

**For Immediate Release**

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**State DGS Small Business Advocate Awarded for Outstanding Work**

**(Sacramento)**— The Department of General Services' (DGS) Eric Mandell, Chief of the DGS Office of Small Business (SB) and Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBE) Services, was recently recognized for his contributions to the small business community. Mandell was the recipient of the 2012 John Lopez award for his outstanding efforts to help small and disabled veteran business owners receive valuable state purchasing dollars at the 2012 Keeping the Promise (KTP) Disabled Veteran Business Alliance Expo. The expo is the largest DVBE Outreach event held each year; Mandell is only the fourth person to receive the recognition.

"I am privileged to lead a talented and dedicated team," said Mandell. "Their passion for helping California's small businesses and Disabled Veteran owned firms to compete for and win state business and help our economy to recover is unmatched. I received this award because of the great work they do every day."

Eric began his career with DGS in 2005 and created the state's Small Business and Disabled Veterans Business Enterprises Services outreach program. He was later promoted and assumed oversight of the program's certification function in 2007.

The program's certification function oversees the approval of all applications from SB/DVBE firms requesting certification, as well as assists firms by participating in outreach events, providing resource guidance, and supporting the businesses through advocacy. Once certified, Small Business and Disabled Veterans Business Enterprises firms are entitled to benefits that including a five percent bid preference on applicable state solicitations and higher interest penalties for late payment of an undisputed invoice.

When Mandell began working for DGS, the state had approximately 10,800 certified Small Business and Disabled Veterans Business Enterprises firms and spent nearly \$1.7 billion (about 18.06 percent) purchasing dollars towards these firms. Currently, DGS has certified nearly 20,000 small business and disabled veteran-owned firms, steering more

than \$2.5 billion purchasing dollars toward these firms.

“Small businesses are vital to our growing economy and Eric’s dedication to helping these businesses succeed is evident in everything I’ve seen him do,” said DGS Director Fred Klass. “I congratulate him and his entire team on this tremendous recognition.”

*The Department of General Services acts as the business manager for the State of California. DGS helps state government better serve the public by providing services to state agencies including procurement and acquisition solutions, real estate management, leasing and design services, environmentally friendly transportation, and architectural oversight and funding for the construction of safe schools.*

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