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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center Receives International Award

(Abingdon, VA) The Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center has received a special Certificate of Appreciation for Achievement in Trade from the U.S. Department of Commerce. The award, presented by Congressman Rick Boucher (D-VA), recognized the Center and George Hiller, Director of International Programs, for their work in international trade promotion and education. Ms. April Redmon, Acting Director of the U.S. Commercial Service Office for Northern Virginia, also participated in the presentation.

The nomination by the Department of Commerce's Commercial Service noted the Center's support for small business exporters in Southwest Virginia and active partnership with the Commercial Service. The Center's acclaimed "Southwest Virginia International Business Study in Mexico" course was also cited as a highly effective program to help area college students learn more about international trade. Hiller noted, "Preparing area college students to effectively compete in the global marketplace is an absolute priority for us. We are most fortunate to have

the support of the Commercial Service post in Monterrey, Mexico, and other offices around the world."

Funding for the Center's international programs has been provided by major grants from the Virginia Tobacco Commission's economic development fund and the U.S. Department of Education's Business and International Education program. Later this month the Center will launch a new international business study in China program with 21 professors and students from area colleges. As with the Mexico program, the participants will also meet in Shanghai with managers of Tri-Cities area businesses.

For additional information about international programs at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center, please contact George L. Hiller, Director of International Programs, at (276) 619-4374 or e-mail at [ghiller@swcenter.edu](mailto:ghiller@swcenter.edu). The website is [www.globalvirginia.com](http://www.globalvirginia.com).



Pictured from left to right: Dr. Rachel Fowlkes, Executive Director, SVHEC  
Congressman Rick Boucher (D-VA)  
April Redmon, Acting Director of the U.S. Commercial  
Service Office for Northern Virginia

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**MISSION STATEMENT:** The mission of the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center is to strengthen the regional economy of southwest Virginia by providing higher education and professional development training of the current and future workforce.