



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Contact: Ken Slavin
Communications Director, Accion Texas Inc.
Phone: 210-226-3664, ext. 1139 or 210-313-0597 (cell)
Email: kslavin@acciontexas.org

**ACCION TEXAS AWARDED
CAFÉ COMMERCE CONTRACT**
*Initiative Will Create a “One-Stop” Small Business and
Entrepreneurship Development Center in
Downtown San Antonio*

SAN ANTONIO – The San Antonio City Council has unanimously approved Accion Texas Inc. – the nation’s largest nonprofit microlender and a recognized leader in small business education – to receive a contract to operate Café Commerce, the city’s new one-stop small business and entrepreneurship development center.

The term of the contract is for five years (with a renewal option) and is valued at approximately \$1 million, which will be matched dollar-for-dollar by Accion Texas.

Café Commerce will be located on the first floor of the San Antonio Central Library, 600 Soledad St., and is scheduled to open in January 2014.

Accion Texas will immediately begin a search for a president of the new one-stop center. Information on the position is available on the Accion Texas website at www.acciontexas.org.

Café Commerce was the brainchild of a taskforce of local entrepreneurs and small business resource providers convened by Mayor Julián Castro last spring. This task force identified the need for better coordination and marketing of the numerous resources available to small business owners, along with promoting entrepreneurial thinking among San Antonio residents.

“We are ready to put our 20 years of expertise to work on behalf of the city and its vibrant small business community,” said Accion Texas President and CEO Janie Barrera. “We believe this is a perfect fit and we look forward to working with Mayor Castro, the city, and the various partners in this new one-stop center that will help startups and established businesses grow and flourish.”



In a statement issued earlier this week, Mayor Castro said Café Commerce will spur the kind of innovation necessary for San Antonio to compete in the 21st century global economy. “Small business has long been at the heart of San Antonio’s economy, creating about one-third of all private-sector jobs,” he said. “Café Commerce is designed to leverage that entrepreneurial spirit by providing one location where budding business owners can tap into the vast resources available in the community. Accion’s proven experience in the field makes them an ideal fit for Café Commerce.”

Café Commerce will use US SourceLink, a web-based clearinghouse of business resources designed to better market and deliver services to San Antonio businesses. The center will also offer The Ice House Entrepreneurship Program, a cutting edge entrepreneurial education curriculum that emphasizes problem solving, critical thinking, opportunity identification, and fosters the development of the entrepreneurial mindset. Both The Ice House Entrepreneurship Program and US SourceLink are flagship programs of the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, a worldwide leader in the field of entrepreneurship and business.

About Accion Texas Inc.

Established in 1994 in San Antonio, Accion Texas Inc.’s financial and business-support services help entrepreneurs strengthen their businesses, stabilize and increase their incomes, create employment and contribute to the economic revitalization of their communities.

Accion Texas manages the largest nonprofit microloan portfolio in the nation and is the largest member of the Accion U.S. Network. It is committed to providing capital to entrepreneurs who do not have access to loans from commercial sources and to providing educational services to help them succeed. Since its inception, Accion Texas has made more than 14,000 loans totaling more than \$152 million. Accion now operates in 21 offices in eight states – Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee and Texas. For more information, visit www.acciontexas.org.

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