

SWOSU's Veal Wins SBA Regional and State Awards

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John D. Veal, Jr., business coordinator for Southwestern Oklahoma State University's Small Business Development Center office in Lawton, has been selected as the Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year for a five-state area.

John Veal also received the state of Oklahoma's award as well as the honor for the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico and Oklahoma.

Individuals who have fulfilled a commitment to advancing small business opportunities for veterans of the United States armed forces are considered for the award, which is presented by the United States Small Business Administration.

In his job with SWOSU, Veal provides counseling and training programs to potential small business owners and existing business owners. The OSBDC is jointly funded by SBA, SWOSU, the OSBDC and the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and provides owners of small businesses and entrepreneurs with the expertise they need to turn an idea into a business or help an existing business reach its potential. SWOSU has OSBDC sites in Lawton and Weatherford.

Veal has been very active in enhancing opportunities for veterans. He has an active outreach program that reaches two major military installations, including Fort Sill Army Post and Altus Air Force Base.

Veal is very active with the Lawton Chamber of Commerce Legislative Affairs Committee and provides active support for legislative or regulatory action designed to help small businesses.

Through the efforts of Veal, six new veteran-owned businesses have been established recently in the Lawton area. In addition, Veal has provided support to over 150 veterans through OSBDC training and counseling programs. Through Veal's efforts, three programs have been developed that are geared to provide support, including the Fort Sill Army Career and Alumni Program Center, the Fort Sill Regional Correction Facility Training and Counseling Program and the Altus Air Force Base Family Support Center Program.

Veal will be honored on May 24 in Midwest City.