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Editor's Note: Please consider running this release as a whole or profiling women owned businesses in your circulation area. Thank you.

**WOMEN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS CLIENTS OF THE NJSBDC NETWORK REACH
SUCCESS -- GENERATING JOBS AND CONTRIBUTING TO NEW JERSEY'S ECONOMY**

January 15, 2014 (Newark, NJ) – Women small business owners from varying industry sectors – some of whom with annual revenues of a million-plus - have credited their tenacity as well as the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers network for much of their development and growth. Small business drives the economy and leads the way for innovation and job creation throughout the state. These NJSBDC women business clients lead the way with their success stories.

Clients of the NJSBDC network, including women at the helm, have further developed and grown by seeking the advice of and guidance of the NJSBDC's business professionals. The network provided more than 20,000 hours of one-on-one counseling to more than 5,000 small business owners and entrepreneurs in 2012. Data for 2013 will be released in February.

"We believe these women are great examples of how perseverance and attention to details can pave the way for great accomplishments," NJSBDC CEO-State Director Brenda Hopper said.

"Our network's business experts helped them succeed in getting to these great benchmarks and will continue to provide guidance during the various stages of growth to come," added Deborah Smarth, NJSBDC chief operating officer-associate state director.

They include:

- **HerbaKraft** (Nisha Khanijow, President) – Manufactures of dietary supplements, employing 13 individuals and reaching annual sales of more than \$4 million; located in Piscataway.
"Our company and team received very strategic assistance to help us manage our rapid expansion. We truly thank the NJSBDC for their quality support and guidance," says HerbaKraft President Nisha Khanijow
- **Morris Family Medical Center** (Elena R. Jauregui, MD) – Has grown her family medical practice since opening the business in 2000, building a practice of more than 3,000 patients; located in Elizabeth.
"To have someone guide you in creating a business plan is a strategic way to start a business. Thanks to the NJSBDC and its highly informed coaches and instructors we were able to fulfill our dream," said Dr. Jauregui.
- **GIANT Gymnastics** (Jennifer Packard & John Skorski) – Focused in the world of gymnastics, the company now has 6 full-time employees and has increased sales to almost a million dollars; located in Hackettstown.
The owners credit the NJSBDC with showing them how to run a business and with its high customer retention rate.

- **Stokes Creative Group, Inc.** (Joanne Stokes) – Provides full service marketing services with specialization in the construction and transportation industries; has succeeded in obtaining major contracts in New Jersey and New York; located in Southampton.
Stokes received assistance with business plan formulation, enabling her to obtain financing from Sun Bank to take the company to the next level.
- **WisEngineering, LLC** (Cheryl D. Hall) – A defense contractor providing technology solutions and consulting services with 30 employees and several million dollars in sales annually; located in Dover.
“Our company truly appreciates the guidance and support of the NJSBDC and SBA. We will continue to leverage the knowledge that they provide as we look toward the future.”
- **Mallory’s Marvelous Muffins** (Leslie Nist) – Has attracted new customers and grown her business due to an aggressive Internet marketing/ and website sales campaign for her diversified supply of gift baskets with an array of baked goods selections; located in Basking Ridge. Nist credits all of the NJSBDC’s resources as making *“all the difference in the world.”* Her online sales have grown tremendously as a result.
- **Jersey Girl Café** (Kathleen Rana) – A corporate catering business and a retail eatery establishment, the business now has 6 full-time employees, known for its culinary experience; located in Hamilton.
Kathleen Rana, owner of Jersey Girl Café, said that the NJSBDC at the College of New Jersey *“put everything right after an auspicious start and allowed me the training and guidance to open a new location planned for early spring. I am so thankful.”*

“Among the array of services provided, the network assists small business owners with enhancing sales, customer service, long-term strategic planning as well as business continuity planning to prevent and ameliorate negative impacts on business operations from disasters like Super Storm Sandy,” said Hopper.

“Our NJSBDC network long-distance learning programs, also, provide advice on pricing strategy, strategic planning, disaster assistance and benchmarking financial and marketing performance,” added Smarth.

About NJSBDC

This non-profit network is a federal-state-educational partnership. Its expert staff and business practitioners help small business owners and entrepreneurs with every stage of business development and growth. The network headquarters is located at the Rutgers Business School in Newark. Its major funding partner is the U.S. Small Business Administration. The New Jersey Business Action Center is an additional funding partner of the NJSBDC program as well as other public and private grants/sponsorships. The NJSBDC network is an accredited member of the national association of SBDCs, with more than 1,100 centers and satellite offices throughout the country serving and assisting small businesses and saving and creating jobs across the nation. For more information, visit www.njsbdc.com.



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NJSBDC Network Client - Optimal Solutions - Wins National Science Foundation Grant
Project Will Leverage Big Data for Business Decision Making

Newark (Feb. 11, 2014) - Optimal Solutions, Inc. (OSI), of Lyndhurst, has received a \$225,000 National Science Foundation grant with the assistance and guidance of the New Jersey Small Business Center's Technology Commercialization program which focuses on assisting science-tech companies in taking their innovations from the laboratory to the marketplace.

OSI delivers customized software applications that model, optimize and simulate complex industrial processes and is headed by Vijay Hanagandi, Ph.D. Founded by former GE PhD Chemical Engineers, OSI's applications bring mathematical and computational support to companies' decision making processes in order to minimize energy usage, optimize manufacturing variables, increase profitability and decrease time to market.

With the advent of social media, Telemetry, Point of Sale systems, and other data sources, companies are suddenly inundated with more data and they need to manage this important information in the most optimum way to make their operations more efficient, productive and effective.

Many business owners realize that this is their opportunity to be outward and customer focused.

OSI's approach to leveraging Big Data for supply chain analytics supported by this National Science Foundation (NSF) project, involves developing novel demand forecasting algorithms. These algorithms will use massive quantities of data and enable companies to radically alter the way they plan to meet customer demand. OSI's innovation will also help companies to feed valuable data to their R&D groups in order to bring new products to the market.

As a recipient of an NJSBDC Small Business Success Award in December 2013, Dr. Hanagandi commented that, "The help received from the NJSBDC network's Tech Commercialization Consultant Randy Harmon has been invaluable. It has essentially helped OSI chart a course to become a products company while maintaining its steady consulting practice." Dr. Hanagandi appreciates the NJSBDC network's business guidance and help in securing the National Science Foundation STTR Phase I grant.

In addition to the current project, NJSBDC has assisted Dr. Hanagandi in winning two previous Department of Energy Grants.

The NSF project includes a collaboration with Rutgers Discovery Informatics Institute (RD12) which is critical for its success,” he added. “RD12 will complement our deep field and customer knowledge in supply chain analytics by providing the necessary research results in the area of text mining and application required for scalability of the eventual software product.” The long term goal of the project is to help increase the global competitiveness of the U.S. manufacturing sector resulting in job retention and creation.

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**IS NEW JERSEY ON THE RIGHT TRACK? IT DEPENDS ON HOW STATE
GOVERNMENT IMPLEMENTS POLICIES THAT ARE SMALL BUSINESS
FRIENDLY SAYS NJSBDC NETWORK EXECUTIVES**

February 20, 2014 (Newark, NJ) – There is strong support for small businesses and entrepreneurs, according to the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers (NJSBDC) economic impact data for 2013.

“It’s our report card,” says Brenda Hopper, chief executive officer and state director of the network which has been assisting small businesses for 35 years. “Our numbers show strong support for small businesses and entrepreneurs.”

The business experts at the NJSBDC network which consists of 12 centers statewide provided customized, personalized counseling for 5,351 small businesses and entrepreneurs totaling 22,699 counseling hours in 2013 alone. “That’s a lot of counseling for a small non-profit network like ours,” Deborah Smarth, chief operating officer and associate state director commented. “And, that was during a year when our core SBA funding grant had been reduced due to automatic congressional sequestered cuts in funding for the national SBDC program.”

More than 54 percent of the client portfolio is established businesses. These businesses are at different stages of growth and on average have between one to five employees although the network does have many clients who employ up to 100 or more employees. Their revenue ranges span from typical start-up to several million dollars in sales. Despite the slow recovery and a slow appetite for business expansion and financing, the network helped facilitate \$74.9 million dollars in loans, equity and procurement contracts. The network had 644 clients who started a new business in 2013.

The comprehensive technical assistance had a broad range including business planning, strategic planning, E-Business presence, exporting, technology commercialization, marketing strategies, accounting and financial analysis and more. The NJSBDC network helped its clients create and save 16,479 jobs with 2,191 created jobs and 14,288 saved jobs. The regional center directors who run the centers statewide stress that they ensure that when business clients face uphill problems, SBDC experts help clients find viable solutions - preventing layoffs and eventually creating more jobs.

Smarth made the point that New Jersey invests far less than other states do in their SBDCs across the nation. In mid-December 2013, the non-partisan Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council (SBEC) study, ranked New Jersey 49th of 50 states in terms of policy friendliness towards small businesses and entrepreneurs.

“A recent national association survey showed that NJSBDC is way below the national average of state funding at \$1.1 million in state SBDC networks. Yet, this network is the boots on the ground for thousands of businesses which tap its services annually, including Sandy-hurt businesses.” In addition to one on-one-counseling, the network sponsored 666 training seminars at which 9,830 small business owners and individuals attended, Smarth stressed.

Historically, the NJSBDC network has been the go-to entity for small businesses across the state due to its wide infrastructure and offices affiliated and hosted at various higher education institutions which leverages faculty and student teams when appropriate.

“In the past, the Governor’s Task Force on Higher Education advocated for a greater partnership between business and higher education institutions. This network is a perfect example of giving the business footprint for academic institutions’ partnerships,” said Smarth.

Hopper added, “Because NJSBDC is part of a national network of SBDCs across the country, it also has access to many national resources that are superbly utilized for the benefit of its clients, like a national clearinghouse which further assists SBDC business consultants and counselors to perfect details and research specifically geared to each client’s needs.”

“We’re grateful that our state funding has remained stable over the past 4 years,” Hopper continued. “But, it’s apparent that the ROI we give the state’s Treasury through small business clients’ development and growth far exceeds the level of investment made. It doesn’t have to be like that because the Legislature had funded the program at a million dollars several years ago.” About two decades ago NJSBDC received a state allocation of \$500,000 prior to its increase to \$1 million, but, is now at \$250,000 despite the extra pressures of dealing with the influx of small businesses which had property damage and other economic losses due to the business shutdown as a result of Super Storm Sandy.

There’s no doubt that restored SBDC funding to its past levels would reap economic development benefits for the state.

“Our true hope for the small businesses in the state and those individuals who haven’t been able to find decent paying jobs and who are considering starting a business, is that the state Legislature and Governor and his Team restore funding for the mission of the NJSBDC program,” said Smarth.

Hopper said considering restored funding for the NJSBDC program in this upcoming state budget would be a good symbol and message to the small businesses of the state that they do matter.

“Small businesses need to know they are supported.” Smarth noted that hundreds of millions of dollars have been awarded to mid and large size companies through business incentive grants over the past few years and that compared to the cost per creating and saving a job through the SBDC program, the cost of incentive grants is much higher.

Hopper said she hopes that in this upcoming budget cycle, the Legislature will work with the Governor’s Office in making a greater investment in this jobs producing program. Smarth noted that federal monies under the past federal jobs stimulus act expired and special, one-time Sandy assistance funding will end in 2015, which means that resources to serve small businesses in New Jersey will be reduced further.

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businesses,” Smarth stressed. The network also sponsored 666 training seminars at which 9,830 small business owners and individuals attended.

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New Jersey Small Business Development Center (NJSBDC) at Brookdale Community College Will Receive Silver Gull Award for Its Sandy Related Services, Strong Support for Small Businesses

February 26, 2014 (Lincroft, NJ) —The New Jersey Small Business Development Center (NJSBDC) at Brookdale Community College was named a recipient of the annual Silver Gull Award for economic development by the Monmouth-Ocean Development Council (MODC).

Recognizing outstanding work in economic development, community service and tourism, the NJSBDC at Brookdale was selected this award for its strong commitment to helping small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs create and expand their business enterprises. This includes its ongoing efforts assisting businesses impacted by Super Storm Sandy.

In the aftermath of the storm, the center provided more than 870 hours of consultation services to more than 250 clients. Their efforts facilitated more than \$4 million in total financing within the last nine months alone. In addition, the NJSBDC at Brookdale became the host office for the Small Business Administration (SBA) Disaster Recovery Center in the immediate days following the storm and continuing for a period of time.

“The NJSBDC at Brookdale Community College is proud to be recognized for our services as a business community leader,” said Jackeline Mejias-Fuertes, director. “The MODC is a highly respected advocacy group and it is an honor to be acknowledged for our hard work and dedication in supporting our small business community during a challenging time for all.”

“We couldn’t be more pleased,” said NJSBDC CEO-State Director Brenda Hopper. “Many of our centers in the hardest hit areas have been working with small businesses devastated by the Storm to ensure they come back to full capacity. Our Center at Brookdale deserves this award.”

“The NJSBDC team at Brookdale has done some outstanding work for our business owners in Monmouth and Ocean counties,” added NJSBDC COO-Associate State Director Deborah Smarth. “The network as a whole undertakes important functions every day to support the small business sector in New Jersey, saving and creating jobs.”

The Center will receive the award at the 49th Annual Silver Gull Awards Dinner to be held Thursday, May 1, at the Jumping Brook Country Club, Neptune. For more information about the MODC or to purchase tickets, visit www.modc.com. For more information on the NJSBDC at Brookdale Community College, visit www.mosbdc.com

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IT'S ALL ABOUT JOBS AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SAYS NJSBDC LEADERS IN RESPONSE TO GOVERNOR/LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP ON STATE BUDGET

February 26, 2014 (Newark) -- In response to state legislative leaders who say they want to concentrate on the economy and jobs to make the Governor's proposed budget work, New Jersey Small Business Development Centers (NJSBDC) network executives said that business health, survival, growth depends on how well resources and assistance flow to small businesses.

The role of small business is often touted as a priority but New Jersey's current 49th ranking in terms of small business/entrepreneur friendly status must be improved especially considering they make up 98.4% of all employers in the state and employ a little more than 50% of the private sector workforce in New Jersey, stress NJSBDC executives.

"Our SBDC network is all about business retention, business survival and maintenance, and growth even in these tough economic times," says Brenda Hopper, chief executive officer-state director of the NJSBDC network. "What SBDC does impacts on jobs."

"We need to invest more in small business assistance through NJSBDC. Resources are essential," said Deborah Smarth, NJSBDC's chief operating officer-associate state director.

Both executives said that the resources made available to small business owners and entrepreneurs have a direct link to improving the economy and the direction of business development and stability including creating and saving jobs.

"It's all about jobs and our Network has a track record of helping small businesses save and create jobs for the state's economy," continued Smarth.

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NJSBDC coordinates resources from five organizations for Super Social Media Marketing Events

Learn critical skills at NJIT's Enterprise Center

May 10, 2014 (Newark, NJ) – The New Jersey Small Business Development Centers network, also known as America's SBDC New Jersey, has coordinated the first multi-organizational #LearnToEarn event, hosted by Resident Internet Expert Sunny Kancherla live from NJIT's Enterprise Development Center from 5:15 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on June 24, 25 and 26.

So, stop wasting time and money trying to figure out the "secret" to marketing your business Online. In three evenings, you'll know everything you need to do to build a strong foundation for your Internet presence and move forward with the confidence you need to focus on growing your business, not fooling around on a computer guessing on what you should do next.

This special NJSBDC #LearnToEarn series is designed to celebrate the entrepreneurial spirit of New Jersey's established small business community while providing resources tailored to helping business grow through the development of a digital strategy encompassing Internet Marketing, operational efficiency, and an ROI focused implementation of technology from small business advocates who have succeeded online themselves!

Each event features the NJSBDC's Kancherla and local small business advocates, consultants, and experts from different partner organizations to discuss their perspectives and share best practices in a collaborative learning environment including workshops and one-on-one consulting sessions.

Topics include How to Improve your Small Business Website, Social Media Tactics to Raise Your ROI and Integrating Digital Strategy to Boost Efficiency and Sales.

Also these events are part of the NJSBDC #LearnToEarn series NJSBDC began in 2014 to bring E-Business webinars to different organizations and academic institutions across the state, this is the first time so many organizations a topics have been put together under one roof.

Participating organizations include:

New Jersey Small Business Development Center (NJSBDC)

Greater Newark Enterprises Corporation (GNEC)

Rutgers Center for Urban Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (CUEED / EPI)

New Jersey Institute of Technology's Enterprise Development Center (NJIT EDC)
Brick City Development Center (BCDC)
National Association of Professional Women (NAPW)

These events are designed to help raise awareness of the NJSBDC's commitment to helping small business owners seamlessly integrate their business with a well laid out digital strategic plan and provide the instruction to leave the conference with the tools to grow their business.

"This is the culmination of a renewed effort by the NJSBDC and its partners to bring together amazing experts to help established NJ businesses move the needle with their Internet strategies, said Kancherla. "We have so many great organizations trying to help business owners better compete in an increasingly time starved and global competitive landscape. Most businesses owners are struggling to find the time to setup their businesses 'the right way' online. So, this event allows businesses to develop a strong foundation under expert guidance of the NJSBDC E-Business division and other strategic small business advocates dedicated to providing them resources to help them grow."

The program is free to approved clients of any of the existing organizations and the general public can participate in the interactive webinars and network online with businesses attending the event for \$75 each or \$200 for all three.

Small Business Owners should contact their respective organizations promptly to receive their registration code as soon as possible.

Special events, pro bono strategic consulting, and workshops will be available for those participants.

This week is designed to help growing New Jersey small businesses learn the correct approach to build out their website, learn how to make Social Media work for them, and lastly how to creatively integrate their online and offline campaigns with little additional effort.

Interested in entering for the chance to receive a Pro Bono expert website and Internet Presence Analysis and attending workshops? That too is available.

Contact Shy Hopkins at shopkins@njsbdc.com for further information.

Registration may begin by Friday June 13on njsbdc.com. The registration page is <https://njsbdcInternetMarketingWeek.eventbrite.com>

Each evening will follow a similar format with registration and networking beginning at 5:15 p.m., NJSBDC Webinar Broadcast, interactive live expert discussion and informal business networking.

About America's SBDC New Jersey (NJSBDC)

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America's SBDC New Jersey Is Making a Difference for Small Businesses:
Small Business Week – One Week of Many – Supporting Small Business Owners

May 15, 2014 (Newark, NJ) Every business day of the year, the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers network's experts provide the guidance necessary to advance small business aims. If it's not personalized one-on-one counseling, there are training seminars on topics and issues with which small businesses must grapple like business planning, marketing strategies, financial analysis, customer service, procurement opportunities, export markets, moving technology innovation from the lab to the marketplace, competitive pricing, strategic planning, and establishing a visible e-commerce presence, etc.

The 12 centers of the network have promoted initiatives and events during national Small Business Week (May 12 through May 16). Some highlights in the north and south follow:

--On May 13, the **NJSBDC at Richard Stockton College** conducted and co-sponsored an event titled "*Get Real about Funding Possibilities*" in cooperation with Main Street Atlantic City, The Greater Atlantic City Chamber, The Atlantic City Business and Community Association, and UCEDC. The event was designed to discuss issues relating to realistic planning and business development strategies to help grow small businesses and access capital in and around Atlantic City, New Jersey.

"This collaborative effort in Atlantic City and the surrounding area is a clearinghouse of knowledge and resources for small business owners located in the area," said Center Director at Richard Stockton College, Joe Molineaux. "It was well received."

--On May 14, the **NJSBDC at Bergen Community College** launched its new program titled "*The New Client Business Clinic*" at the Center's location in Hackensack. This offering will provide new small business clients a unique opportunity to receive entrepreneurial training and receive financing criteria and guidance directly from an SBA lending partner – TD Bank, as well as obtain a full understanding of risk mitigation and insurance from Otterstedt Insurance Company.

"This clinic aimed at new business clients of our Center really provides hands-on information and knowledge that business owners need to know in order to succeed in an optimal way," said Acting Center Director at Bergen Community College Vincent Vicari.

"Our centers across the state are involved with businesses in the communities all year long and we have sponsored special events this week," Brenda Hopper, chief executive officer-state

director commented. “We’re there for small business owners and with our vast infrastructure and intellectual capital, we help them achieve success.”

“Our network’s activities during Small Business Week are an extension of what we do all year long to help small businesses understand, develop, and excel at their business operations,” added NJSBDC Chief Operating Officer-Associate State Director Deborah Smarth. “In a weak economy, they need our help even more as the challenges are great.”

In addition to the special events being held at the individual centers during Small Business Week, advocacy at the State Legislature and Governor’s Office by the network-- highlighting its economic impact statewide and how the network has helped small business clients create and save jobs -- is another key task. In 2013, the network assisted its 5,351 clients, providing 22,699 total counseling hours and helping them create and save more than 16,000 jobs.

“We always provide our accountability report,” said Smarth. “What better week to do it than during Small Business Week!”

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Small Business Owners Just Want a Fair Share of Their Taxes Back
New Jersey Small Business Development Centers Return a Large Dividend to State Economy

May 28, 2014 (Newark, NJ) Now called America's SBDC New Jersey, the Small Business Development Centers network is advocating for restoration of its State Government match funding since the program brings in almost \$3 million dollars in federal funding to deliver comprehensive assistance to small business owners and entrepreneurs.

That state match is critical along with other non-federal funds it raises to obtain full federal funding.

Small business clients from around the state readily acknowledge that the guidance and knowledge they receive through this program has helped them stay in business, develop and grow. During 2013, 644 SBDC clients started a new business and the SBDC network helped its clients create and save 16,479 jobs.

Clients maintain that this program is simply returning services they are already pre-paying for through the large amount of federal and state taxes they pay.

During the last administration, the network received \$1 million in state allocation, but, due to executive action, it was reduced to \$500,000 even after the Legislature's efforts attempted to restore the full one million. Then mid-fiscal year, the Corzine administration froze the program to \$250,000 which is where it is today.

The Christie administration in its first year had tried to eliminate that modest funding level, but, the Legislature fought to restore the funding and the \$250,000 allocation has been stable for the past few years and has been proposed for the upcoming 2014-2015 state budget.

Recently, Arizona State University's Business School issued a study which ranked New Jersey 50th in job growth.

"We look at the dividends returned to the State economy and we often wonder why would public policy-makers allocate a funding level way below the average state investment level nationally in this program," said Brenda Hopper, NJSBDC Chief Executive Officer-State Director. "It just doesn't make sense considering the slow economy."

A 2013 survey of SBDCs nationally revealed that the average state investment in SBDCs stands at \$1.1 million. New Jersey falls significantly below that average.

“Last year New Jersey ranked 49th in small business/entrepreneur-friendly policies according to a national non-partisan study,” said Deborah Smarth, NJSBDC Chief Operating Officer-Associate State Director. “We need to do more for small businesses, and restoring investment to where it used to be a few years ago would send a strong signal in the quest to making New Jersey more small business friendly and maximizing resources for their development and growth.”

Hopper added, “The NJSBDC shared in the state budget sacrifice a few years ago with its 75 percent state funding reduction for its core mission. It should now be time to reverse that outcome.”

Both NJSBDC executives maintain had it not been for the network experts’ advice and guidance, more individuals would be on unemployment and more businesses would not have survived during the recession and post-period, notwithstanding Super Storm Sandy’s impact on the small business sector. Without NJSBDC’s help, there would have been even more job losses and business closings.

“We’re just looking for equity and investment decisions based on metrics outcomes,” Smarth added. “It’s clear that the program produces a large dividend for the state. The state funding allocation should take that into consideration especially in times where there are still economic difficulties.”

Anthony and Karen High of Special Ops Security Services, Inc. located in Dunellen NJ recently said had it not been for the assistance they received from the regional SBDC in New Brunswick/Piscataway – both counseling and training – they would not have succeeded in staying in business. The fully bonded and insured security and investigative service company now has more than 30 employees. A musician turned entrepreneur, Brandon Kurzawa, opened a community music school a few years ago with the help of the NJSBDC located in Bridgewater. He credits the NJSBDC with helping grow his business with more than a dozen employees. Dominick DeSantis, owner of DeSantis Construction in Somerset, has been a client of the NJSBDC for several years now and has steadily increased his earnings and the number of employees. SBDC helped his company receive financing which has allowed for company growth through the assistance by SBDC.

Deidre McCarthy was assisted by the NJSBDC in Jersey City and has grown her construction-manufacturing business, Advanced Built Structures, Inc. to more than 60 employees in just a couple of years. The NJSBDC was there again to help after her business received damages from Super Storm Sandy. With SBDC’s assistance she obtained a large SBA loan, which helped the company re-boot operations. She credits the NJSBDC with making her business plan happen and her company growth.

“We’re out there all the time in the communities advising small businesses that come to us for help,” said Hopper. “We get referrals from our state government partners to help individual businesses which may have inquired through the state’s call center or portal. We’re there for them.”

“Greater investment in such a program augments small business resources,” added Smarth. “At this time, small businesses are the innovators and job creators. We believe that the Legislature and Governor should invest wisely. If hundreds of millions of dollars are invested in large and mid-size companies’ business incentive grants, making a small investment increase in small businesses is the right thing to do.”

About America’s SBDC New Jersey (NJSBDC)

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Contact: Jody Calendar
(973) 353-1927 or (732) 245-9181

Balance in Trade Deficit Necessitates Business Focus on Exports
NJSBDC Network Trade Program Offers Business Seminars on Going Global

June 12, 2014 (Newark, NJ) – Ninety-five percent of the world's customers are outside the United States. Recent statistics by the federal government indicate that the U.S. trade deficit has increased as exports declined and imports surged to a high.

The New Jersey Small Business Development Centers network, also known as America's SBDC New Jersey, will conduct a series of three hour business workshops – “Go Global” – at Rutgers Business School in Newark June 23 through June 26. The sessions will be held each day from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The series of international trade business seminars will also be instructed in coordination with the NJSBDC at William Paterson University and the Passaic County Department of Economic Development, September 15 through September 18.

“I’m here to assist small business owners in every aspect of international trade development, so that small businesses may begin exporting and established businesses can expand their international markets,” said Roger S. Cohen, Lead International Trade Consultant for NJSBDC’s International Trade program.

Brenda Hopper, NJSBDC network Chief Executive Officer and Director said, “Our NJSBDC network focuses on how we can help grow businesses through diversified markets. Our International Trade Specialty Program helps small business owners navigate through the complexities of international trade market development and transactions.”

“Exports are good for the economy because they create higher paying jobs and attract new streams of company revenue,” added Deborah Smarth, NJSBDC Chief Operating Officer and Associate State Director.

The four-part seminars cover:

- *Demystifying International Trade* aims at assisting both beginning and accomplished exporters/importers with emphasis on marketing, sales, pricing and distribution;
- *Getting the Most from International Reps, Agents, & Distributors* focuses on the practical aspects of working with agents, reps, distributors and other resources including sales emphasis;

- *International Payments and Risk – Incoterms* provides an overview of international payments and commercial terms; how to buy, sell, deliver and get paid to transact international business;
- *International Branding – Visual Images* provides tips and strategies on branding products in international markets.

Roger S. Cohen, Lead NJSBDC network Consultant for International Trade is President of Cohen International. Roger has helped clients develop all sorts of international business – from fine art, through currency printing machines, to xylophones and zebrawood. Roger is credited with initiating the project that brought the popular "self-sticking" postage stamp to the United States.

Go to <http://www.njsbdc.com/InternationalTrade> for more information.

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**NJSBDC coordinates resources from five organizations for
Super Social Media Marketing Events**

Learn critical skills at NJIT's Enterprise Center

June 17, 2014 (Newark, NJ) – The New Jersey Small Business Development Centers network, also known as **America's SBDC New Jersey**, has coordinated the first multi-organizational #LearnToEarn event, hosted by [Resident Internet Expert Sunny Kancherla](#) live from NJIT's Enterprise Development Center from 5:15 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on June 24, 25 and 26.

So, stop wasting time and money trying to figure out the "secret" to marketing your business Online. In three evenings, you'll know everything you need to do to build a strong foundation for your Internet presence and move forward with the confidence you need to focus on growing your business, not fooling around on a computer guessing on what you should do next.

This special NJSBDC #LearnToEarn series is designed to celebrate the entrepreneurial spirit of New Jersey's established small business community while providing resources tailored to helping business grow through the development of a digital strategy encompassing Internet Marketing, operational efficiency, and an ROI focused implementation of technology from small business advocates who have succeeded online themselves!

Each event features the NJSBDC's Kancherla and local small business advocates, consultants, and experts from different partner organizations to discuss their perspectives and share best practices in a collaborative learning environment including workshops and one-on-one consulting sessions.

Topics include How to Improve your Small Business Website, Social Media Tactics to Raise Your ROI and Integrating Digital Strategy to Boost Efficiency and Sales.

Also these events are part of the NJSBDC #LearnToEarn series NJSBDC began in 2014 to bring E-Business webinars to different organizations and academic institutions across the state, this is the first time so many organizations a topics have been put together under one roof.

Participating organizations include:

- New Jersey Small Business Development Center (NJSBDC)
- Greater Newark Enterprises Corporation (GNEC)
- Rutgers Center for Urban Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (CUEED / EPI)

- New Jersey Institute of Technology's Enterprise Development Center (NJIT EDC)
- Brick City Development Center (BCDC)
- National Association of Professional Women (NAPW)

These events are designed to help raise awareness of the NJSDBC's commitment to helping small business owners seamlessly integrate their business with a well laid out digital strategic plan and provide the instruction to leave the conference with the tools to grow their business.

"This is the culmination of a renewed effort by the NJSBDC and its partners to bring together amazing experts to help established NJ businesses move the needle with their Internet strategies, said Kancherla. "We have so many great organizations trying to help business owners better compete in an increasingly time starved and global competitive landscape. Most businesses owners are struggling to find the time to setup their businesses 'the right way' online. So, this event allows businesses to develop a strong foundation under expert guidance of the NJSBDC E-Business division and other strategic small business advocates dedicated to providing them resources to help them grow."

The program is free to approved clients of any of the existing organizations and the general public can participate in the interactive webinars and network online with businesses attending the event for \$75 each or \$200 for all three.

Small Business Owners should contact their respective organizations promptly to receive their registration code as soon as possible.

Special events, pro bono strategic consulting, and workshops will be available for those participants.

This week is designed to help growing New Jersey small businesses learn the correct approach to build out their website, learn how to make Social Media work for them, and lastly how to creatively integrate their online and offline campaigns with little additional effort.

Interested in entering for the chance to receive a Pro Bono expert website and Internet Presence Analysis and attending workshops? That too is available.

Contact Shy Hopkins at shopkins@njsbdc.com for further information.

Registration is currently available on njsbdc.com. The registration page is <http://bit.ly/njsbdc-internetmarketingweek-2014>.

Each evening will follow a similar format with registration and networking beginning at 5:15 p.m., NJSBDC Webinar Broadcast, interactive live expert discussion and informal business networking.

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Contact: Jody Calendar
(973) 353-1927 or (732) 245-9181

Small Businesses and Entrepreneurs Left Behind Again
America's SBDC New Jersey Executives Issue Statement on the Enacted State Budget

July 1, 2014 (Newark, NJ) – Legislative representatives often cite the importance of small businesses to New Jersey and promise to do the best they can to help them thrive.

Still, despite the state's ranking of [49th among the states](#) in terms of small business friendliness according to a most recent study of the non-partisan Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council and [50th in job growth](#) according to a study by the Business School at Arizona State University, the final budget passed by the Legislature and presented to the Governor, lacks the help small businesses need to help them survive, let alone grow.

The [New Jersey Small Business Development Centers \(NJSBDC\)](#) network executives are disappointed in the outcome of the final budget. The statewide network, part of a national network of SBDCs (America's SBDC), received stable funding with a quarter of a million dollars allocated. State funds are leveraged with federal dollars brought back to New Jersey for small business assistance and services and other non-federal sources including private sector sponsorships/grants. State funds are a significant way of meeting the federal match requirement.

“We had hoped that even though this was a difficult state budget, the Legislature would have presented a budget with restored, increased funding for this program,” said Brenda Hopper, chief executive officer-state director of NJSBDC. “Considering the [\\$30 billion-plus budget](#), a half million in funding for comprehensive small business assistance and services, doesn't seem like a tall bill to fill! This is especially so considering the program's rate of return.”

Deborah Smarth, chief operating officer-associate state director, added, “The economy hasn't fully recovered. It's been weak. Investment in the SBDC program is a formidable way of enhancing small business ownership and entrepreneurship. Small businesses have produced more jobs for the economy during these difficult economic times. It's a shame that New Jersey's investment still dramatically trails the average state investment of \$1 million in SBDCs nationally.”

“It seems that ‘small business’ is in the legislative and executive branch talking points, but, there's a real gap between words and actions,” Smarth stressed.

The NJSBDC program once had an allocation of \$1 million but during the last budget cycle of the Corzine administration, funds were almost eliminated entirely. The State Legislature, however, restored funding to \$500,000. However, mid-fiscal year following the budget's

enactment, the funding level was frozen at \$250,000. When Governor Chris Christie took office, his first budget proposed eliminating the \$250,000 but the New Jersey Legislature again restored funding to \$250,000 where it has remained to date.

Small business owners, who are clients of the NJSBDC network, had advocated for more financial support for the program they say has helped them survive, develop and grow as well as helped them save and create jobs for New Jersey, but, the final State Budget as presented to the Governor maintains the same level of funding.

“We wish that the Legislative Leadership would have played a greater role in restoring at least 25% of prior lost funding,” said Smarth.

“With all that our network is doing to help small businesses including those businesses who suffered hardships from Super Storm Sandy, we thought it was a reasonable approach to start restoring state funding for this jobs producing program,” said Hopper, noting the state’s below average investment ranking among SBDCs nationally. “But, there’s always optimism for the future.”

“If we want our economy to grow, we need to invest more in small businesses and entrepreneurs,” said Smarth. “Another opportunity was lost this year even though a good number of legislators supported increased funding by sponsoring such budget resolutions. We’re not turning our backs on the small businesses we serve. We will continue to advocate for the proper policies to support them.”

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Contact:
(973) 353-1927

**AMERICA'S SBDC AT BERGEN - HOSTED BY BERGEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE -
APPOINTS NEW REGIONAL CENTER DIRECTOR**

July 17, 2014 (Hackensack, NJ) – The New Jersey Small Business Development Center serving Bergen County, which is hosted by Bergen Community College, has appointed Mr. Vincent Vicari to lead the Center's efforts in providing comprehensive assistance for small business owners and entrepreneurs. The Center is based at the Bergen Community College Ciarco Center in Hackensack, NJ.

Mr. Vicari formerly held the position of Assistant Director at the Center. Vicari holds an MBA degree with specialization in organizational management and development. His undergraduate degree is in Business Administration. He has published a number of academic papers on key business issue topics including the Best paper award Clute Institute for Academic Research.

The Center, which is one of 12 centers within the statewide network of SBDCs, provides one-on-one management consulting for small business clients from all industry sectors, provide specialized training and workshops on key topics such as business planning, financial analysis, marketing strategies, other restructuring and turnaround strategies, and financial loan packaging.

"I am pleased to be appointed to this position," said Vicari. "I look forward to serving the small businesses of Bergen County and implementing our national and state program's standardized counseling focus and business seminar curriculum as well as collaborating with the Center's host, Bergen Community College."

As a former business owner, manager/director in various private sector positions, and adjunct professor of business at William Paterson University, Vicari brings a diversified set of business, technology and management skills to the table in assisting existing small businesses as well as pre-venture and start-ups. Vicari also holds a global/international trade certification through America's SBDC national association and SBA.

In his past career, Vicari developed innovative methods of learning online classroom and video advising interactive television.

Mr. Vicari serves on several organizations' Boards including: Bergen County Economic Development Corporation, Bergen Workforce Investment Board, and Chairman of the Board, Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce in Edgewater.

Both Brenda Hopper, NJSBDC network CEO-State Director, and Deborah Smarth, COO-Associate State Director, commented that the SBDC network Headquarters is glad the national search process has been completed and that Mr. Vicari's credentials and business/academic experience have been recognized with this formal appointment as Center Director.

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Contact: Ed Kurocka
(973) 353-1927

USEPA Grant Helps America's SBDC New Jersey Launch Counseling and Membership Registry for Specialty "Green" Business Initiative

August 6, 2014 (Newark, NJ) – Small to midsize New Jersey businesses interested in implementing or expanding environmentally friendly practices can now get pro bono advice and technical assistance from counselors with expertise in sustainability and pollution prevention, thanks to a new NJSBDC initiative that is being funded by a grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency to the NJSBDC network, headquartered at Rutgers Business School.

The New Jersey Sustainable Business program, which also includes an optional registry for businesses that offers best practices businesses can adopt to become sustainable, is the result of NJSBDC's strategic planning and understanding that many customers and stakeholders seek out and prefer businesses who employ environmentally-conscious practices.

"We take pride in our counselors, our products and services, and the impact they have for our small business clients," states Brenda Hopper, NJSBDC network chief executive officer and State Director. "Adding sustainability consulting and the business registry to NJSBDC's repertoire of services and specialty programs is just another example of our mission to provide business owners with the type of education, training and service that will have high value and produce positive outcomes for businesses and the communities they serve."

In addition to the no-cost environmental counseling services, the NJSBDC, in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), and a host of other business and non-profit partners and supporters, have developed a New Jersey Sustainability Business Registry. The registry is an Internet site where businesses that have implemented pollution prevention and sustainable business practices can register their achievements. "The registry will give small businesses the resources and tools they need to become sustainable," said NJDEP Assistant Commissioner Bob Marshall.

"In order for the network's clients to get the advice they need to differentiate themselves, stay competitive, and implement the most effective and appropriate 'green' practices, small businesses need a helping hand," said Deborah Smarth, NJSBDC chief operating officer and associate state director. While larger corporations, particularly those in the Fortune 500, have adopted and made sustainability an essential part of their operations and strategic plans, smaller ventures usually lack the in-house, technical, or financial resources needed to make changes or improvements, especially in such an esoteric area where success is measured by kilowatt hours, gallons, or metric tons.

“That’s why,” Hopper explained, “We have had a strong and long-standing relationship with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, and have taken an active role in many of their programs geared to small business sustainability practices.” This special registry initiative has the strong commitment and collaboration of the NJDEP, the NJSBDC network and other business and non-profit stakeholders who want smaller businesses to succeed by educating them on the economic benefits associated with cleaner and more efficient environmental practices.

The NJSBDC network’s partnership with the NJDEP coupled with the EPA grant award funding have made it possible to recruit the expert consultants available to work with businesses in diverse industries concerning various pollution prevention or sustainability topics. This effort is totally voluntary on the part of small business owners and the initiative is unrelated to any regulatory or workplace compliance issues.

According to Ms. Hopper, “businesses contacting us need to understand that this is not an enforcement program, despite the involvement with or support of any regulatory agency.” The objective of the NJSBDC network, as well as that of the NJDEP and EPA, is education, and strictly in keeping with the title and scope of the grant, which is, “Encouraging and advancing pollution prevention practices among small to mid-sized businesses.”

Businesses that contact the NJSBDC network for advice will be put in touch with one of NJSBDC’s sustainability consultants. As is the case with all NJSBDC consultants, they are experts in a specific field and concentrate on providing services in their expertise areas. The sustainability consultants selected for this program join a cadre of NJSBDC network consultants who, for over three decades, have provided one-on-one customized management consulting and training to tens of thousands of established small businesses and entrepreneurs.

“Green practices are quickly becoming expected rather than optional,” added Ed Kurocka, a consultant who has worked with the NJDEP and is managing this grant program for the NJSBDC. “In addition to many other free benefits, we feel that membership and recognition in the Sustainable Business Registry will be a credible way for a business to project its commitment to society and the environment, as well as a factor adding to its growth and competitive advantage.”

Participants in the counseling and registry programs will also be eligible for a new NJSBDC network Sustainable Business Award, beginning in 2015. This honor will be bestowed at NJSBDC’s annual Success Awards event, where businesses from NJSBDC’s twelve regions and specialty programs are recognized for growth and significant accomplishments.

To take advantage of the NJSB pro bono consultations, or for help with the New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry, email your request to NJSBinfo@NJSBDC.com. An experienced sustainability consultant will be happy to speak with you in person, on-line, or by phone. You can also find out more about these programs by going to the Sustainability link, under the Services tab on the NJSBDC network website (www.njsbdc.com), where you can also complete a request for counseling. The New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry web pages and application can also be accessed from a link on the NJSBDC homepage.

About America's SBDC New Jersey

The New Jersey Small Business Development Centers network, also known as America's SBDC New Jersey, provides comprehensive services and programs for small businesses in New Jersey, helping businesses expand their operations, manage their growth in New Jersey, helping businesses expand their operations, manage their growth, or start new ventures. Expert staff and practicing business consultants help small business owners and entrepreneurs to develop business plans, find financing, identify new markets, find procurement and international trade opportunities, commercialize technology and develop an E-commerce presence. This non-profit network is a federal-state-educational partnership, leveraging public and private funding sources to further maximize resources for the small business community. The network leverages funding from the Small Business Administration (SBA), New Jersey Business Action Center, the educational institutions that host the 12 centers as well as other private sponsorships and grants. The NJSBDC Headquarters is located at the Rutgers Business School in Newark, NJ. The NJSBDC network is an accredited member of the National Association of Small Business Development Centers (ASBDC). More than 1,000 centers and satellite offices serve small businesses across the country. Visit www.njsbdc.com.

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Contact:
Ed Kurocka
(973) 353-1927

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In addition to the no-cost environmental counseling services, the NJSBDC, in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), and a host of other business and non-profit partners and supporters, have developed a New Jersey Sustainability Business Registry. The registry is an Internet site where businesses that have implemented pollution prevention and sustainable business practices can register their achievements. "The registry will give small businesses the resources and tools they need to become sustainable," said NJDEP Assistant Commissioner Bob Marshall.

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Editor's note – Attached please find photo of Don Wirth with caption info

Top notch panelists address the importance of Resilience and critical information for business continuity at a series of workshops sponsored by the NJSBDC network and the USRP.

Aug. 25, 2014 (Newark) – An impressive slate of national and state speakers will headline the first of a series of solution-based Resilience Workshops that link resilience to competitiveness; preparedness to prosperity and motivate companies and communities to think in terms of shared outcomes and collaborative solutions.

The initial workshop, “Putting the How-to in Resilience” will be held on Tuesday Sept. 16 in the Atrium of the Campus Center on the NJ Institute of Technology campus. Highlighting the speakers will be former FEMA Director R. David Paulison, and Retired DuPont Executive Don Wirth Carroll A. Thomas, Associate Administrator, the U.S. Small Business Administration; and Dr. Don Sebastian, president of the NJ Innovation Institute.

Sponsored by the SBA and the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers, Traveler's Insurance and the New Jersey Innovation Institute in coordination with the U. S. Resilience Project(USRP), the Workshop will focus on:

- Capturing left-of- boom strategies to mitigate the impact of disruptions, irrespective of trigger
- Sharing best practices and tools to make companies resilient to volatility and uncertainty
- Leveraging resources through partnership among companies and with the public sector

According to Don Wirth, former Vice President at DuPont: “Resilience is not just about strengthening our ability to deal with disruption,. “It also drives better customer service, operational excellence and productivity.”

"A lot of effort was invested in organizing this high level, knowledge packed all-day seminar," said Brenda Hopper, NJSBDC CEO-State Director. "The topic of resilience and related best practices to prevent business operational disruptions are more important than ever and we think small business owners attending will take away a lot of valuable information they can utilize."

"We're encouraged that various size businesses at different levels of growth will participate in this thought provoking session," said Deborah Smarth, NJSBDC COO-Associate State Director. "Having business leaders at all levels sharing their experiences and operating procedures in relation to market disruptions or natural disasters will provide a good framework for other small businesses to follow.

Other speakers for the Sept. 16 kick-off workshop include notables such as Edward Zazzali, PSEG Regional Manager for Large Customer Support; ; Bob Klemme, Associate Director, Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery, Verizon Wireless; Scott Humphrey, Director of Service, Travelers Insurance Company and Tracye McDaniels, president and chief operating officer, Choose NJ.

Supporting partners include Choose NJ, Newark Alliance, Newark Regional Business Partnership, NJ Climate Adaption Alliance, NJ Manufacturing Extension Partnership, Princeton Public Affairs Group, Rutgers Climate Institute and US Department of Energy.

Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. The NJSBDC network is also funded by the State of New Jersey and is hosted by Rutgers Business School: Newark and New Brunswick.

About America's SBDC New Jersey (NJSBDC)

This non-profit network is a federal-state-educational partnership. Its expert staff and business practitioners help small business owners and entrepreneurs with every stage of business development and growth. The network headquarters is located at the Rutgers Business School in Newark. Its major funding partner is the U.S. Small Business Administration. The New Jersey Business Action Center is an additional funding partner of the NJSBDC program as well as other public and private grants/sponsorships. The NJSBDC network (America's SBDC New Jersey) is an accredited member of the national network of SBDCs, with more than 1,000 centers and satellite offices throughout the country serving and assisting small businesses and saving and creating jobs across the nation. For more information, visit www.njsbdc.com.

About the U.S. Resilience Project (USRP) The US Resilience Project focuses on enterprise resilience solutions -- capturing, sharing and deploying best practices and tools before a disruption hits. The USRP emphasizes the business rationale for resilience and seeks to document the bottom-line benefits of resilient strategies and practices. For more information, visit www.usresilienceproject.org



Contact:
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(973) 353-1927 or (732) 245-9181

Top notch panelists address the importance of Resilience and critical information for business continuity at a series of workshops sponsored by the NJSBDC network, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the USRP

Editor's Note: Attached please find photo of Don Wirth with caption info

August 27, 2014 (Newark, NJ) – An impressive slate of national and state speakers will headline the first of a series of solution-based Resilience Workshops that link resilience to competitiveness; preparedness to prosperity and motivate companies and communities to think in terms of shared outcomes and collaborative solutions.

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About the U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) was created in 1953 as an independent agency of the federal government to aid, counsel, assist and protect the interests of small business concerns, to preserve free competitive enterprise and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of our nation. We recognize that small business is critical to our economic recovery and strength, to building America's future, and to helping the United States compete in today's global marketplace. Although SBA has grown and evolved in the years since it was established in 1953, the bottom line mission remains the same. The SBA helps Americans start, build and grow businesses. Through an extensive network of field offices and partnerships with public and private organizations, SBA delivers its services to people throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, the U. S. Virgin Islands and Guam. For more information, visit www.sba.gov.

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People and communication key to resilience planning theme of conference about state's economic development strategy sponsored by NJSBDC and USRP

National panelists engage statewide officials and business owners in how to prepare for the next disaster

September 24, 2014 (Newark, NJ) – The ability to recover from a catastrophic event requires committed people with a common understanding of methodology and principles that is practiced time in and time out in real life scenarios with clear, concise communication was the theme of a recent day- long conference sponsored by the New Jersey Small Business Center network and the U.S. Resilience Project at the NJIT campus.

So, employers must put people first to succeed.

The first of several workshops, “Putting the How-to in Resilience” sponsored by the NJSBDC, USRP and the SBA, focused on strategies to mitigate impact of disruptions, sharing best practices and tools to make companies resilient to volatility and leveraging resources through partnership being key to survival and recovery.

“Preparedness is key to prosperity and competitiveness. Superstorms or other natural disasters cause disruptions and businesses have to be prepared,” said Deb Smarth, Chief Operating Officer and Associate State Director of the NJSBDC. “Small businesses represent 98 percent of all employers and more than 50 percent of the private sector employment yet research indicates that more than 43 percent of businesses do not reopen following a disaster and 29 percent close for good within two years. Small businesses and large businesses are interdependent; small businesses are part of local supply chains and create economic vitality in communities.”

Don Wirth, VP Operational Excellence and Global Supply Chain (retired), [DuPont](#), said two things “terrify” him. Ebola which is going airborne and global shipping and those are the things that need incredible preparation for before they become a crisis.

“Action plans are great but principles are brilliant,” he told the large crowd. “A plan that sits in a drawer that you don’t work with your people- there is nothing more useless.”

Edward Zazzali, Regional Manager Large Customer Support for PSE&G, stressed resiliency is “all about planning and communication.”

He said of the 2.2 million PSE&G customers, an incredible 1.8 million were without power from Superstorm Sandy.

“What our people are doing at their own house and can they get to work” was one of the first questions he said. But because of incredible commitment and dedication of and to staff, “One million customers were back in the first five days and... we learned about communication.”

He said practical approaches such as making sure the vehicles were fueled and ready to go while the workers slept was critical as were testing generators which required advance planning when faced with unprecedented threats such as the flooding that occurred during Sandy.

Partnerships were equally important with state and federal agencies such as [FEMA](#), he stressed.

“We’re going to attack getting small businesses up and running as soon as possible and that requires partnerships,” he said. “It’s 10 p.m. Do you know where your substation is?”

He explained that if a business is near a hospital you have a better chance of having power. And he stressed that having less inventory during a storm is best.

The cost of inaction was too high, all the panelists agreed.

Bob Klemme, Associate Director, Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery, [Verizon Wireless](#), said local personnel repeatedly practice so everyone understands the plan and how it should be executed in each Verizon office.

Verizon has 250 preparedness plans and 15 to 20 events a year to keep process and practical application at the forefront with communication. He urged businesses to pursue things as simple as car chargers to help in a disaster as well as jet packs, wireless priority service and wireless backup routers.

He said small businesses should, before a crisis, have key folks chosen for a Crisis Management Team, have two hour tabletop discussions about what to do in different scenarios, have data back-up plans and identify and reduce primary disaster risks. During a crisis, he said, emphasis should be put on employee safety, open communication, crisis management conference calls often and quick and engage customers and partners.

All panelists agreed that anger and arguments break out during a disaster and it’s important to stay focused and stay with the principles.

R. David Paulison, former director of FEMA during Katrina and now Global Emergency Solutions, LLC, warned “Focus on things you can control, stick to principles of plan but the details of the plan may change.”

“Refocus the effort and attention of the staff,” he stressed. “And keep talking about positives.”

He said discipline is key, avoid burnout and trust in resources, be flexible and listen to your staff, particularly those in the field.

“Respect the greater good,” he stressed. “Express compassion and push your plan until it breaks. Practice.”

The number of loss events – storms, earthquakes, volcanoes, tsunamis – has been on the upswing, from less than 400 in 1980 to more than 800 today. Economic losses from disasters have been increasing from about \$50 billion a year in the 1980s to on average just about fewer than \$ 200 billion a year in the last decade.

The five lessons learned from Sandy:

- Every storm is Different – do not plan for the next disruption based on what happened in the last.
- Families come first – employers must recognize that employees will not return to work until they feel their families are safe.
- Communicate before, during and after – Let employees update their status and employers communicate when to return to work.
- Protect your assets – Pay attention to strong roofs and proper elevation against flooding, install shutters, plywood or panels with 24 hours of an impending storm.
- Test and re-test – Practice the plan and explore what has changed in your business that might make your plan obsolete.

Disruptions come in all sizes and flavors, but there is a set of tools and strategies that leave companies poised to adjust to turbulence. Contact your local NJSBDC for guidance.

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NJSBDC Network Headquarters Initiates New Affiliate Partnership with the Anisfield School of Business at Ramapo College of New Jersey

October 6, 2014 (Newark, NJ) – America's SBDC New Jersey announces a new partnership with Ramapo College of New Jersey. The NJSBDC, serving Bergen County and hosted by Bergen Community College, has a new affiliate office at Ramapo College of New Jersey's Anisfield School of Business.

"The SBDC program offers so many positive resources and help for entrepreneurs and small business owners," said Lewis Chakrin, Ph.D., the dean of the Anisfield School of Business. "We are pleased to be part of the statewide program and to serve Bergen County small businesses. The program will also offer our business students new learning opportunities about pursuing entrepreneurship and small business ownership."

"This new collaboration with the Anisfield School of Business at Ramapo provides our Center in Bergen County with new resources and an affiliate office at a fine institution," said Brenda Hopper, CEO-State Director. "It gives us a real presence in the northern area of Bergen County to allow small business owners and entrepreneurs located in that general region to have greater accessibility and proximity to counseling and training."

"We at SBA are excited about this addition to the Bergen Center's coverage. The increased visibility it will provide, in addition to the increase in resources, services and coverage to small business owners in the northern part of Bergen County is a win for all involved," said Al Titone, SBA NJ District Office Director. "This new satellite office at Ramapo College's Anisfield School of Business will serve a growing business population in this part of the county, and enhances our ability to provide additional small business assistance and services to entrepreneurs throughout Bergen County."

"Our Headquarters is excited about launching this new partnership and having Ramapo College as an 'affiliate' partner for Bergen County small business assistance services," said Deborah Smarth, COO-Associate State Director. "Collaborating with Dean Chakrin of the Anisfield School of Business, his seasoned staff and with students at the school offers new opportunities for both the network and Ramapo."

"I look forward to advancing resources and services for students, small business owners, entrepreneurs, and SBDC stakeholders in the northern region of Bergen County," said Vincent Vicari, regional director of the NJSBDC at Bergen Community College. "Having a viable presence in this portion of Bergen County is a welcomed expansion of our service capacity in an AACSB accredited business school."

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Preparation and communication are essential to survival theme of second conference about state's disaster and economic development strategy sponsored by NJSBDC network and USRP

International and local panelists practiced real life scenarios with officials and business leaders to help prepare them for the next disaster on second anniversary of Super Storm Sandy

November 5, 2014 (Lakewood, NJ) – It's every business owner's responsibility to prepare for a disaster because, in reality, neither government nor anyone else may be there to help.

That's reality. Ask any small business directly hit by Super Storm Sandy. And that's just one of the many possible disasters.

Preparedness entails preparing a comprehensive continuity plan that addresses any catastrophic event with protocols clearly communicated to managers and staff alike and is practiced time in and time out in real life scenarios was the theme of the second day-long conference at the Woodlake Country Club, here, sponsored by the New Jersey Small Business Centers network, the U.S. Resilience Project and funded by the Small Business Administration..

Sound like too much to do? Then think again.

Held on the second anniversary of Super Storm Sandy, the workshop "Putting the How-to in Resilience" was an illuminating hands-on workshop lead by an international facilitator, Nathaniel Forbes, who hails from Singapore "the most disaster prone area in the world" and it became clear in snap polling at the conference that most of the audience seemed lacking in preparedness.

But by the time they left, many were eager to implement what they learned.

Super Storm Sandy was an "unbelievable tragedy...and all those things we couldn't imagine but out of that tragedy there was rebuilding and this program today – resilience," said Brenda Hopper, Chief Executive Officer and State Director of the NJSBDC network. The conference was focused on providing the tools so businesses and communities never again face this level of adversity.

Jackeline Meijas-Fuertes, Regional Director of the NJSBDC at Brookdale Community College, stressed that resiliency planning isn't mysterious but solid planning that is necessary and her center is there to help.

Fuertes, who was instrumental with her team at Brookdale in formulating the conference, stressed that she and her expert team can guide businesses in developing a contingency plan.

Ms. Hopper said Fuertes had “her boots on the ground” immediately after Sandy and went door to door and held regional meetings and provided as much information about how she could help and Fuertes said once you’ve been through something like Super Storm Sandy you learn how to be resilient.

Her fear is that small business owners will not heed the warning that another disaster may be around the corner and they won’t be prepared.

Forbes joined with Tony McDonald, director of the Urban Coast Institute at Monmouth University and representatives of Verizon, JCP&L and New Jersey Natural Gas, to explain the gravity of the situation and what could be done to survive the next catastrophe and to actually turn it around into an opportunity to increase business. To do that, businesses and companies need tools to make them resilient to the volatility of disasters and to learn to leverage resources through partnerships, all of which are key to survival, recovery and advancement.

In case anyone at the conference had doubts about the gravity, Forbes referred to the nuclear meltdown in Japan and what happened there and noted there are 280 power plants on the coast line in the United States.

The good news is that if businesses join with the communities they service and develop contingency plans that are clearly articulated and involve businesses, local government, schools, and non-profit agencies, success is guaranteed. But it’s critical they brainstorm plans that address transportation, sanitation, electricity, other energy sources, and water. Then there are the needs of employees, customers, suppliers, stakeholders and most importantly, families to consider. Then toss in retail, services, manufacturing and public safety concerns that impact schools, hospitals, private property and public transportation.

Forbes gave a striking example of what can happen when this is not done. He said the North Ward of New Orleans was devastated by Katrina, the most costly storm, although Sandy was many times larger, and that district has been abandoned because everyone has given up. No one would help.

“If we are willing to give up on New Orleans, than what else are we willing to abandon? How about water in the west? In Las Vegas, which is a dessert?” Forbes asked. “Another disaster is going to happen and the government won’t be there. It’s true...the question is ‘What can I do to protect myself?’ That’s the question you must ask.”

Bob Klemme, Associate Director, Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery, Verizon Wireless, said regional teams at Verizon who are locally based repeatedly practice so everyone understands the plan and how it should be executed in each Verizon office if a disaster should strike.

Verizon has 250 preparedness plans and 15 to 20 events a year to keep process and practical application available at the fore front with communication. He told businesses to pursue things as simple as car chargers to help in a disaster as well as jet packs, wireless priority service and wireless backup routers.

Rae Mallin, Manager, Emergency Preparedness, Jersey Central Power & Light, said the utility lost 1.1 million customers in 2011 when Irene struck, and 375,000 six weeks later in the October storm but, he said, all their customers were lost as a result of Sandy.

“Sandy was so large we had a snow event in Virginia,” he said. “Katrina was the most costly and Sandy the second but Sandy devastated a larger area.”

The company, partnering with the Department of Energy, brought in 8,500 people over a week’s time from 36 states, some as far away as California and Oregon.

He urged businesses during the next outage to go to firstenergy.com and click on the outage map to track estimated time and status of crew, and businesses can go to the app on their smart phone.

Bill Wells, Director of Operations at New Jersey Natural Gas, said the utility has about 500,000 customers in Monmouth, Ocean, Morris and Somerset Counties and disruption is rare but when it happens it’s protracted and it takes at least eight weeks to restore to be safe.

Businesses need to take this into account in their contingency and business plans, Forbes said.

During Sandy, Wells said, the utility lost 30,000 customers on the Sea Bright peninsula, Manasquan, the Seaside peninsula and all of Long Beach Island. And the company had never seen anything like it.

He urged residents to look for anyone trying to dig around a gas line and notify NJNG immediately if any disruptions occur. They consider safety first and will respond as soon as possible.

Participants enjoyed the conference and walked away better informed and eager to plan.

“I want to stress I believe we need community based planning. We are all connected and in case of disaster,” said Gwendolyn Love, director of Lunch Break, Red Bank., a non-profit that feeds and houses those in need. “We need to coordinate our efforts, as a true community.”

Aaron Levine, of LG Insurance Group, agreed.

“I’m a professional insurance agent and this will help me complete my business contingency plan and to help my customers set up theirs. It is so important to be prepared for success and disaster and this workshop set the groundwork for that.”

“Our first resilience seminar was held in Essex County back in September,” said NJSBDC Chief Operating Officer/Associate State Director. “We learned many lessons from that event, and, in counties like Monmouth/Ocean where disaster really struck hard, this event offered business owners even more insights and conversations on how to develop an offensive plan so you don’t have to play defense when disaster strikes.”

Jackeline Meijas-Fuertes, Regional Director of the NJSBDC at Brookdale Community College, put together the majority of the conference with members of her “Center” team and other representatives from NJSBDC headquarters and USRP.

Since disruptions come in all sizes and flavors, there are all sets of tools and strategies that Ms. Meijas-Fuertes can provide that leave companies poised to adjust to turbulence. Contact her at your local NJSBDC at Brookdale Community College for guidance.

About America's SBDC New Jersey (NJSBDC)

The New Jersey Small Business Development Centers network, also known as America's SBDC New Jersey, provides comprehensive services and programs for small businesses in New Jersey, helping businesses expand their operations, manage their growth in New Jersey, helping businesses expand their operations, manage their growth, or start new ventures. Expert staff and practicing business consultants help small business owners and entrepreneurs to develop business plans, find financing, identify new markets, find procurement and international trade opportunities, commercialize technology and develop an E-commerce presence. This non-profit network is a federal-state-educational partnership, leveraging public and private funding sources to further maximize resources for the small business community. The network leverages funding from the Small Business Administration (SBA), New Jersey Business Action Center, the educational institutions that host the 12 centers as well as other private sponsorships and grants. The NJSBDC Headquarters is located at the Rutgers Business School in Newark, NJ. The NJSBDC network is an accredited member of the National Association of Small Business Development Centers (ASBDC). More than 1,000 centers and satellite offices serve small businesses across the country. Visit www.njsbdc.com.

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**Learn critical skill sets to build your business's digital presence and develop a seamless integration of a strategic digital campaign to grow your business at
NJSBDC 2014 Marketing Conference**

Scholarships are available. Enrollment for this popular event is limited.

Newark (Nov. 7, 2014) – Stop wasting time trying to figure out the “secret” to marketing your business online and instead invest a few hours attending in person or through a webinar the New Jersey Small Business Centers network 2014 Marketing Conference from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Monday Nov. 10, 2014 through Nov.13.

The event's organizer and prime sponsor, America's SBDC New Jersey headquartered at Rutgers Business School, will hold the event at The New Jersey Institute of Technology, hosting dozens of small business advocates, digital marketing experts and established businesses seeking to improve their digital marketing strategy at its Enterprise Development Center. In addition, NJSBDC's conference will be broadcast live via webinar.

“We all know that in this day and age business success requires an Internet presence,” NJSBDC CEO-State Director Brenda Hopper said. “This special series helps build that foundation.”

“Our past webinars have attracted business owners in New Jersey, but, in addition individuals from out of state and as far as Europe have participated,” NJSBDC COO-Associate State Director Deborah Smarth stated. “We expect to draw in a good size crowd to this upcoming series.”

Each event will feature Sunny Kancherla, NJSBDC's in residence digital expert, and local small business advocates, consultants, and experts from different partner organizations to discuss their perspectives and share best practices in a collaborative learning environment.

Kancherla, creator of the popular [#LearnToEarn](#) educational series, has brought together some of the best Internet focused experts who plan to give attendees the tools to grow their business and assist them with developing an effective digital campaign for their business..

Each day of the conference will focus on a different aspect of building an effective digital strategy. The main webinar broadcast topics are as follows:

Monday **November 10th** – Building Your ROI Focused Website and On-line Presence

Tuesday **November 11th** --Email and Social Media Marketing Strategies

Wednesday **November 12th** -- Creative Ways of Getting Qualified Traffic to Your Website (SEO)

Thursday **November 13th** -- Pitch Competition and Closing Networking Reception

Kancherla is a digital strategist and e-marketing expert who has built a website that sees more than half a million visitors each year and has been searched more than three million times. He has consulted with the NJSBDC network since 2008 and has helped numerous small businesses take their business online.

Participation in this event is limited to only those small businesses that have been generating an income for 2 years, who have received technical assistance and are approved for participation by one of the partner organizations. If you would like to participate, scholarships are available by contacting one of the following partners of this event:

- Rutgers Center for Urban Entrepreneurship and Economic Development
- New Jersey Institute of Technology's Enterprise Development Center
- Seton Hall University's Stillman School of Business
- Greater Newark Enterprise Corporation
- Brick City Development Corporation

“We are very excited to participate in this collaboration. Sunny's #LearnToEarn series is gaining traction and buzz across the small business community in New Jersey,” said Steven Gomez, Executive Director of one of the event's partner organization, Greater Newark Enterprises Corporation. “We are very excited to bring our expertise to this program and will be highlighting our participation to all of our industry supporters and funders.”

With this clear vision in mind, many of the academic institutions and small business technical assistance organizations Kancherla has worked with through the years have stepped forward to help small business owners learn the correct approach to building their website, learning to make Social Media work for them, and how to creatively integrate their online and offline campaigns with little additional effort.

To register go to www.njsbdc.com/internet-marketing-week-2014 or by calling **973-353-1414**.

About America's SBDC New Jersey

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**The New Jersey Small Business Development Centers Network Honors
13 Exceptional Clients**

*At Its Annual Growth Awards Luncheon Dec. 5
Four State Legislators to Receive "Business Advocate" Awards and members
of the media to be acknowledged*

December 2, 2014 (Newark, NJ) – A celebratory tradition of the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers network is to honor its small business clients who have achieved strong growth and are passionate about what they do at The Annual Small Business Growth Success Awards luncheon to be held from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Dec. 5 at the Forsgate Country Club, Monroe Township. PNC Bank and PSE&G are the primary financial sponsors of the event.

"This event is important because it brings all of us together to hear very special success stories about our small business clients around the state. They took a dream in the business world and made it happen with the expert guidance of our key management consultants of America's SBDC New Jersey. Our financial sponsors help assist our small business assistance activities," said **Brenda Hopper**, NJSBDC CEO/State Director.

"This event is all about recognizing our network's small business clients' business leadership and growth," Hopper continued.

This year's 13 award recipients represent broad sectors including, a company that is a leading manufacturer of pre-fabricated steel and joists in the Northeast; a tech company that has developed an app that has been downloaded 4 million times; a tech company that leverages High Performance computing and "big data;" a company that sells cooking tools and ingredients; a health food store; a cleaning company; an ecofriendly classic auto body repair shop; a woman's clothing boutique; a limo service; a real estate services company; a company that specializes in asbestos and mold remediation, a tech company that provides off site backup and a promotional products firm.

"These client success stories only come to fruition due to client perseverance, assistance by our network experts, funding from the national program through Congress and financial support enacted by the State Legislature and administration each budget cycle as well as the financial support we receive through diverse private and public sector partners," said **Deborah Smarth**, NJSBDC COO/Associate State Director.

"Our recognition of state legislators who have helped us maintain state funding and potentially increase the state's investment is another key aspect of our annual event. We are glad to recognize our 2014 business advocates since their support is necessary to a growing small business assistance program that generates jobs," Smarth continued.

Recipients of the NJSBDC Network 2014 Legislative "Business Advocate" Awards are Assemblyman Anthony M. Bucco (parts of Morris, Somerset counties); Assemblyman Ronald S. Dancer (parts of Burlington, Monmouth, Ocean counties); Senator Sandra B. Cunningham (part of Hudson County) and Senator Linda R. Greenstein (parts of Middlesex and Mercer counties).

"I'm always proud to work on behalf of the NJSBDC because small businesses are the engine of our economy," Assemblyman Bucco said. "I believe that every dollar invested in the growth of small businesses in this state is returned to us many times over." **Senator Cunningham** indicated that *"Through the ongoing commitment and work of NJSBDC, many of our small businesses are not just surviving, but thriving through very tough economic times."*

Assemblyman Dancer credited the NJSBDC and added *"We must invest in our business community, leading the way to more jobs and a better economy."*

"The work done by the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers in fostering a welcoming environment for small business really is crucial to our state's overall economic health," Senator Greenstein underscored.

Certain members of the media are being acknowledged for "Truth in Media" reporting for their coverage of the SBDC program's mission and its funding plight at important junctures in the life of the SBDC network. They include: Keith Ryzewicz, Editorial Page Editor of the Courier News, Home News Tribune and Daily Record; Kevin McArdle, State House Correspondent for Townsquare Media, New Jersey 101.5 radio; and Kevin Post, Business Editor of The Press of Atlantic City.

The 13 Success Awards Winners are:

- **Tap Factory, LLC** (*Taseen Peterson, Mark Petersen, Cameron Smith*) – A client of the **SBDC network E-Business Program**. A boutique app developer, the company has developed an application named Nofefu.ly which has been downloaded more than 4 million times and ranked as high as the top three in the entire Apple App Store; located in Newark.
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personal attention and value come together. The mission is to translate the needs of the company's clients into products that give them voice to their message in a customized approach; located in Mahwah.

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- **Technical Integration Services, LLC** (*Shawn and Brian McDonough*) – A client of **SBDC of Northwest Jersey**. Has expanded its client base to include small businesses providing them with the same high-quality, cost effective data center solutions and services that it has provided to medium and large size companies; located in Fairfield.
- **Healthy Balance** (*Jane Bowers*) – A client of **SBDC at Raritan Valley Community College**. Specializes in gluten-free foods, herbs, and a vast inventory of supplements that support a “healthy balance;” located in Lebanon.
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The NJSBDC network consists of 12 centers statewide. In 2013, experts counseled more than 5,000 small businesses and entrepreneurs, sponsored almost a thousand training sessions statewide and helped retain and create more than 16,000 jobs through its small business clients.

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The New Jersey Small Business Development Centers Network Honors 13 Exceptional Clients, Legislators and Members of the Media and Receives Thanks and Praise

At Its Festive Annual Growth Success Awards Luncheon Dec. 5

December 8, 2014 (Monroe Township, NJ) – Mario Tommolillo, owner of Mario’s Classic Auto Body, Paterson, summed up why the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers network needs legislative support.

“I’m an Italian immigrant with a high school diploma. I am living the American dream,” he said crediting the NJSBDC network for his success and urging legislators to advocate for the network.

He made his remarks during the festive Annual Small Business Growth Success Awards Luncheon Dec. 5 at the Forsgate Country Club, here, during which 13 business recipients were honored for their commitment, passion and success working with the NJSBDC network.

And the state legislators in attendance couldn’t have agreed more.

Sen. Sandra B. Cunningham (parts of Hudson County), who is the majority whip said she is “fighting for (NJSBDC) all the way.”

Sen. Linda R. Greenstein (parts of Middlesex and Mercer counties), assured the several hundred in attendance that NJSBDC “is the organization that represents you, small business.” She added that the entire Senate Budget Committee knows how important the SBDC is to the state’s economy.

The network, just last year, had 644 clients start a new business and assisted in small businesses being able to create 2,191 jobs and retain 14,288 positions.

Other legislators who received “Business Advocate” Awards included Assemblyman Anthony Bucco (parts of Morris, Somerset counties) and Assemblyman Ronald S. Dancer (parts of Burlington, Monmouth, and Ocean counties). They expressed equal support of the NJSBDC network’s mission in prepared statements. Assemblyman Ron Dancer was not present due to a schedule conflict, but, Assemblyman Samuel Fiocchi (Cape May County, parts of Atlantic and Cumberland counties) traveled all the way from Vineland, NJ to accept an award on behalf of

Assemblyman Anthony Bucco, who was out of town for a legislative conference. As a small business owner himself, Fiocchi who serves on the Assembly Telecommunications and Utilities Committee and Regulatory and Oversight Committee voiced his support for the NJSBDC program, saying it provided needed assistance for small businesses.

And the NJSBDC network thanked members of the media who wrote fair and objective stories and supported them editorially, Keith Ryzewicz, of the Courier News, Home News Tribune and Daily Record, Kevin Post of The Press of Atlantic City and Kevin McArdle of Townsquare New Jersey 101.5 radio, especially at critical junctures in the life of the network during state budget considerations. McArdle accepted his award in-person and acknowledged the network's impact, relaying the story of meeting COO/Associate State Director Deborah Smarth in the halls of the State House and learning about the program's economic impact. He said "That was an impressive luncheon and I was thrilled to be included."

Several speakers said the passion of Deborah Smarth, NJSBDC COO/Associate State Director in making arguments advancing the cause of small business resulted in real gains. They thanked the CEO/State Director Brenda Hopper and Smarth for their collaborative efforts to publicize and grow the program for the good of small business owners and entrepreneurs.

Quoting Thomas Jefferson, Smarth told the crowd, "Do you want to know who you are? Don't Ask. Act! Action will delineate and define you." Then, she said each of the awardees acted and defined themselves, calling on the audience to applaud them for their great accomplishments.

Hopper acknowledged the support of the Small Business Administration and said the NJSBDC could not do what it does without their support. Al Titone, director of the SBA New Jersey District Office and Kellie LeDet, regional administrator of SBA's Region II (NY, NJ, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands), participated in the program.

"They are our funding partner," she said, noting the organization is critical to the NJSBDC. She also acknowledged Rutgers University and Rutgers Business School for hosting their headquarters as well as thanking PNC Bank and PSE&G as financial sponsors of the event.

As each of the 13 recipients was lauded, they spoke of the guidance, counseling, knowledge and expertise of the NJSBDC.

"The reality is I want to make my business explode and I meet with the Rutgers-New Brunswick NJSBDC to direct me and show me the way. It humbles me," said Jonathan Wilner, President/CEO of A. Harrington Limousine Service, Inc. "After 26 years of doing it the wrong way, now I can do it the right way."

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AMERICA'S SBDC NEW JERSEY ANNOUNCES SMALL BUSINESS WINNERS DURING ITS INTERNET MARKETING WEEK PITCH COMPETITION

December 19, 2014 (Newark, NJ) – The New Jersey Small Business Development Centers (NJSBDC) network's E-Business Specialty Program announced the winners of the inaugural 2014 New Jersey Small Business Internet Marketing Week Pitch Competition. Eight entrepreneurs of the more than two dozen companies attending the seminar series were selected as finalists. Those small business owners and entrepreneurs attending the three day series gave five-minute elevator pitch presentations to a panel of judges including entrepreneurs, small business lenders, business management consultants and leadership from the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers network.

Internet Marketing Week focused on supporting small businesses including those affected by Hurricane Sandy. According to the event's organizer, **Sunny Kancherla**, NJSBDC's Lead Consultant for the E-Business Specialty Program, this year's Entrepreneur Pitch Competition participants were truly outstanding.

"We were so impressed with this cohort of entrepreneurs that demonstrated thoughtful, innovative and realistic growth strategies based on what they learned during the conference," said Sunny Kancherla. "Choosing the winners was incredibly difficult, but we managed to choose the top three candidates based on the quality of their presentations, their potential for growth and their overall digital strategy."

The expert industry judges who were carefully selected to oversee the winners of the pitch competition included **Vincent Vicari** (Director of the NJSBDC at Bergen Community College), **Kevin Chu** (Loan Program Manager at the Greater Newark Enterprises Corporation), **Cheryl McCants** (Principal at Impact Consulting), and **Anthony Alvarez** (Principal at Anthony Alvarez Photography).

The 2014 New Jersey Small Business Internet Marketing Week Pitch Competition winners are:

- **2014 Most Innovative Pitch Winner-- Earlene Cruz** of Seton Hall's Stillman School of Business received the highest marks for innovation with her growing social entrepreneurship concept KitchenConnection.org. Kitchen Connection is a platform that virtually connects individuals by two common interests: Food and cooking. A portion of the funds contributed to the Cheffies for their time goes toward the alleviation of global hunger through our international partner, *Action Against Hunger*, whose mission is to save lives by eliminating hunger through the prevention, detection and treatment of malnutrition, especially during and after emergency situations of conflict, war and natural disaster.

Our partners, chefs and culinary schools alike, are all over the world, but Kitchen Connection is not only for the professionals. It's for culinary enthusiasts everywhere. Why not share the meals we share with each other and with the rest of the world? Discover a new recipe—discover a new culture. Sign up for free and get cooking today!

- **2014 Best Overall Pitch Winner -- Sequoya Jones** of Newark's Downtown Halsey Street district for her boutique fashion company **Kali Kouture Inc.** Jones' growing company provides the ultimate trends of fashion at its best. As a passionate entrepreneur, Jones believes that Kali Kouture can satisfy every woman's vision for couture fashion for any and every occasion. Kali Kouture promises a merchandise and shopping experience to last a lifetime at both at her cozy Dress Room Boutique and online at Kalikouture.com.
- **2014 Best Growth Pitch Winner—Lisa Kearney** of the newly relocated **K & S Tire Service** in Hudson County, NJ. K & S is a family-owned business providing professional truck and tire repair services to the transportation industry. K & S Tire Service professionals have over forty years of experience in the trucking industry. The general business is tire repair on tractors, trailers and chassis for small to mid-size transportation companies and owners-operators. Their primary customers come from the New York, New Jersey, Connecticut tri-state area and Canada. In order to better service customers' needs, the business offers road services, on-site repair services and fleet maintenance programs.

Each Winner receives over \$2,500 in professional and specialty consulting services from participating companies including cash flow and financial guidance from Greater Newark Enterprises Corporation, Internet marketing presence maximization from the TheDigitalStrategists.com, strategic planning advice from Jalima & Associates, branding and communication advice from Impact Consulting, professional head shots and brand positioning from Anthony Alvarez Photography, mobile application development readiness assessments from NJSBDC client Tap Factory Apps, and general business consulting, advocacy and support from the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers.

In addition, the pitch participants received a pledge of support from each of the participating organizations and expert speakers who agreed to make themselves available to assist in helping fine tune their pitch and execute their newly developed digital marketing strategy for 2015. These pitch finalists receive over five hours of coaching support from the NJSBDC's E-Business Specialty Program through three consultants, advocacy from the conference panelists, and much more.

"I've been teaching in marketing and management for 26 years at the college level," explained one of the event's pitch competition judges, Vincent Vicari, director of NJSBDC at Bergen Community College. "What small business owners and entrepreneurs received through this kind of collaborative teaching program is unique. It doesn't exist in any other environment except for what Sunny Kancherla and the NJSBDC network put together during this series."

"We're glad that the Internet Marketing Week series and pitch competition was such a success," said Deborah Smarth, Chief Operating Officer and Associate State Director."

“The E-Business Specialty Program and the Team it assembled produced a terrific learning program with positive benefits to entrepreneurs,” added Brenda Hopper, Chief Executive Officer and State Director.

One of the panelists, Marcela Zuchovicki of Jalima and Associates, acknowledged that it was a pleasure participating in the Internet Marketing week and she thanked the NJSBDC for designing such a high caliber program which will produce impact for its business participants.

In addition to the great reviews by participating panelists and judges, Captain Irv Hurd of Miss Avalon Fishing and Cruising who participated in the Internet Marketing Seminar series had nothing but positive reactions to the program. “I have taken several webinars and have been to a few workshops. This seminar by far has been the best. Right from the first night I was given a few inexpensive ways to increase my online presence. I was able to make the changes myself the next day. The panelists were amazing. I was able to ask questions and given insights on my business. When I was able to meet one on one for 2 hours of coaching, it was fantastic! Everyone on the staff is a successful business person, highly respected in their field. The NJSBDC internet marketing seminar was by far the ‘Best’ and informative use of my time. As a small businessman I highly recommend this to all. It will increase your business.”

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