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WAKE FOREST TO LAUNCH TRIAD BUSINESS COLLABORATIVE

Winston-Salem, N.C. – Wake Forest University is launching an initiative aimed at helping area small businesses deal with the significant hurdles most will face in coming months as the economic downturn persists.

The initiative, known as the Triad Business Collaborative, will be announced Jan. 24 during a meeting of the United Minority Contractors of North Carolina (UMCMC). Wake Forest is hosting the 2009 Business and Planning Meeting of the trade association, which was formed in 2006 to represent the interests of women- and minority-owned design and construction professionals and suppliers throughout the state.

Joining Wake Forest in the effort will be the City of Winston-Salem, Winston-Salem State University, and various public and nonprofit agencies. The primary goal of the initiative is to share information about and coordinate access to programs that already exist within individual institutions and agencies that are part of the collaborative, said Garland Burton, director of Wake Forest’s Office of Business Diversity Programs and a spokesman for the new initiative. Burton cited the Babcock Graduate School of Management’s Family Business Center and the School of Law’s Community Law & Business Clinic as examples of such programs. Understanding how state and local government agencies operate will also be vital to businesses hoping to participate in infrastructure and other economic stimulus programs authorized by the federal government, he said.

“Wake Forest is pleased to lead this effort to strengthen the ability of area businesses to participate in regional procurement opportunities,” Burton said. “We look forward to collaborating with our colleagues at Winston-Salem State, in city government and at area agencies to ensure the continued economic growth and vibrancy in our entire region.”

Details about the initiative will be shared with UMCMC members at 10 a.m. Jan. 24 in Reynolda Hall’s Magnolia Room. The meeting is open to the public, and a networking luncheon will follow at noon.

For more information about the Triad Business Collaborative, call (336) 759-1122.

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