

# LEE'S SUMMIT JOURNAL

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## Local business woman receives SBA Award



Michelle L. Long, CPA has been named the 2007 Financial Services Champion of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration's Kansas City district office which serves 89 counties in eastern Kansas and western Missouri (including Springfield). Each year during Small Business Week, the SBA honors "champions" for their outstanding contributions and dedication to assisting small businesses above and beyond regular business duties. Long is the owner of M. Long Consulting, LLC ([www.mlongconsulting.com](http://www.mlongconsulting.com)) which specializes in QuickBooks consulting and training services. In addition, Long's company coaches entrepreneurs to develop business plans and assists them in improving the performance and profitability of their business.

"Michelle is a great example of an individual committed to helping small business owners succeed in their endeavors" according to Cheri Streeter, Regional Director of the Johnson County Community College Small Business Development Center (JCCC-SBDC). "Assisting aspiring entrepreneurs in building a strong foundation and business plan to start their business and existing entrepreneurs to grow their business requires a solid understanding of the various aspects of entrepreneurship. Michelle has these qualifications and inspires and helps prepare (FastTrac) program participants to meet the challenge of entrepreneurship" according to Sharon Tillman of the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation.

As a CPA, Long has an extensive background in accounting having worked for two large national public accounting firms and Hallmark Cards, Inc. prior to starting her own accounting practice. After about five years on her own, Long realized that she wasn't content merely "keeping the books and preparing tax returns" for small businesses. She wanted to help them use the information to grow their business and understand their financial information. Now she is a Certified FastTrac Facilitator, an Advanced Certified QuickBooks ProAdvisor, and an adjunct professor at University of Missouri—Kansas City (UMKC) and Johnson County Community College (JCCC). Long has conducted numerous seminars throughout Kansas City to assist entrepreneurs with writing a business plan, marketing strategies, and has taught well over 700 people how to use QuickBooks.

Since earning a MBA in Entrepreneurship from UMKC, Long has been consulting, training, and teaching entrepreneurs, small business owners, and college students throughout the greater Kansas City area. According to Barbara Millard, Assistant Professor Entrepreneurship at JCCC, "So many small business owners are intimidated or frustrated by financials. It takes a Champion to be able to be able to put them at ease, not make them feel ignorant and to provide the much

needed assistance. Michelle is truly deserving of the 2007 SBA Financial Services Champion Award.”

As an Advanced Certified QuickBooks ProAdvisor, Long teaches monthly QuickBooks seminars for JCCC-SBDC. Over the past seven years, she has taught well over 700 people how to use QuickBooks. Long has also developed specialized seminars to address the needs of Contractors and Retailers.

Long is an Adjunct Professor of Entrepreneurship at Johnson County Community College teaching FastTrac Planning and Entrepreneurial Marketing. She is also an Adjunct Professor at University of Missouri—Kansas City (UMKC) teaching strategic management and previously accounting courses.

Long is also a Certified FastTrac Facilitator. FastTrac is a program of the Kauffman Foundation that assists entrepreneurs start and grow their businesses. She has been a business coach or facilitator for numerous FastTrac NewVenture programs for the Kauffman Foundation—helping the participants control their future by starting their own business.

Long believes in giving back to the community and helping local organizations. She has written several articles on financial topics for the Kansas City Small Business Monthly and has been a guest speaker at local nonprofit organizations.

After living in Blue Springs for 14 years, Long moved back to Lee’s Summit in 2003. She and her husband, Steve Long, were high school sweethearts at Lee’s Summit High School and have been married for 21 years. Their children attend Lee’s Summit West High School and Summit Lakes Middle School. Her parents are RosaLee and Dick Scharfen—Mayor of Lake Winnebago.

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