

MEMUNA WILLIAMS

Company: Avantgarde Translations

Title: President

Responsibilities: Business development and marketing for the company, which provides multilingual services that include translation, editing, proofreading and consulting.

Major accomplishments of the year: Williams established a web-based client service and translator-management system. The company's website can now upload documents for translation and payment submissions. She also expanded her reach nationally and in eastern Canada. Her client base grew to 35 accounts this year from 20 in 2009. She also was appointed to the alumni advisory board at the McColl School of Business at Queens University of Charlotte.

Other important achievements: The Minority Suppliers Diversity Council certified Avantgarde Translations as a minority-business enterprise. The firm achieved 8(a) business-enterprise certification. Williams also was named president-elect of the Charlotte chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners.

How her firm sets itself apart: Williams says she is a strong believer in quality control and ensures that each translated document is vetted for grammar and cultural nuances.

New-product development: Williams last year introduced the company's newsletter, *Beyond the Word*, to share information with her growing base of clients and translators.

Philosophy for running a business: "It comes down to being a good corporate citizen. We want people to enjoy working here."

Greatest lesson learned: "Everything is almost always more than you thought it would be. If you have a good support network, you can get through it."

Aspirations: Continue to expand her company's sales and geographical reach. "I think we've been slow and steady. I'd like the pace to pick up."

On the road: She is a "part-time chauffeur" for her three boys aged 12, 9 and 5. The family went to Johannesburg this month to attend World Cup matches. Roberta Fuchs

