

CREATE Receives the Economic Restructuring Award

On June 7, 2005 Ernie Post, director of the SBDC, and Michael Givler, Manager of the Main Street program in Coatesville, accepted an award for Economic Restructuring from the Pennsylvania Downtown Center (PDC) for their work with the Coatesville Regional Entrepreneurial and Training Endeavor (CREATE) program.

The PDC is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting revitalization and reinvestment in Pennsylvania's communities. Post and Givler accepted the award at a ceremony held during a four-day conference in State College, Pennsylvania.

The CREATE program was launched in September of 2001 as a cooperative effort between the City of Coatesville, the Kutztown University Small Business Development Center, and the Chester County Economic Development Council. The two economic restructuring strategies include development of entrepreneurship and business

development. Before the program came into existence, local business owners and those wanting to start a new business had limited resources to start, grow or expand a business. Few businesses were opening in Coatesville and those that were already located there struggled to exist.

The 16-session training, provided by the SBDC is open to anyone who has a desire to open a small business, or already has an established business, in the Coatesville region. Topics include: being an entrepreneur, budgeting, pricing, legal aspects, and developing a business plan. Every graduate has a completed business plan that can be used when seeking financing and guides their business.

The program has had 81 graduates to date, with approximately 49 percent are in some form of business, and resulted in \$59,000 in micro-loans for business start-up.