



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Annette Fulgenzi of the Illinois Small Business Environmental Assistance Program honored with Karen V. Brown Leadership Award**

The National Steering Committee (NSC) of Small Business Environmental Assistance Programs (SBEAPs) & Small Business Ombudsmen (SBO) have recognized Annette Fulgenzi of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity as the 2019 winner of the Karen V. Brown Leadership Award. This award acknowledges the accomplishments of an individual who promotes small business compliance assistance, sustainability, advocacy, and collaboration nationwide. These individuals have demonstrated leadership, innovation, dedication to environmental protection, and persistence in building strong local/state/federal partnerships for small business compliance assistance throughout their career as a SBEAP/SBO.

Fulgenzi was recognized for her leadership and participation on the NSC as Chair and Vice-chair, a regional representative, the Promotional subcommittee chair, and on nearly every Planning subcommittee over her 25 year career. In addition to planning many Annual SBEAP/SBO Training programs, Fulgenzi hosted the event in 2002, 2013 and 2019. Fulgenzi was also recognized for being a strong advocate for strengthening the relationship between USEPA and the SBEAP/SBOs, finding long-term consistent federal funding for the programs, and creating strong partnerships with national business organizations such as National Federation for Independent Businesses, Printing Industries of America, as well as local organizations like the Illinois Association of Aggregate Producers.

“My colleagues in the Small Business Environmental Assistance Programs are some of the most dedicated, creative and passionate public servants in government. Their work protects our environment for generations to come while at the same time helps foster the small business community’s ability to create jobs and grow our economy. I consider it a great honor that they would choose me for the Karen V. Brown Leadership Award,” said Annette Fulgenzi.

The SBEAP/SBO NSC Awards are the States’ premier awards program for recognizing outstanding environmental leadership among small businesses and small business assistance providers. These awards recognize small businesses, SBEAP/SBO programs and individuals, trade associations and other business assistance providers who have made significant contributions to protecting the environment. The awards program is sponsored by the SBEAP/SBO NSC in partnership with U.S. EPA Asbestos and Small Business Office.

The NSC Awards were presented at the 2019 Annual SBEAP/SBO Training in Chicago, IL, May 15, 2019.

More information about the SBEAP/SBO is available at <https://nationalsbeap.org/>.

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**About the Small Business Environmental Assistance Programs and Small Business Ombudsmen**

*The Small Business Environmental Assistance Programs (SBEAP) and Small Business Ombudsmen (SBO) were created under Section 507 of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. For more than 25 years, the SBEAP/SBO have provided extensive, hands-on technical assistance to small businesses across the country to help them understand and comply with complex environmental regulations. The SBEAP/SBO website, <https://nationalsbeap.org/>, is a resource for program participants and small businesses. Find your state specific contact at: <https://nationalsbeap.org/states>*