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## PRESS RELEASE 24-24

# U.S. Small Business Administration Congratulates 2024 Exporter of the Year

## SBA Grant Recipient From Georgia Exports to Over 65 Countries

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**WASHINGTON** – Today, [Administrator Isabel Casillas Guzman](#), head of the [U.S. Small Business Administration \(SBA\)](#) and the voice for America’s more than 33 million small businesses in President Biden’s Cabinet, celebrated **Spectrum International LLC**, headquartered in Georgia, being [named the 2024 Small Business Exporter of the Year](#). The company will be recognized during SBA’s [National Small Business Week](#), an annual event honoring the accomplishments and contributions of small businesses from across the Nation.

“Felipe Arroyave immigrated to the U.S. and worked hard to eventually launch his American dream of business ownership. Today, Spectrum International sells its contact lenses across multiple continents and demonstrates how small businesses are growing our nation’s economy and helping us compete globally,” said **Administrator Guzman**. “I am proud to recognize Felipe and his team at Spectrum during National Small Business Week 2024 as our Exporter of the Year and showcase how the SBA supports our more than 1.3 million small business exporters with grants, financing, and advisory support.”

Based in Georgia, Spectrum International designs and manufactures specialty contact lenses. Felipe Arroyave, a Colombian who immigrated to the US at 18, spent the next 17 years working in the vision industry while completing a degree in international business. In 2017, he started his own company. Today, he employs 28 individuals and sells to over 65 countries.

“It is with great pride that we recognize Spectrum International LLC as the SBA’s 2024 National Exporter of the Year. This small business demonstrates outstanding international success with the help of our [State Trade Expansion Program \(STEP\) grant](#), and we are thrilled that the SBA was able to assist them as they expanded into a global company,” said **Acting Associate Administrator for International Trade [Claire Ehmann](#)**.

Spectrum International was founded “to create a world that sees better.” Its U.S.-made

technology is sold almost exclusively abroad, to patients who would not otherwise have access to innovative vision solutions. In 2022, Arroyave earned an SBA State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) grant through the Georgia Department of Economic Development to offset the costs of attending the Arab Health Trade Show.

His company now operates a philanthropic arm entitled 'Changing Lives' that gifts vision treatments and products free of charge to those most in need. Arroyave serves on the Georgia District Export Council where he helps others expand abroad.

Spectrum International and other [National Small Business Week \(NSBW\) award winners](#) will be honored April 28-29 in Washington, D.C.

For more information about the State Trade Expansion Program grant, visit [www.sba.gov/STEP](http://www.sba.gov/STEP). For more information about National Small Business Week, visit [www.sba.gov/NSBW](http://www.sba.gov/NSBW).

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## About National Small Business Week

In the spirit of National Small Business Week, we celebrate the unprecedented growth of entrepreneurship in the United States, marked by 16.5 million new business

applications since the Biden-Harris Administration took office. This surge highlights the dynamism and innovation that America's entrepreneurs bring to our local communities. The SBA will continue to champion the endeavors of small businesses and the vital role they play in driving economic prosperity across the nation.

## About SCORE

SCORE, the nation's largest network of volunteer, expert business mentors, is dedicated to helping small businesses get off the ground, grow, and achieve their goals. Since 1964, SCORE has provided education and mentorship to more than 11 million entrepreneurs. SCORE is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and a resource partner of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

## About the U.S. Small Business Administration

The U.S. Small Business Administration helps power the American dream of business ownership. As the only go-to resource and voice for small businesses backed by the strength of the federal government, the SBA empowers entrepreneurs and small business owners with the resources and support they need to start, grow, expand their businesses, or recover from a declared disaster. It delivers services through an extensive network of SBA field offices and partnerships with public and private organizations. To learn more, visit [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).

# Media contacts

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