



www.acciontexas.org * 888-215-2373

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 21, 2014

Contact: Angela L. Young
ALY Media Relations, LLC
Phone: 504-416-2747

Lindsey Navarro
Director of Business Support
Accion Louisiana
Phone: 504-410-6162

**ACCION LOUISIANA and SAM'S CLUB HOST
"GROW YOUR BUSINESS: MARKETING BOOT CAMP"**

Accion partners with Sam's Club and the City of New Orleans Office of Economic Development to help small businesses thrive in these challenging times

NEW ORLEANS - Accion Louisiana, an extension of Accion Texas Inc. – the nation's largest microlender – today partnered with Sam's Club to host "Grow Your Business: Marketing Boot Camp" to help local small businesses with training in key marketing concepts and by providing expertise from local marketing industry leaders.

New Orleans is one of only 25 U.S. cities that Sam's Club selected to host the entrepreneurial event.

The half-day event was held at Propeller Incubator, 4035 Washington Avenue, where attendees heard from keynote speaker Jessica Shahein, executive director of 504ward, a collaborative movement of organizations in New Orleans dedicated to retaining the city's young talent. Panelists included Jennie Westerman, owner of Deep Fried Advertising; Andy Kutcher, director of accounts at FSC Interactive; and Jordan Friedman, partner at Bond Public Relations and Brand Strategy.

Additional presentations and support were provided by area representatives, including Accion Louisiana, Operation Hope, GNOR LSBDC, Goldman Sachs, and the Delgado Small Business Center.

The three main goals for the half-day seminar were to better understand the impact of branding, identify key components to building an affordable marketing strategy and identifying local resources that can help emerging and existing small businesses.

"Accion Louisiana is thrilled and honored to offer this learning experience to local entrepreneurs," said Jarrett Woods, regional market manager for Accion Louisiana. "Education is key to the success of small businesses – along with access to capital."

--more--



The Boot Camp Series is a result of a nationwide initiative by Sam's Club to reach out and educate small business owners. The hands-on training seminars are backed by a funding commitment of \$500,000 from Sam's Club. The Boot Camp Series allows local Sam's Club leaders to collaborate with community nonprofits and organizations with the goal of empowering local business owners, including those owned by women, minorities and veterans.

About Accion Texas Inc.

Accion Louisiana is an extension of Accion Texas Inc., a nonprofit, multi-state microlending company and small business lender that helps new and existing entrepreneurs successfully grow their businesses. Through affordable lending and business development services, Accion is committed to empowering diverse individuals and small businesses that have limited access to traditional sources of capital.

Accion's New Orleans office opened in 2009 and has made more than 250 small business loans totaling nearly \$3 million, helping hundreds of local small businesses thrive and creating hundreds of area jobs.

Since its founding in San Antonio in 1994, Accion Texas has made more than 14,000 loans totaling more than \$160 million. Accion now operates in eight states: Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee and Texas. To learn more about Accion's lending options – including the SBA 504 program – call 888-215-2373 or visit www.acciontexas.org.

About Sam's Club

Sam's Club®, a division of Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (NYSE: WMT), is the nation's eighth largest retailer and a leading membership warehouse club offering superior products and services to more than 47 million members in clubs across the U.S., as well as in Brazil, China and Mexico. Sam's Club members averaged savings of 33 percent versus traditional retailers.* To learn more about Savings Made Simple®, visit the Sam's Club Newsroom, shop at SamsClub.com or through Sam's Club apps, and interact with Sam's Club on Twitter and Facebook.

About Sam's Club Giving

The Sam's Club Giving Program is committed to building stronger communities through philanthropic efforts with a focus on small business growth and success. Sam's Club and the Sam's Club Giving Program gave \$106.4 million in cash and in-kind gifts over the 2012 fiscal year including donating the equivalent of 50 million meals to local feeding America food banks. Associates from more than 600 U.S. clubs contributed more than 300,000 hours to volunteering at local businesses and nonprofits, enabling more than \$3.2 million in awards to eligible organizations through the Volunteerism Always Pays (VAP) program. To learn more, visit SamsClub.com/giving.