



## **BLACKHAWK RECOGNIZED FOR LEADING SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

**ROCKFORD, IL (October 12, 2009)**—Blackhawk Bank will be recognized for its partnership in supporting local business growth at a dinner hosted by the Small Business Development Center on October 15 at Cliffbreakers. As part of its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, the Small Business Development Center will recognize Blackhawk for providing Spanish Self-Employment Training classes in Rockford.

The classes provide a platform for successful Hispanic/Latino entrepreneurs to help other Hispanic adults who are interested in starting their own business. Participants receive training and mentoring in a linguistically and culturally accessible manner. The classes also received honors in the 2009 Year of Innovation program. More than 28 individuals completed the course.

“Our work in this program demonstrates Blackhawk’s commitment to support local business development and extend our reach to underserved populations of our community,” said Rick Bastian, president and CEO of Blackhawk Bank. “We are honored by our recognition by the Small Business Development Center and look forward to continuing our partnership with this important organization.”

Blackhawk Bank operates eight full service banking centers in Beloit, WI; Roscoe, Machesney Park, Rockford, Belvidere and Capron, IL and a dedicated Mortgage Center in Rockford. For more about the bank, log onto [www.blackhawkbank.com](http://www.blackhawkbank.com).

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