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**BROWN COUNTY MICROLOAN PROGRAM WELCOMES DICKSON**

Green Bay, Wis.- (March 25, 2011) – Advance and the Brown County MicroLoan Program welcome Marianne Dickson as the director of its microloan program.

The progressive microloan program – only one of a few in the state – is geared to entrepreneurs and small businesses. The program establishes a pool of monies intended to boost the local economy through funding of entrepreneurs, emerging businesses and small businesses seeking to establish or grow their businesses.

Dickson brings more than 30 years of progressive business experience including more than 20 years in banking during which she served as the vice president of commercial lending at several Milwaukee financial institutions. She also assisted in the establishment of a corporate lending division for TCF National Bank and held similar positions with Park Bank and Brown Deer Bank. In addition, she worked as an independent contractor for the Wisconsin Women’s Business Initiative Corporation (WWBIC), a statewide microlender based in Milwaukee. In this role, she oversaw its loan portfolio including collections and legal work, hiring, training, managing a team of lending professionals and developing written policies and procedures for the lending area.

“Marianne’s experience in microlending and bank lending, as well as her instrumental role with the Wisconsin Women’s Business Initiative Corporation, made her the ideal candidate for the newly established Brown County MicroLoan Program,” said Fred Monique, interim president of the Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce and vice president of Advance.

In her role, Dickson will work with small businesses and entrepreneurs on microloans to create, improve or expand their businesses. These borrowers may not be eligible for more traditional means of financing due to their small size and/or lack of proven track records. A key component of the program includes a process that requires an initial meeting by the interested

business with Dickson, as well as periodic client meetings with staff and/or volunteers of Advance after a loan is granted.

“Brown County is a hub for entrepreneurs and small business,” said Dickson. “I’m excited to be here and help these businesses start and grow. This collaborative effort is a fabulous testimony to the commitment of the community to help in this process.”

For more information on Dickson or the microloan program, please contact her at 920.496.2111.

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Established in 1882, the mission of the Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce is to promote economic and community development. Chamber programs include Advance, the economic development arm of the Chamber. Advance is a partner in the Business Assistance Center, a partnership of organizations providing assistance and resources for growing businesses in the New North. Other partners include: Northeast Wisconsin Technical College Center for Entrepreneurship, SCORE, UWGB Small Business Development Center, Wisconsin Business Development Finance Corporation, Wisconsin Entrepreneurs Network, and Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership.

For more information about Advance, contact Fred Monique, 920.496.2118, or visit [advancegreenbay.org](http://advancegreenbay.org). For more information about the Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce and its programs, call 920.437.8704 or visit [titletown.org](http://titletown.org).

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