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LIFTFUND IS ACCION TEXAS' NEW CORPORATE NAME

SAN ANTONIO – Janie Barrera, who helped found and has served as President & CEO of Accion Texas Inc. for more than 20 years, revealed that the nation's largest nonprofit small business microlender will now operate under a new name – LiftFund. The new logo uses a vibrant blue and green to spell out "lift", while "fund" is slightly elevated in classic gray.

"Our goal is to provide opportunities to underserved individuals," Barrera said. "We lift up our clients by offering a pathway to success. By providing access to capital, we empower our clients to chart their own economic paths and achieve the American Dream."

The new LiftFund logo communicates elevation and success and better conveys what the organization does throughout its eight-state footprint.

LiftFund provides startup and small business loans from \$500 to \$250,000 and partners with the U.S. SBA 504 loan program to service loans up to \$5.5 million. It also offers counseling and financial education to help entrepreneurs learn how to start, grow and manage their businesses and to establish and maintain good credit.

Barrera said the mission – to provide credit and services to small businesses and entrepreneurs who do not have access to loans from commercial sources and to provide leadership and innovation to the microlending industry – remains the same.

The Board of Directors, leadership, IRS tax identification number, and commitment to helping business owners will remain the same, as well.

"The heart and the body of this organization, which exists to serve entrepreneurs and to give life to their small business dreams, is the same and will not change," Barrera said. "We are excited about the future and we are excited that we will be able reach and serve more clients through our new name, LiftFund."

Barrera said her organization conducted numerous interviews with stakeholders locally and on a national level and hired the Atkins Agency to create a brand that reflects the growth of the organization which has grown from one city to serving over 20 communities in eight states.

"The name Accion Texas served us very well in Texas, but our clients and partners in other parts of the Delta region are better able to identify with a name that isn't associated with one state," Barrera said.

Barrera helped found Accion Texas Inc. in San Antonio in 1994, with the assistance of Accion International based in Cambridge, MA. For 17 years, Accion Texas expanded throughout the state of Texas, branching from San Antonio to El Paso in 1996, to Houston and the Rio Grande Valley in 1998, and to Austin and Dallas-Fort Worth in 1999. Then in 2009, Accion Texas expanded into Louisiana, at the invitation of leaders seeking to spur economic development by supporting small businesses in the state. And in 2011, at the invitation of the Delta Regional Authority, Accion Texas expanded into Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri and Tennessee.

“This new name change is an opportunity for Accion to take its scale of work to the next level,” LiftFund’s Chairman of the Board Jim Adams said. “We want to continue to be recognized as an organization that is innovative with its products and services.” “The name LiftFund is a name that we can use throughout our eight-state footprint, and beyond, as we grow to other markets,” Adams said.

The new logo also includes a tag line: Dream it. Fund it. With this new brand, LiftFund plans to continually optimize the “borrower experience,” offering an opportunity for clients to overcome financial challenges and achieve financial stability. LiftFund also has a brand promise to help people with limited access to capital have a chance to live their entrepreneurial dreams. The new brand not only promises to help people build success, but also promises to continue assisting the underserved.

In keeping with the longstanding partnership between the two organizations, Chase has signed-on as a presenting sponsor of the rollout tour to introduce the LiftFund brand in 17 cities. Chase has been a strong supporter of the microlender since its founding, providing volunteer support and grants, including a \$5 million grant in 2011. This event will give both partners the opportunity to reiterate their commitment to economic development through their support of small business.

Barrera unveiled the new corporate name and logo at the Farmer’s Market in the Historic Market Square, also known as El Mercado, on Commerce Street in Downtown San Antonio, where LiftFund has several clients that operate businesses.

“If I have ever needed help, Accion has been there for me,” said Alicia Reyes, owner of Ranchero Grill & Tap, just one of the many clients that LiftFund serves within the Market Square. “The name has changed, but I believe in what they do and that, for me, will never change.”

About LiftFund

Established in 1994 in San Antonio, as Accion Texas Inc., LiftFund is a financial and business-support service organization that helps entrepreneurs strengthen their businesses, stabilize and increase their incomes, create employment and contribute to the economic revitalization of their communities. LiftFund has the nation’s largest microlender portfolio and is committed to providing capital to entrepreneurs who do not have access to loans from commercial sources. Since its inception, LiftFund has made nearly 15,000 loans totaling more than \$180 million. LiftFund operates in eight states – Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee and Texas. To learn more about LiftFund, go to www.liftfund.com .