



News Release

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National Women's Business Council Sponsors International Best Paper Award *Study Examines Variables Impacting Women-Owned Enterprises in Islamic Countries*

Washington, DC – The National Women's Business Council (NWBC) joined the International Council for Small Business (ICSB) and the International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship (IJGE) in presenting the Best Paper Award for Women's Entrepreneurship at the ICSB World Conference in Seoul, South Korea in late June. The award was presented to Muhammad Azam Roomi of the University of Bedfordshire's Centre for Women's Enterprise for his paper, "Entrepreneurial Capital, Social Values and Islamic Traditions: Growth of Women-owned Enterprises in Pakistan." NWBC has sponsored the women's entrepreneurship award all six years it has been offered.

"The National Women's Business Council is proud to present the 2009 Best Paper Award to the author of this outstanding paper," said NWBC Executive Director Margaret Barton. "We believe it is important to support creative and unique research in topics related to women's business ownership worldwide in support of the Council's mission of supporting fact-based policymaking."

The winning paper explores variables, such as personal resources and social capital, contributing to the growth of women-owned enterprises in Pakistan. Notably, the author found that the moral support of immediate family, independent mobility, and being allowed to meet with opposite gender play a decisive role in both sales and employment growth of women-owned firms in Islamic countries like Pakistan. The paper concludes with recommendations for changing stereotypical images of women in society and encouraging family support of women in Islamic countries developing their entrepreneurial ambitions.

"It's an honour to receive this prestigious award," stated Roomi. "I am encouraged to develop my research further to investigate the effects of culture and social values on the establishment and development of women's entrepreneurship in different parts of the world."

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The National Women's Business Council is a bi-partisan Federal government council that serves as an independent source of advice to the President, Congress, and the U.S. Small Business Administration on economic issues of importance to women business owners. The Council's mission includes conducting and supporting research on issues of importance to women business owners and their organizations in order to promote bold initiatives, policies and programs designed to support women's business enterprises at all stages of development in the public and private sector marketplaces. The Best Paper Award for Women's Entrepreneurship was created by NWBC to encourage such research.

To read the winning paper, visit www.nwbc.gov/ResearchPublications/papersOped.html. For more information on NWBC's support of the International Best Paper Award for Women's Entrepreneurship, contact NWBC Executive Director Margaret Barton at margaret.barton@sba.gov.

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The National Women's Business Council is a bi-partisan Federal government council created to serve as an independent source of advice and counsel to the President, Congress, and the U.S. Small Business Administration on economic issues of importance to women business owners. Members of the Council are prominent women business owners and leaders of women's business organizations. For more information about the Council, its mission and activities, contact: National Women's Business Council, 409 3rd Street, SW, Suite 210, Washington, DC 20024; phone: 202-205-3850; fax: 202-205-6825, e-mail: info@nwbc.gov; Web site: www.nwbc.gov.