Puerto Rico SBTDC accredited with best practices

BY B.G. DOYLE

Through a cooperative agreement with the Small Business Administration (SBA), the Puerto Rico Small Business & Technology Development Centers (SBTDC) and host institution, Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico, have been supporting entrepreneurial growth in Puerto Rico since 1997.

“Our organization’s vision—to become world-class leaders supporting small business growth in Puerto Rico—is what drives our highly qualified team of business consultants, as they offer quality technical and business consulting and training services,” said Carmen Martí, the executive director of the Puerto Rico SBTDC. “By transferring their knowledge, these experts have helped take small businesses to the next level.”

benefitted 2,098 attendees through 105 Entrepreneur Training Institute sessions,” she said. Course topics have included Financial Management & Cash Flow, International Trade Certificate, the Baldridge Performance Excellence Program, Micro-Entrepreneur NxLevel Courses, Agribusiness NxLevel Courses, Disaster & Business Management, From Idea to Market, and many others.

When the Puerto Rico SBTDC network recently underwent its accreditation review, the team conducting the process found that all standards had been fully met. It also recognized multiple Best Practices in the areas of leadership, strategic planning, customer knowledge, the Peer Quality Review, workforce, results and impact. “I truly appreciate the excellence and quality of our workforce, whose members are very committed and genuinely interested

the Year award went to José Soto of Empresa Porcina Soto in Arecibo, with the Start-up Business of the Year award going to Dorca López for Dolly’s Dream Closet in Fajardo.

“It is an honor to recognize the achievements of these exceptional small business leaders.” Martí said. “As a network of 10 centers, our organization is proud to have provided management and technical assistance to the emerging and established business owners throughout Puerto Rico for the past 17 years. This, in turn, has enabled overall growth and increased profitability for businesses, as well as economic prosperity.”

She added that as a result of the consulting services provided by the Puerto Rico SBTDC, about 1,417 jobs were created around the island, and 2,847 local jobs were retained. She noted that there was also a nearly $42.6 million increase in sales, and more than $81.9 million in procurement.

In addition to having this level and type of economic impact, Martí said that the Puerto Rico SBTDC also strives to identify business tools, while working to improve processes that facilitate each customer’s unique journey. “The training programs we have offered so far have

engaged the entrepreneurs’ growth,” Martí said. “Our accreditation is a direct result of this level of dedication and hard work.”

She also pointed out that four Puerto Rico SBTDC clients and nominees recently won awards from the U.S. Small Business Administration’s annual recognition event. This included Eniel Torres of Maga Foods in Sabana Grande, with Torres named the Small Business Person of the Year. The Morales Martínez family, owners of TENA Rock in Fajardo, received the Family-Owned Business of the Year award. The Young Entrepreneur of