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**LOCAL BUSINESSWOMAN KAREN HEBERT-GORDON WINS  
WOMEN'S INITIATIVE WOMAN-OWNED BUSINESS OF THE YEAR AWARD**  
*Bay Area nonprofit for women entrepreneurs announces winners of 2009 competition*

**Los Gatos, Ca.** – The Oya Group, owned by local businesswoman Karen Hebert-Gordon, has been named the Woman-Owned Business of the Year Award in Silicon Valley. The award is given by Women's Initiative for Self-Employment and recognizes women-owned Bay Area businesses that:

- Have been successful despite the barriers that exist for women business owners
- Exemplify how business ownership and leadership is beneficial for women
- Have a positive impact on the local community or the community at large
- Advance their field through innovation.

In recognizing these businesses, Women's Initiative celebrates the power of microenterprise in transforming communities through job creation and economic revitalization. In today's economic recession the importance of supporting existing micro-businesses and fostering entrepreneurship is paramount. Existing research states that over 70% of all new jobs created during the recession will be through microenterprise. Research at the World Bank and the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor has indicated that investing in women entrepreneurs, in particular, is critical for economic growth.

The WOB Award recognizes these women entrepreneurs and their businesses for their leadership and positive contributions to their communities. Ms. Hebert-Gordon will be recognized at the Woman-Owned Business of the Year Awards Ceremony on November 10, 2009 at Google in Mountain View.

For more information about the awards and a complete list of winners, go to [www.womensinitiative.org](http://www.womensinitiative.org).

About Women's Initiative

Women's Initiative is the nation's largest microenterprise training and funding organization and is widely regarded as a leader in the field of microenterprise training. For more than 20 years, Women's Initiative has been providing low-income women throughout the Bay Area with business training and ongoing support in addition to access to capital. Our unique program propels low-income women into business ownership, and more importantly, tackles barriers to self-sufficiency. In English and in Spanish, women conquer their fears of success, complete a business plan, learn technology, access capital, and meet influential and experienced business people who can help them succeed. Average income more than doubles four years after participation in the Women's Initiative program and 71% of WI business owners are making steady sales five years down the road. In 2008 Women's Initiative graduates generated an average of 2.25 new jobs each day.