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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – October 14, 2010

**SBDC relocates to downtown business hub
to expand its reach into Pueblo community**

PUEBLO – For the past 23 years, the Small Business Development Center at Pueblo Community College has been helping a varied audience of fledgling companies succeed in Pueblo, Fremont and Custer counties. Today, the SBDC celebrated settling into a new location that it expects will expand its reach even further into the business community.

The Southern Colorado SBDC showcased its new headquarters in the Business & Technology Center at 301 N. Main Street in downtown Pueblo with a news conference, open house and ribbon-cutting ceremony. Joining in the celebration were state SBDC-related officials as well as local representatives of community business, chambers of commerce, and economic development organizations. The ceremony included an official proclamation, read by Pueblo City Council President Larry Atencio and Pueblo County Commissioner Jeff Chostner, denoting October 14, 2010 as “Southern Colorado SBDC Day.”

Among those addressing the audience were Don Marostica, Executive Director of the Office of Economic Development & International Trade; Kelly Manning, Colorado SBDC Network Director; and Dan Centa, President of the Pueblo Economic Development Corporation.

By settling in the BTC, the center anticipates expanding its base of business clients by being able to provide the perfect complementary tools that will support businesses with retention and expansion opportunities. With an easily-accessible, centralized location, it figures its business counseling services will be even more available.

“As we tell our clients – ‘location, location, location’ – and by moving to our new location at the BTC we are practicing what we preach,” said Caroline Parra, Executive Director of the Southern Colorado SBDC. “We are now at a prime location to help our businesses by providing key services that are easily accessible; this could be the difference between their success and failure.

“It is recognized nationally that 80% of all small business that obtain assistance through the SBDC Network are more likely to succeed,” she added. “At our new location, we will be that much closer to small businesses in the community. By being an intricate part of the community, our entrepreneurs will be that much closer to success.”

The SBDC is a partnership between the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, the Small Business Administration and Pueblo Community College. The Southern Colorado SBDC is one of 14 centers under the Colorado SBDC Network. Its charge is to help businesses start, grow and prosper through a variety of services.

These services include:

- Free confidential, one-on-one business advising services
- A 12-week certified Leading Edge program that provides multiple tools on entrepreneurial training and business plan development
- Seminars and workshops on marketing, management, record keeping, tax and wage issues, procurement opportunities, etc.
- Guidance on locating sources of funding to expand or restructure a business or to start a new business venture
- Small business referrals and resource assistance
- Federal, state and local government information that can help individuals achieve business success
- Information on government procurement opportunities
- Small business advocacy

The mission of the small business development network is to help new entrepreneurs realize the dream of business ownership and to enable existing businesses to remain competitive in an ever-changing and complex economy. Basically, the network exists to help companies succeed.

Hosted by leading universities, colleges, and state economic development agencies, and funded in part through a partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration, approximately 1,000 service centers are available to provide no-cost consulting and low-cost training.

Individuals who need assistance or have questions should contact the Southern Colorado SBDC at 719.549.3224 or e-mail SBDC@pueblocc.edu. Information also is available on its website at www.coloradosbdc.org.

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Founded in 1933, Pueblo Community College is a premier teaching institution focused on providing academic and service excellence to help its students acquire the 21st Century skills needed to better their lives. An educational and technological leader, PCC fosters economic development and utilizes strong partnerships in the communities it serves through its Pueblo, Fremont and Southwest campuses.