



SOUTH FLORIDA URBAN MINISTRIES, INC.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lars Gilberts, SFLUM, 305-442-8306

Luis Rosero, Citigroup, 212-559-2455

Eight Women Microentrepreneurs in South Florida to Receive up to \$2500 Equity Award on March 29, 2006

Miami, FL – March 13, 2006 – **South Florida Urban Ministries (SFLUM)** is proud to announce its selection as one of only fifteen partners nationwide for the 2006 Women and Company® Microenterprise Boost Program. Through this program, SFLUM will have an opportunity to award \$500 to \$2,500 cash equity awards to eight women microentrepreneurs from the South Florida community. These awards will help foster the growth and development of their businesses. Award ceremony will be held on Wednesday March 29, 2006 at 10 a.m. at Little Havana NET office at 111 SW 5th Avenue, Miami, FL. This event is co-hosted by City of Miami's ACCESS Miami, ACCION USA, and Microbusiness USA.

“Women and Company is proud to participate in this program because we believe all women should have the opportunity to achieve their financial goals,” said **Lisa Caputo, President and CEO, Women and Company**. “More and more women are finding they can begin to achieve financial independence by starting their own businesses, and these grants can have a practical and immediate impact as they strive to grow these businesses.”

ASSETS Miami was started in 2003 in partnership with Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) The ASSETS Miami program provides a 11 weeks training course for individuals that want to start their own business or strengthen a business they already own. ASSETS Miami also provides ongoing technical assistance with business issues, business plan writing, and access to capital. SFLUM offers its ASSETS program in both the English and Spanish languages. SFLUM has been serving South Florida for 33 years in the areas of hunger and poverty, children and youth, and economic development.

“Thanks to Citigroup and Women and Company we can provide and ensure women will have access to training and technical assistance and have an increased opportunity to succeed in business. The Women and Company Microenterprise Boost Program provides valuable resources needed to achieve business goals,” said Brent Hursey-McLaughlin, SFLUM's Executive Director.

Started in 2005 and funded by the Citigroup Foundation, the Women and Company® Microenterprise Boost Program will disperse over seventy-five equity awards to women microentrepreneurs across the country in 2006. Recipients will receive technical training, business development guidance and assistance from South Florida Urban Ministries on growing their business and maximizing their equity award. The awards may be used for essential business development activities such as marketing, technology purchases, website development, inventory, or professional services. The program is managed by Association for Enterprise Opportunity, a national membership association for the microenterprise development industry representing hundreds of microenterprise development programs across the country. Women and Company is a division of Citigroup that provides access to financial education and resources for women.

###