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**North Carolina’s Small Business Ombudsman Honored with Karen V. Brown Leadership Award**

The National Steering Committee (NSC) of Small Business Environmental Assistance Programs (SBEAPs) & Small Business Ombudsmen (SBO) has recognized Tony Pendola, PE of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality as the 2018 winner of the Karen V. Brown Leadership Award. This award acknowledges the accomplishments of an individual who promotes small business compliance assistance, sustainability, advocacy, and collaboration nationwide. These individuals have demonstrated leadership, innovation, dedication to environmental protection, and persistence in building strong local/state/federal partnerships for small business compliance assistance throughout their career as a SBEAP/SBO.

Mr. Pendola was recognized for providing his technical expertise on a wide range of environmental requirements, increasing credibility of the SBEAPs within U.S. EPA and with business organizations, and building strong partnerships between small businesses and the environmental assistance programs for over 19 years.

“This award means more to me than any other I have ever received because it was given by my peers who have a keen understanding of the totality of the work I’ve been doing for the past couple decades.” said Tony Pendola. Mr. Pendola is the chair of the SBEAP/SBO NSC and serves on the board of the Air & Waste Management Association’s Research Triangle Park Chapter. He has previously received individual and team awards including SBEAP/SBO NSC SBEAP of the Year, U.S. EPA’s Office of Small Business Program’s Director’s Award, U.S. EPA’s Bronze and Silver Medals, Environmental Council of States (ECOS) State Program Innovation Awards, North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary’s Award, and the State of North Carolina’s Governor’s Award of Excellence.

The SBEAP/SBO NSC Awards are the States’ premier awards program for recognizing outstanding environmental leadership. These awards recognize small businesses, SBEAP/SBO programs and individuals, trade associations and other business assistance providers who have made significant contributions to protecting the environment. The awards program is sponsored by the SBEAP/SBO NSC in partnership with U.S. EPA Asbestos and Small Business Office.

LaRonda Bowen, SBO for the California Air Resources Board and 2017 Karen V. Brown Leadership Award winner commented, “Tony’s unwavering vision of an environmentally and economically healthy nation is key to his successful leadership - people feel his conviction, see his work, and want to follow his lead. Tony Pendola is the “poster child” for excellence in public service.”

The NSC Awards were presented at the 2018 Annual SBEAP Training in the Washington, D.C. area in conjunction with National Small Business Week, May 1-3, 2018.

The NSC would also like to recognize Rivanna Natural Designs for their creative awards and their continued support of green manufacturing. For more information on Rivanna Natural Designs please visit [www.rivannadesigns.com](http://www.rivannadesigns.com).

More information about the SBEAP/SBO is available at <https://nationalsbeap.org/>.

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**About the Small Business Environmental Assistance Programs and Small Business Ombudsmen**

*The Small Business Environmental Assistance Programs (SBEAP) and Small Business Ombudsmen (SBO) were created under Section 507 of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. For more than 25 years, the SBEAP/SBO have provided extensive, hands-on technical assistance to small businesses across the country to help them understand and comply with complex environmental regulations. The SBEAP/SBO website,* <https://nationalsbeap.org/>*, is a resource for program participants and small businesses. Find your state specific contact at*: <https://nationalsbeap.org/states>