

H&R Block, ACCION USA Team up to Support Small Business in Miami; ACCION USA Focuses On Providing Credit To Low- To Moderate-Income Entrepreneurs

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KANSAS CITY, Mo.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Feb. 8, 2006--H&R Block (NYSE: HRB), the world's largest tax preparation firm, and ACCION USA, a nonprofit group that provides business loans to low- to middle-income entrepreneurs, have agreed to work together to support small business owners and new business start-ups in the Miami area.

H&R Block will promote ACCION USA's micro-lending program to Block small business clients and prospective small business owners through the 100 H&R Block offices in the greater Miami area. Selected H&R Block tax professionals are being trained as informational ambassadors in order to introduce ACCION and its services to interested H&R Block clients.

ACCION, for its part, will promote H&R Block's tax preparation service to ACCION clients through normal business contacts and through a direct mail campaign targeting more than 700 individuals. ACCION also will create and produce various supporting marketing materials and brochures in coordination with the City of Miami and H&R Block. As part of the arrangement, ACCION clients can have their 2005 business returns prepared by H&R Block at a discounted rate of \$75.

"We're pleased to be working alongside ACCION to further its mission of supporting entrepreneurial activity among low- to middle-income residents of Miami," said Bernie Wilson, vice president, H&R Block. "Together, we believe we can make a real difference by helping new businesses get off the ground and existing businesses prosper."

Boston-based ACCION USA's objective is to make access to credit a permanent resource for low- and moderate-income small business owners nationwide. By providing small, so-called micro-loans to individuals who've been shut out of the traditional banking sector, ACCION helps build businesses and increase personal income.

The organization believes that available credit is a resource that can help narrow the income gap and provide economic opportunity, thereby stabilizing and strengthening local communities. At the heart of this vision is the recognition that micro-lending institutions much be financially sustainable and not perennially dependent on donations or government aid.

In addition to working with the ACCION USA, H&R Block is involved in a number of other initiatives in South Florida aimed at assisting low- to middle-income residents. In 2004, the company entered into a five-year partnership with the City of Miami to increase participation in the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). City of Miami Mayor Manny Diaz will kick off the second year of the City's partnership with H&R Block on Jan. 31 during an event for Access Miami, a comprehensive program designed to increase residents' access to the tools necessary for economic prosperity. As part of the program, H&R Block has waived the \$25 fee for setting up an Express Individual Retirement Account for EITC-eligible Miami residents.

In other activities, Block is working with Sedanos Grocery chain for direct referrals and the company has opened tax preparation kiosks in all Miami Dade Office Depots, select Pronto and Labamba Cash stores, the University of Miami and at Jackson Hospital, the largest public hospital in Miami, to provide urban residents with convenient tax preparation options.

About H&R Block

H&R Block is a leading provider of tax, financial, mortgage, accounting and business consulting services and products. H&R Block is the world's largest tax services provider, having prepared more than 400 million tax returns since 1955. The company and its subsidiaries generated revenues of \$4.4 billion and net income of \$636 million in fiscal year 2005 from operations in four principal business segments: tax preparation and advice via in-office, online and software solutions; investment and financial advisory services; retail and wholesale mortgage services; and tax/accounting/business consulting

services for midsized companies. Headquartered in Kansas City, Mo., H&R Block markets its services and products under three leading brands: H&R Block, Option One and RSM McGladrey. For more information, visit our Online Press Center at www.hrblock.com.

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