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Contact: Christie Miller
(804) 545-5805
cmiller@yesvirginia.org

Nine Virginia Companies Accepted into Virginia's Accessing International Markets Program

~Program provides resources to support international business expansion~

RICHMOND – The Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) today announced the acceptance of nine Virginia companies into its Accessing International Markets (AIM) export development program. The year-long AIM program introduces companies across Virginia to new global business opportunities.

Virginia companies selected to participate include Dougherty & Associates Inc. (DAI) and DreamPak L.L.C., both of Alexandria; Arctech Inc., Comter Systems, Inc. and ESI Total Fuel Management, Inc., all of Fairfax County; Blackwell Engineering, PLC of Harrisonburg; Mikro Systems, Inc., of Albemarle County; Unitech, LLC, of Hampton; and Universal Companies, Inc. of Washington County.

AIM participants pursue leads in one target market overseas that they agree to visit during their year in AIM. Companies do not need to have export experience to participate in AIM, but must work with the AIM team to develop leads and meet with prospects in their target export market prior to graduation. They must also participate in seminars covering the basic steps of exporting. The June class will target countries in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and the Americas.

“The AIM Program jump-starts the development of international business by connecting companies with the practical tools needed for successful export sales,” said Elizabeth Morgan-Brown, AIM Program Manager. “We look forward to supporting these new AIM participants as they develop and implement their international business strategies.”

Each AIM participant has access to \$5,000 in capital funds to offset approved export-related expenses. Participants also have access to eight private-sector export specialists who provide essential expertise for expansion into international markets. The eight AIM service providers include an attorney, a banker, a translator, a freight forwarder, a U.S. export compliance specialist, a corporate growth consultant and companies offering online marketing and tax services.

Based on a competitive application process, 20 companies are accepted into the AIM program each year. Since its launch in December 2005, AIM has served 70 clients across Virginia. Classes of ten start June 1 and December 1. Applications for the December 2009 class are currently being accepted and are due no later than Nov 1., 2009. To learn more about the benefits of the AIM program, please visit the services page at www.ExportVirginia.org.

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership, a marketing organization, was created by the Virginia General Assembly in 1995 to encourage, stimulate, and support the development and expansion

of the economy of the Commonwealth. The Partnership is a state authority, which is governed by a 22-member Board of Directors appointed by the Governor and the Virginia General Assembly. To accomplish its objectives of promoting economic expansion within the Commonwealth, the Partnership focuses its efforts on business recruitment, expansion and international trade. VEDP has offices in Virginia, Belgium, Hong Kong, Mexico and Japan.

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