

NEWS RELEASE:

ISSUED BY: ACORN GROUP OF COMPANIES

DATE: 22 JULY 2016

ACORN'S GAIL DOWNING WINS 2016 INTERNATIONAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS' AWARD

Founder and CEO of the Acorn Group of Companies, businesswoman and entrepreneur Gail Downing, is one of two awardees of the 2016 International Women Entrepreneurs Challenge (IWEC) - honoured recently by the Cape Chamber of Commerce and IWEC Foundation in Cape Town. The organisation is an initiative of the Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with New York's Chamber of Commerce of Manhattan and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry Ladies Organisation. Gail will represent South Africa at the IWEC global conference in Brussels later this year, together with her co-winner, Debbie Merdjan, Founder and CEO of the Camelot Group.

The underlying mission of IWEC is to empower successful businesswomen and enable them to expand their business reach into new markets and geographies, while providing them with unique networking and mentoring opportunities along the way.

The concept was developed in 2005 as a result of the President of the Barcelona Chamber of Commerce's Mr Miquel Valls' desire to support the international economic empowerment of women entrepreneurs, during a visit to India. He later sent a representative to the United States to seek allies in the effort to empower women entrepreneurs. The Manhattan Chamber of Commerce and the US Department of State joined the effort and IWEC was born.

In 2008, thanks to the work of the Africa Bureau of the US Department of State, the IWEC project was extended to the African continent, identifying honourees to recognise the growth trajectory of businesses from Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa. Countries that also joined through efforts of FICCI/FLO in India, were Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Thailand at the third annual Awards Ceremony, held in New Delhi during the IWEC Conference in February 2009.

In a statement issued by the international board of the IWEC Foundation and the Cape Chamber of Commerce, Janine Myburgh, President and IWEC Board member, Cape Chamber of Commerce, commented that the judges "had an inspirational and delightful time working through some strong business applications. The passion for business was evident during the interview process and the adjudication panel ensured the excellence and quality of entrants were maintained. All applications were in synergy with the IWEC mission which embodies developing a global business network for successful women business owners, helping them to gain and expand access to international markets."

True to its name, Acorn Group has grown from a small sapling to become the organisation behind some of South Africa's most successful independently owned consumer brands, including Tabard insect repellents, Teepol detergents, Vapona insecticides and Carbro home care products. Founded in 1996 by Gail Downing as a small business named Acorn Products, the transition to a group of companies occurred as various operating units and brands were added to its portfolio. Tabard, Acorn's flagship brand, has remained one of Africa's most trusted insect repellents for over 50 years and will be used by Team South Africa when they participate at the Rio 2016 Olympics.

Page 1 of 2

True to its name, Acorn Group has grown from a small sapling to become the organisation behind some of South Africa's most successful independently owned consumer brands, including Tabard insect repellents, Teepol detergents, Vapona insecticides and Carbro home care products. Founded in 1996 by Gail Downing as a small business named Acorn Products, the transition to a group of companies occurred as various operating units and brands were added to its portfolio. Tabard, Acorn's flagship brand, has remained one of Africa's most trusted insect repellents for over 50 years and will be used by Team South Africa when they participate at the Rio 2016 Olympics.

ENDS

For more information, contact: Gail Downing, Managing Director, Acorn Group
Email: gail@acorngroup.co.za

WORD COUNT:
484 words

Prepared for Acorn Group by Newmarket Strategic Design.
For more information, contact: Mike Harper
Email: mike@newmarketdesign.net

Page 2 of 2