



*For Immediate Release
Contact: Kristen Hellmer
Phone: 602-845-1234
kristenh@azcommerce.com*

ACA HELPS SMALL BUSINESSES WITH NEW EXPORT INITIATIVE
Joins ASU, Arizona Businesses on Important Trade Mission to Canada

PHOENIX (December 2, 2011) – The Arizona Commerce Authority is launching the State Trade and Export Promotion (STEP) program with a trade mission to Montreal. Earlier this year, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) awarded the ACA \$656,000 in grant money to help small businesses (those with less than 500 employees) enter export markets for the first time or to expand into new markets. Coupled with ACA's 25 percent match, the program will total \$800,000.

"Small business makes up the fabric of Arizona," said Don Cardon, President and CEO of the Arizona Commerce Authority. "Providing resources to these entrepreneurs to help them expand their business and realize their fullest potential is a key element of ACA's mission."

Small businesses account for 98 percent of the businesses in Arizona. ACA's STEP program will offer a continuum of services such as education and counseling, market selection assistance, and development and translation of marketing materials, allowing companies to increase their revenues through international sales. Ultimately, this will help Arizona businesses expand and become engines for job creation and economic growth in the state.

To kick off the new program, the ACA and Arizona State University will lead a delegation of Arizona small businesses to Montreal to participate in the AeroMontreal Forum. Stemming from ASU and ACA's participation at the Paris Air Show in June 2011, the trade mission builds on the Memorandum of Understanding signed with AeroMontreal in Paris.

"The Aerospace and Defense Research Collaboratory works with a broad range of academic and industry partners across the state to develop new technologies to advance Arizona's aerospace industry," said Dr. Anshuman Razdan, ADRC project director and associate professor of Engineering at ASU's College of Technology and Innovation. "This trade mission provides an important opportunity to share knowledge, promote Arizona's strengths in the sector, and forge linkages between our companies and academic institutions with partners and potential customers in Canada."



At the Forum, representatives from Arizona businesses will have the opportunity to meet directly with Canadian companies, such as Bombardier, to explore collaborative research and development, business and trade opportunities. Companies participating in the mission include:

- **Kaiser/Alexo** - Manufacturer of hard alloy aluminum shapes for aerospace, defense, medical and automotive industries
- **Kinetx** - Aerospace technology firm providing software, systems, and hardware engineering and development
- **LAI International** - Manufacturer of make-complete precision-engineered components and assemblies

The AeroMontreal Forum takes place December 5-8. For more information on ACA's STEP program please visit www.azcommerce.com.

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