

**I**t has been a busy year for Melody Warren, president and CEO of Transportation Logistics Systems Inc.

Warren's company, a freight brokerage and forwarding firm, was named as a Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce 2002 Top 10 Small Business, and she was a finalist for the Kansas/Western Missouri 2002 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year award.

Nancy Zurbuchen, president of Motion Multimedia in Kansas City and co-founder of the Kansas City Council of Women Business Owners, nominated Warren because of her desire to help women business owners.

Warren also is involved with the council, which is in its first year of existence.

"In the short time that I have known her, I have found her to be so energetic and so dynamic," Zurbuchen said.

Warren said getting involved with the organization was an easy decision after she attended the first meeting. One of the organization's goals is to push for increased emphasis on using women-owned businesses.

"If you can turn that key, it's a huge door you're going to open for all women," Warren said.

Warren said she thinks it is important to put her energy into organizations that benefit the

community. Transportation Logistics supports about 25 local charities, with its two biggest being Harvesters and the Salvation Army.

Warren serves on the board of directors of the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee and on the advisory boards for the Helzberg Entrepreneurial Mentoring Program, Blades & Associates and ACS Datasearch through her participation in the Athena Powerlink program.

Warren also is a backer of Kansas City SmartPort Inc., an initiative aimed at increasing the area's presence as a significant trade hub.

"If you don't back it, how can you expect it to happen?" she said.

The year also has brought some challenges for her transportation company.

One of Transportation Logistics' biggest projects, handling the transportation for all the parts that make up the truck bed of Ford Motor Co.'s Lincoln Blackwood, has evaporated.

Ford said in June that it will stop producing the Blackwood in August.

Nonetheless, Warren said that, to date, revenue at Transportation Logistics is up about 35 percent.

The company had more than \$2 million in revenue in 2001.

— Brian Cookson



**Melody Warren**  
**Transportation Logistics**  
**Systems Inc.**