U.S. Small Business Administration

ALASKA EDITION 2020

Small Business

RESOURCE GUIDE

START GROW EXPAND YOUR BUSINESS

SBA

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Alaska Edition 2020

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ON THE COVER Jerado and Joyce Reynolds, courtesy of Shana Sureck Photography; Adriana Medina and a client, courtesy of the SBA; Dac Tran, courtesy of the SBA; Shelley Bramstedt, left, John and JanTathem, courtesy of PIP Printing of Alaska Inc.; Reeves Clippard, courtesy of the SBA

U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

A MESSAGE FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

It is my honor to serve as Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration, leading a dedicated team of talented individuals across America who are focused on helping entrepreneurs start, grow, and expand their small businesses. The SBA is here to support the prosperity and longevity of our nation's small businesses with timely and innovative resources to help them thrive in today's economy. America's entrepreneurs are innovators, risk-takers, and the catalyst for employment opportunities within their communities, and they are what makes our economy so strong and dynamic.

As we enter a new decade of possibilities, small businesses have a remarkable opportunity to continue building upon the success we've seen in our economy over the last three years. As the voice for America's 30 million small businesses, I am eager to advocate on entrepreneurs' behalf as a member of the President's Cabinet. Whether it's seeking access to capital, government contracting opportunities, business mentoring, or assistance with disaster recovery, the SBA is ready and determined to help our customers succeed.

The SBA remains committed to continuing our support of America's entrepreneurs and making an even bigger impact in communities across the country. In particular, the SBA is focused on elevating female entrepreneurs and our military veterans, expanding access to SBA resources among entrepreneurs in disadvantaged communities, and continuing to prioritize disaster relief.

Within this resource guide, you will learn more about the tremendous tools the SBA provides small businesses through our 68 District Offices and numerous Resource Partners, such as our Small Business Development Centers, our SCORE mentoring network, Women's Business Centers, and Veterans Business Outreach Centers. Featured in this guide are some of the remarkable success stories of entrepreneurs who partnered with the SBA to take their businesses to the next level. The SBA encourages you to also utilize these resources to help strengthen and meet your business goals.

Sincerely,

Jovita Carranza
SBA Administrator

WE MAKE SMALL BUSINESS
OUR BUSINESS.
START • GROW • EXPAND • RECOVER

Small businesses **power** our economy.

The SBA **powers** small businesses.

Whether you dream of transforming your business idea into a thriving company, growing your customer base, or expanding into new markets or locations, the SBA is here for you. We offer programs, expertise, and access to capital that will empower you to take your small business to the next level of success.

Stop by your local SBA office or visit SBA.GOV to learn how you can move your business forward with confidence.

SBA

U.S. Small Business Administration

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Fairbanks, AK 99701
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District Director Letter

Welcome to the 2020 edition of the SBA Alaska District Office Small Business Resource Guide. Whether you are an experienced owner of a successful business, a home-based entrepreneur, or just thinking of starting your business, this guide provides useful tools and references to help you start up and grow. The SBA Alaska District Office is here to offer support as you fulfill your vision. Your achievement affects your employees, your community, and ultimately the Alaskan economy.

The SBA helps you find free or low-cost business counseling. In the last year, our local SCORE mentors and Small Business Development Center advisers met with over 2,500 entrepreneurs and business owners to help with the development of business, marketing, and succession plans. Visit our offices or turn to page 9 to connect with a free business adviser in your area.

Last year, the SBA made a difference to thousands of businesses by providing access to capital to qualifying small business owners and entrepreneurs. Our partnerships with local lenders helped small businesses to secure nearly $65 million, which was then used for business improvements or working capital. Last year over $2 billion in government contracts were awarded to Alaskan businesses, bringing revenue to their communities. Government agencies set aside contracts for small businesses, supporting the smooth operation of the federal government and helping local businesses grow and employ more Alaskans. Use this guide to explore entrepreneurship and, in your own way, contribute to building a stronger economy.

Sincerely,

Nancy Porzio
District Director

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LOCAL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

How We Did It

Made to Last

Joyce and Jerado Reynolds used SBA support to succeed.

WRITTEN BY **MICAELA MORRISSETTE**

COURTESY OF SHANA SUREOK PHOTOGRAPHY

Reynolds Welding & Fabrication has grown steadily, building a loyal customer base, since Jerado Reynolds founded the company in 2005.

"At first the company was just Jerado," recalls his wife and co-owner, Joyce Reynolds. "Then it was him and me part time." During the day she worked as a nurse and spent her evenings doing all the company's paperwork. The Reynolds sank everything they earned into the business—money, time, and energy. She remembers with pride helping Jerado weld a stair railing at a local school. Her son later attended that same school, and she watched her child and others using the rail, benefiting from the hard work the couple did together. It was then Joyce decided as much as she loved her day job, she wanted to devote herself full time to the family business in Windsor, Connecticut. She wanted to work side-by-side with her husband, fully focused on administration and business growth. As they both hoped, word of mouth spread; clients made referrals. Joyce was soon overwhelmed with paperwork. They brought on two employees—doubling up in the busy seasons. They were able to maintain four full-time employees by 2009. After this, Joyce says, they saw that "things were not moving." She wanted to scale up.

Challenge

The company wasn't growing in part because it wasn't certified with the state department of transportation or prequalified with the Connecticut State Department of Administrative Services, Joyce says. She decided to tackle the certification problem full time, leaving her nursing career. This was the change she'd been wanting to make, but since her background was in health care, Joyce didn't feel fluent in the languages of construction or business. Joyce wanted to learn, and she had incentive: they needed the certifications to bid on bigger jobs. "Never be afraid to ask questions," she says. Joyce needed to find people with answers.

Solution

She and Jerado connected with the University of Hartford Entrepreneurial Center & Women's Business Center, an

COURTESY OF SHANA SURECK PHOTOGRAPHY

SBA Resource Partner, where "from day one it was, Eureka! Everyone wanted to see us win." Women entrepreneurs receive essential business counseling and training from this national network of community-based centers. Most helpful was the detailed personal attention available through free one-on-one business counseling. Joyce also learned about workshops offered by providers like the Metropolitan District, a Connecticut nonprofit municipal corporation offering water and sewer services. At a meet-and-greet, Joyce understood how much the SBA could help her business. An SBA professional walked Joyce through the extensive paperwork and, crucially, helped her register the company in the System for Award Management (sam.gov), positioning the company for new federal contracts.

"Resources like the Entrepreneurial Center and the SBA will train you from bottom to top," Joyce says. "They have finance classes that open your eyes regarding taxes. You'll learn how to register your business. They'll help with a contract or your website or accountability statements. Everything!"

Before the SBA, Reynolds Welding attempted the DOT certification on five separate occasions, always falling short because the process was so complicated. Joyce secured the certification with SBA guidance on the first attempt.

Benefit

Reynolds Welding now employs more than 15 workers, constructing stairs, rails, structural beams, and columns throughout the region. Jerado is working on two bridges—a lifelong dream. Joyce continues to move forward, getting Reynolds qualified for the SBA 8(a) Business Development Program, which provides free business development education to small businesses so they can better compete in the public sector. "When I came on full time, I set a goal for what I would like for the company, and I've achieved 80% of that," Joyce says. When she secures 8(a) certification for Reynolds, she'll have hit all her objectives. Then, she admits, she'll probably come up with some new ones.

5 Tips for Success

Find a great business mentor.
To find your local SBA office and resource partners in your area, visit **sba.gov/localresources**.

Have a healthy view of competition.
We're not always competing. We're a competitor, but if a similar business has extra work, they'll send it to us and vice versa. That's the relationship to have.

Record everything you do.
Navigating business relationships in this age means keeping an email record of everything you do. Leave a clear paper trail.

Sacrifice to ensure quality.
We don't cut corners. Sometimes you have to lose money to do quality work–it's rough, but nothing is more important.

Seek SBA assistance to see if you qualify for business certifications.
We used to look for jobs. Now that we're on the SBA Subcontracting Network database, SubNet, and **sam.gov**, we have a continuous flow of contractors reaching out to us.

SBA Resource Partners

No matter your industry, location, or experience, if you have a dream, the SBA is here to help you achieve it. Our SBA Resource Partners offer mentoring, counseling, and training to help you startup and thrive at all stages of the business life cycle. These independent organizations operating across the United States and U.S. territories are funded through SBA cooperative agreements or grants.

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

950+

Small Business Development Centers

Achieve your dream of business ownership and remain competitive in an ever-changing global economy with assistance from your local SBDC. Access free counseling and free or low-cost training on topics like regulatory compliance, technology development, and international trade. Find an SBDC adviser at **sba.gov/sbdc**.

SCORE

300+

SCORE chapters

Join the ranks of other business owners who have experienced higher revenues and increased growth thanks to SCORE, the nation's largest network of volunteer business mentors. Experienced executives share real-world knowledge to fit your busy schedule. SCORE mentors are available for free as often as you need, in person, via email or over video chat. Find a mentor at **sba.gov/score**.

WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTERS

100+

Women's Business Centers

Women entrepreneurs receive essential business counseling and training from this national network of community-based centers. Each center tailors its services to help you navigate the challenges women often face when starting or growing a business. To learn about SBA resources for women visit **sba.gov/women**.

VETERANS BUSINESS OUTREACH CENTERS

20+

Veterans Business Outreach Centers

Veteran and military entrepreneurs receive business training, counseling, and referrals to other SBA Resource Partners at a Veterans Business Outreach Center, **sba.gov/vboc**. Receive procurement guidance to better compete for government contracts. VBOCs also serve active duty service members, National Guard or Reserve members, veterans of any era, and military spouses.

Our Local SBA Resource Partners

SBA's Resource Partners are independent organizations funded through SBA cooperative agreements or grants.

Arthur and Sandra Johnson, owners of 21 Short Stop in Georgia, received assistance from their local Small Business Development Center and SCORE chapter.

SCORE

Visit **sba.gov/score** to start working on your business goals. Contact your local office to schedule an appointment.
alaska.score.org

Alaska SCORE

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Debbie Rinckey
(907) 862-0319
debbie.rinckey@scorevolunteer.org

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Jasmin Smith
(907) 602-5297
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Small Business Development Centers

aksbdc.org

Statewide

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Ian Grant
ian.grant@aksbdc.org

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201 N. Lucille St., suite 2 A
Wasilla
(907) 373-7232 or (800) 478-7232

Central Region Director
Julie Nolen
julie.nolen@aksbdc.org

Alaska Small Business Development Center's Partner Program

Buy Alaska
1901 Bragaw St., suite 199
Anchorage
(907) 786-7201 or (800) 478-7232
Fax (907) 786-5446
buyalaska.com

Technology Research and Development Center
1901 Bragaw St., suite 199
Anchorage
(907)786-7201
info@aksbdc.org

O'Connor Belting, a Delaware family-owned business, expanded with the help of an SBA-guaranteed 7(a) loan.

Veterans Business Outreach Center

Veteran entrepreneurs or small business owners can receive business training, counseling and mentoring, and referrals to other SBA Resource Partners at a Veterans Business Outreach Center, **sba.gov/vboc**. This is also the place to receive procurement guidance, which can help your business better compete for government contracts.

Business Impact NW
(206) 324-4330
1437 S. Jackson St.
Seattle, WA
Program Director Domonique Juleon
domoniquej@businessimpactnw.org
businessimpactnw.org/services/vboc

Your Advocates

The SBA offices of advocacy and ombudsman are independent voices for small business within the federal government.

Advocacy

When you need a voice within the federal government for your interests as a small business owner, the SBA's regional advocates are here to assist. The advocates analyze the effects of proposed regulations and consider alternatives that minimize the economic burden on small businesses, governmental jurisdictions, and nonprofits. Find your regional advocate at **sba.gov/advocacy**.

Your advocate helps with these small business issues:

- if your business could be negatively affected by regulations proposed by the government
- if you have contracting issues with a federal agency
- when you need economic and small business statistics

The SBA's Office of Advocacy also independently represents small business and advances its concerns before Congress, the White House, federal agencies, federal courts, and state policy makers.

Ombudsman

Entrepreneurs who have an issue with an existing federal regulation or policy can receive assistance from the SBA's national ombudsman.

The ombudsman's office can help you:

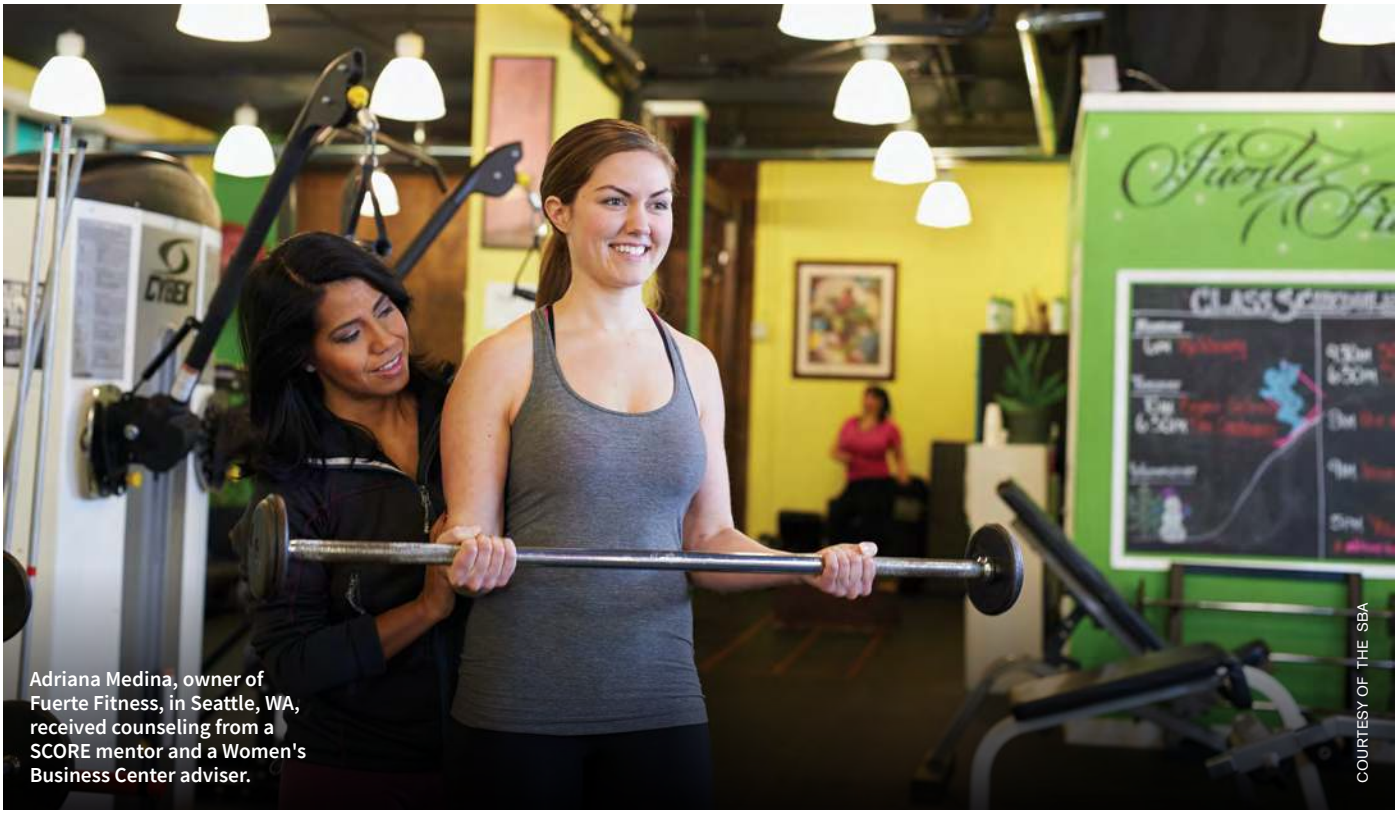
- resolve regulatory disputes with federal agencies
- reduce unfair penalties and fines
- seek remedies when rules are inconsistently applied
- recover payment for services done by government contractors

To report how a proposed federal regulation could unfairly affect you, find your regional SBA advocate at sba.gov/advocacy.

To submit a comment about how your business has been hurt by an existing regulation, visit sba.gov/ombudsman/comments.

Make your voice heard by participating in a Regional Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Roundtable or a public hearing hosted by the SBA's national ombudsman. These events are posted periodically on the ombudsman website, **sba.gov/ombudsman**.

To submit a comment or complaint through the online form, visit **sba.gov/ombudsman/comments**. Your concerns will be directed to the appropriate federal agency for review. The SBA will collaborate with you and the agency to help resolve the issue.



Adriana Medina, owner of Fuerte Fitness, in Seattle, WA, received counseling from a SCORE mentor and a Women's Business Center adviser.

COURTESY OF THE SBA

How to Start a Business in Alaska

Thinking of starting a business? Here are the nuts & bolts.

The Startup Logistics

Even if you're running a home-based business, you will have to comply with many local, state, and federal regulations. Do not ignore regulatory details. You may avoid some red tape in the beginning, but your lack of compliance could become an obstacle as your business grows. Taking the time to research regulations is as important as knowing your market. Carefully investigate the laws affecting your industry. Being out of compliance could leave you unprotected legally, lead to expensive penalties, and jeopardize your business.

Market Research

Need to do research on your clients and location? View consumer and business data for your area using the Census Business Builder: Small Business Edition, **https://cbb.census.gov/sbe**. Filter your search by business type and location to view data on your potential customers, including consumer spending, and a summary of existing businesses, available as a map and a report.

Business License & Zoning

Licenses are typically administered by a variety of state and local departments. It is important to consider zoning regulations when choosing a site for your business. Contact the local business license office where you plan to locate your business. You may not be permitted to conduct business out of your home or engage in industrial activity in a retail district.

» **Division of Economic Development**
Juneau
State Office Building
333 Willoughby Ave., ninth floor
(907) 465-2510
Fax (907) 465-2103
commerce.alaska.gov

Anchorage
550 W. Seventh Ave., suite 1770
(907) 269-8150
Fax (907) 269-8147
businesslicensing@alaska.gov
alaska.gov

» **State of Alaska Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development**
Professional Licensing
Juneau
(907) 465-2550
Fax (907) 465-2974
license@alaska.gov

Anchorage
550 W. Seventh Ave., suite 1500
(907) 269-8160
Fax (907) 269-8156

» **Boards & Commissions**
Nursing (907) 269-8161
Public accountancy (907) 269-4712
Real estate (907) 269-8162
Medical (907) 269-8163

Name Registration

Register your business name with the county clerk where your business is located. If you're a corporation, also register with the state.

» **Corporations**
333 Willoughby Ave., ninth floor
Juneau
(907) 465-2550
Fax (907) 465-2974
corporations@alaska.gov

Taxes

As a business owner, you should know your federal tax responsibilities and make some business decisions to comply with certain tax requirements. The IRS Small Business and Self-Employed Tax Center, **go.usa.gov/xPxYR**, offers information on a variety of topics including: obtaining an Employer Identification Number, paying and filing income tax, virtual workshops, forms, and publications.

As the IRS continues to implement some of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act provisions, your tax obligations may change. Visit the Tax Reform Provisions that Affect Businesses page on **irs.gov** for the latest tax reform updates that affect your bottom line.

» **Local Taxpayer Advocate Service Office**
949 E. 36th Ave., room A-209
Anchorage (907) 786-9777
Outside Anchorage (877) 777-4778
Fax (907) 271-6157

Social Security

If you have any employees, including officers of a corporation but not the sole proprietor or partners, you must make periodic payments, and/or file quarterly reports about payroll taxes and other mandatory deductions. You can contact the IRS or the Social Security Administration for information, assistance, and forms, at (800) 772-1213 or visit **socialsecurity.gov/employer**. You can file W-2s online or verify job seekers through the Social Security Number Verification Service.

Employment Eligibility Verification

The Federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 requires employers to verify employment eligibility of new employees. The law obligates an employer to process Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9. The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service offers information and assistance through **uscis.gov/i-9-central**. For forms call (800) 870-3676. For the employer hotline call (888) 464-4218 or email I-9central@dhs.gov.

E-Verify, operated by the Department of Homeland Security in partnership with the Social Security Administration, electronically verifies the Social Security number and employment eligibility information reported on Form I-9. It's the quickest way for employers to determine the employment eligibility of new hires. Visit **e-verify.gov**, call (888) 464-4218 or email e-verify@dhs.gov.

Health & Safety

All businesses with employees are required to comply with state and federal regulations regarding the protection of employees, visit **dol.gov** for information. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration provides information on the specific health and safety standards used by the U.S. Department of Labor. Call (800) 321-6742 or visit **osha.gov**.

» **U.S. Labor Department**
605 W. Fourth Ave., suite G30
Anchorage
(907) 271-5035

» **Alaska Occupational Safety and Health Section**
Anchorage
(907) 269-4955

Juneau
(907) 465-4855

» **Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development**
(907) 465-2700
Fax (907) 465-2784
labor.alaska.gov

» **State of Alaska Wage & Hour Administration**
Anchorage-Muldoon Job Center
1251 Muldoon Road, suite 113

Anchorage
(907) 269-4900
statewide.wagehour@alaska.gov

Fairbanks
675 Seventh Ave., station J
(907) 451-2886

Juneau
111 W. Eighth St., room 302
(907) 465-4842

Employee Insurance

Check with your state laws to see if you are required to provide unemployment or workers' compensation insurance for your employees. For health insurance options, call the Small Business Health Options Program at (800) 706-7893 or visit **healthcare.gov/small-businesses/employers**.

Department of Labor Association Health Plans allow small businesses, including self-employed workers, to band together by geography or industry to obtain healthcare coverage as if they were a single large employer. For information, visit **dol.gov/general/topic/association-health-plans** or **AlaskaCare.gov**.

» **Juneau**
(907) 465-4460

» **Outside Juneau**
(800) 821-2251

Environmental Regulations

State assistance is available for small businesses that must comply with environmental regulations under the Clean Air Act. State Small Business Environmental Assistance programs provide free and confidential assistance to help small business owners understand and comply with complex environmental regulations and permitting requirements. These state programs can help businesses reduce emissions at the source, often reducing regulatory burden and saving you money. To learn more about these free services visit **nationalsbeap.org/states/list**.

Accessibility & ADA Compliance

For assistance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, call the ADA Center at (800) 949-4232 or the Department of Justice at (800) 514-0301. Direct questions about accessible design and the ADA standards to the U.S. Access Board at (800) 872-2253, TTY (800) 993-2822, ta@access-board.gov or visit **access-board.gov**.

Reeves Clippard used the business knowledge he acquired in the SBA Emerging Leaders program to grow A/R Solar in Seattle, WA.

COURTESY OF THE SBA

Child Support

Employers are essential to the success of the child support program and are responsible for collecting 75% of support nationwide through payroll deductions. The Office of Child Support Enforcement at Health and Human Services offers employers step-by-step instructions for processing income withholding orders for child support. Download the fact sheet about the Employer's Role in the Child Support Program at the Office of Child Support Enforcement's website at **acf.hhs.gov/programs/css > employer responsibilities**. You can also find information about other employer responsibilities and tools that can make meeting those responsibilities easier, such as electronic income withholding orders and the Child Support Portal. Send questions to employerservices@acf.hhs.gov.

» **Alaska Child Support Services Division**
655 F St.
Anchorage
(907) 269-6900

Intellectual Property

Patents, trademarks, and copyrights are types of intellectual property that serve to protect creations and innovations. The United States Patent and Trademark Office is the federal agency that grants U.S. patents and registers trademarks. For information and resources about U.S. patents and federally registered trademarks consult **uspto.gov.** Call the patent and trademark office help center at (800) 786-9199.

A patent for an invention is the grant of a property right to an inventor, issued by the U.S. patent office. The right conferred by the patent grant is the right to exclude others from making, using, offering for sale, or selling the invention in the United States or importing the invention into the country. For information visit **uspto.gov/inventors**.

There are three types of patents:

- Utility patents may be granted to anyone who invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement.
- Design patents may be granted to anyone who invents a new, original, and ornamental design for an article of manufacture.
- Plant patents may be granted to anyone who invents or discovers and asexually reproduces any distinct and new variety of plant, other than a tuber propagated plant or a plant found in an uncultivated state.

A trademark or service mark includes any word, name, symbol, device, or any combination, used or intended to be used to identify and distinguish the goods/services of one seller or provider from those of others and to indicate the source of the goods/services. Trademarks and service marks may be registered at both the state and federal level. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office only registers federal trademarks and service marks. Federally registered trademarks may conflict with and supersede those registered only at the state level. Visit **uspto.gov/trademarks**.

» **State of Alaska trademark registration**
(907) 465-2426
jessica.fowler@alaska.gov
corporations.alaska.gov, also visit the Small Business Assistance Center at **commerce.alaska.gov.**

Copyrights protect original works of authorship including literary, dramatic, musical and artistic, and certain other intellectual works. Copyrights do not protect facts, ideas, and systems, although they may protect the way they are expressed.

For general information contact:

» **U.S. Copyright Office**
U.S. Library of Congress
James Madison Memorial Building
101 Independence Ave. SE
Washington, DC
(202) 707-3000 or toll free (877) 476-0778
copyright.gov

Chambers of Commerce

Alaska Chamber
(907) 278-2722
alaskachamber.com

Anchorage
(907) 272-2401
anchoragechamber.org

Big Lake
(907) 892-6109
biglakechamber.org

Bristol Bay Borough, King Salmon
(907) 246-2222
bristolbaychamber.com

Chugiak-Eagle River
(907) 694-4702
cer.org

Cooper Landing
cooperlandingchamber.com

Cordova
(907) 424-7260
cordovachamber.com

Delta Junction
(907) 895-5068
deltachamber.org

Funny River, Soldotna
(907) 262-0879

Greater Copper Valley, Glennallen
(907) 822-5555
coppervalleychamber.com

Greater Fairbanks
(907) 452-1105
fairbankschamber.org

Greater Healy/Denali
(907) 683-4636
denalichamber.com

Greater Ketchikan
(907) 225-3184
ketchikanchamber.com

Greater Palmer
(907) 745-2880
palmerchamber.org

Greater Sitka
(907) 747-8604
sitkachamber.com

Greater Soldotna
(907) 262-9814
soldotnachamber.com

Greater Wasilla
(907) 376-1299
wasillachamber.org

Haines
(907) 766-2202
haineschamber.org

Homer
(907) 235-7740
homeralaska.org

Juneau
(907) 463-3488
juneauchamber.com

Kenai
(907) 283-1991
kenaichamber.org

Kodiak
(907) 486-5557
kodiakchamber.org

Moose Pass
moosepassalaska.com

Ninilchick
ninilchikchamber.com

Nome
(907) 443-6555
visitnomealaska.com

North Pole Community
(907) 488-2242
northpolechamber.us

Petersburg
(907) 772-4636
petersburg.org

Prince of Wales, Klawock
(907) 755-2626
princeofwalescoc.org

Seldovia
(907) 234-7612
seldovia.com

Seward
(907) 224-8051
seward.com

Skagway
(907) 983-1898
skagwaychamber.org

Talkeetna
(907) 315-8012
talkeetnachamber.org

Tok
(907) 883-5775
tokalaskainfo.com

Willow
(907) 495-9000
willowchamber.org

Wrangell
(907) 874-3901
wrangellchamber.org

Yakutat
yakutattourism@live.com

Yukon, Whitehorse
(867) 667-2000 or (800) 661-0543
yukonchamber.com

Convention & Visitors' Bureaus

Anchorage
anchorage.net

Fairbanks
explorefairbanks.com

Juneau
traveljuneau.com

Ketchikan
visit-ketchikan.com

Kodiak
kodiak.org

Mat-Su Valley, Palmer
alaskavisit.com

Nome
visitnomealaska.com

Sitka
sitka.org

Skagway
skagway.com

Valdez
valdezalaska.org

Wrangell
wrangell.com/business/resources/wcvb

Economic Development

Alaska Regional Development Organizations
Robert B. Atwood Building
550 W. Seventh Ave., suite 1770,
Anchorage
(907) 269-8150
Fax (907) 269-8147
Juneau
State Office Building
333 Willoughby Ave., ninth floor
(907) 465-2510
Fax (907) 465-2103
commerce.alaska.gov/web/ded/dev/ardors.aspx

ANCSA Regional Association
(907) 375-4212
cindy@ancsaceos.org
ancsaregional.com

Alaska Federation of Natives
3000 A St., suite 210, Anchorage
(907) 274-3611
Fax (907) 276-7989
afninfo@nativefederation.org
nativefederation.org

Commerce Department
commerce.alaska.gov
Anchorage
(907) 258-8100

Juneau
(907) 465-2500

U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development
Alaska State Rural Development Office
800 Evergreen Ave #201, Palmer
(907) 761-7700
rd.usda.gov/ak

AVMAC President/CEO Bert Ortiz, left, and fellow U.S. Navy veteran and electrician Ken Morey manufacturing a power panel bracket.

COURTESY OF AVMAC INC.

◀ HOW THE SBA HELPED ME SUCCEED

U.S. Navy veteran Roberto Ortiz puts his 40 years of aviation management experience to use as a small business owner in Chesapeake, VA. Bert expanded AVMAC Inc. into the government sector fulfilling aviation and maritime logistical services with the help of his local SBA Veterans Business Outreach Center. VBOCs are the first stop for military community entrepreneurs looking to start, grow, or expand a small business. The VBOC located at Old Dominion University helped Bert obtain government contracting business certifications. With support from his local VBOC, Bert has strategically position AVMAC in the federal marketplace to better compete for large-scale government contracts. From AVMAC's first contract in 2010, this veteran-led company has nearly doubled in revenue and grown to over 400 employees.

Opportunities for Veterans

Military community members become more successful entrepreneurs with the help of the SBA.

Entrepreneurship training

In Boots to Business, explore business ownership and other self-employment opportunities while learning key business concepts. Walk away with an overview of entrepreneurship and applicable business ownership fundamentals, including how to access startup capital using SBA resources. Boots to Business is conducted on all military installations as part of the Department of Defense's Transition Assistance Program.

Who's eligible?

Service members transitioning out of active duty and military spouses. Boots to Business: Reboot, for veterans, National Guard or Reserve members and military spouses, teaches this entrepreneurship curriculum off base in communities. Register for either B2B program at **https://sbavets.force.com**.

For women veterans

Receive entrepreneurial training geared toward women veterans, service members, and spouses through these SBA-funded programs:

- Veteran Women Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship in Syracuse, New York
- LiftFund in San Antonio, Texas

For service-disabled veterans

Learn how to start and grow a small business using these SBA-funded programs:

- Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities in Syracuse, New York

- Veterans Entrepreneurship Program at the Riata Center for Entrepreneurship, Spears School of Business, Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma
- Veteran Entrepreneurship Jumpstart at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Dog Tag Inc., affiliated with Georgetown University in Washington, DC

Financing

Employee called to active duty?
You can receive funds that enable your business to meet ordinary and necessary operating expenses when an essential employee is called up to active duty in the military reserve. Ask your local SBA specialist or lender about the Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loan.

Government contracting

Veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses that want to better compete in the public market receive training from the Veteran Institute for Procurement, **nationalvip.org**.

VIP Start
Enter the federal market and become ready for procurement.

VIP Grow
Strategize to expand and operate within the federal marketplace.

VIP International
Enter or expand your federal and commercial contracting opportunities overseas.

Get certified
Learn about the service-disabled veteran-owned small business certification program on page 49.

Need assistance?

Veteran and military entrepreneurs receive business training, counseling, and referrals to other SBA Resource Partners at a Veterans Business Outreach Center, **sba.gov/vboc**. For veterans business information visit **sba.gov/veterans**.

COURTESY OF AVMAC INC.

Entrepreneurial Opportunities

Regional Innovation Clusters

Create jobs and grow the economy through an SBA Regional Innovation Cluster.

Who should join

Small businesses driving innovation in one of these tech industries:

- advanced composites
- agTech
- bioscience
- food processing
- data sciences
- medical sciences
- power and energy
- unmanned aerial systems
- water tech
- wood products

How it works

Each industry cluster is based in a geographic region. Your small business must be located in or near that region in order to join the cluster. For example, the AgLaunch Initiative cluster, which focuses on agricultural technology, is located in the Tennessee area. A small agTech business in or near Tennessee will connect with other agTech suppliers, service providers, and related institutions through that innovation cluster.

How it benefits you

Network with other industry innovators and connect with resources that will help your small business find funding. You'll also receive guidance on how to better compete for government contracts and other opportunities so you can grow and expand. Receive free technical and legal assistance to develop your tech and get it to market for government and industry buyers.

Get involved

Find an SBA Regional Innovation Cluster near you by visiting **sba.gov/localassistance**. Select the regional innovation clusters on the drop-down menu.

Online Resources

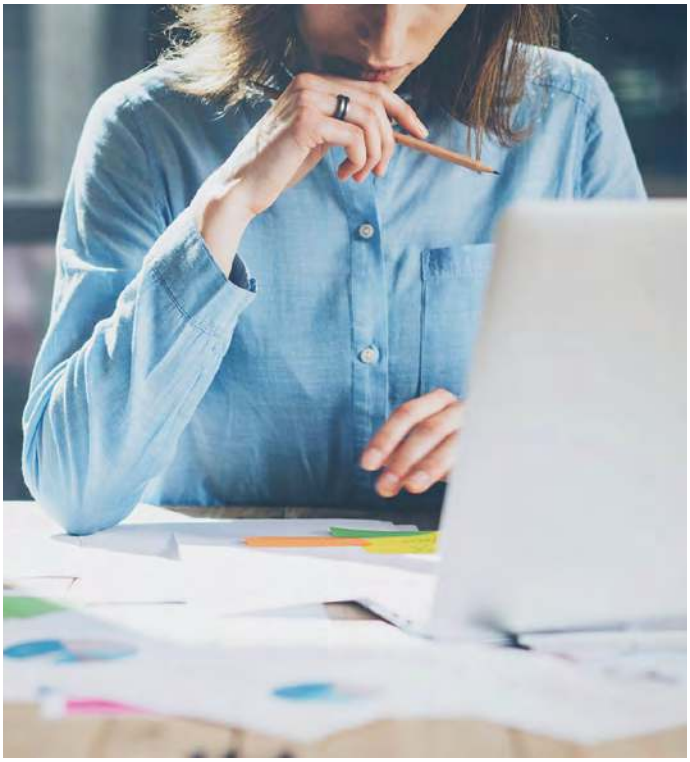
Find free short courses and learning tools to start and grow your small business at **sba.gov/learning**. The free SBA Online Learning Center is a great resource for every entrepreneur, especially rural business owners looking for easy access to vital business training.

Courses include:

- writing your business plan
- buying a business
- financing options
- digital and traditional marketing to win customers
- disaster recovery
- understanding your customer

Native American Workshops

Tribal enterprises and business organizations can receive training at an SBA Entrepreneurial Empowerment Workshop. These workshops cover business concepts important for starting, growing, or expanding a small business. RedWind instructors identify and help participants avoid common pitfalls. Learn how to prepare a business plan, gain access to capital, and basic book keeping. Request a workshop in your area by visiting nativesmallbusiness.org.



10 STEPS to Start Your Business

Starting a business involves planning, making key financial decisions, and completing a series of legal requirements.

1 Conduct market research.
This will tell you if there's an opportunity to turn your idea into a successful business. Gather information about potential customers and businesses already operating in your area so you can use that information to find a competitive advantage.

2 Write your business plan.
This is the roadmap for how to structure, run, and grow your new business. You'll use it to convince people that working with you and/or investing in your company is a smart choice.

3 Fund your business.
Your business plan will help you figure out how much money you'll need to startup. Investors or lenders will help you get the amount you need.

4 Pick your business location.
Are you setting up a brick-and mortar business or launching online?

5 Choose a business structure.
The legal structure you choose for your business will affect your business registration requirements, how much you pay in taxes, and your personal liability.

6 Choose your business name.
Pick a name reflecting your brand. Check your secretary of state's website to make sure your business name isn't already being used.

7 Register your business.
Once you've picked the perfect business name, it's time to make it legal and protect your brand. If you're doing business under a name different than your own, you'll need to register with the federal government and often your state government.

8 Get federal and state tax IDs.
You'll use your Employer Identification Number for important steps to start and grow your business, like opening a bank account and paying taxes. It's like a social security number for your business. Some, but not all, states require you to get a tax ID as well.

9 Apply for licenses and permits.
Keep your business running smoothly by staying legally compliant. The licenses and permits you need for your business vary by industry, state, and location.

10 Open a business bank account.
A small business checking account can help you handle legal, tax, and day-to-day issues.

Write your Business Plan

Your business plan is the foundation of your business. Learn how to write a business plan with the help of an SBA Resource Partner.

Business plans help you run your business.

A good business plan guides you through managing your business. You'll use your business plan as a roadmap for how to structure, run, and grow your new business.

Business plans can help you get funding or bring on new business partners. Investors want to see a return on their investment. Your business plan is the tool you'll use to convince people that working with you—or investing in your company—is a smart investment. Brain storm with a business counselor (visit one of our SBA Resource Partners detailed on page 10) and write a **traditional business plan**, which uses a standard structure and detailed sections. Once you've got it all down, you can then condense it to a lean startup business plan, which typically contains key points on only one page.

TRADITIONAL BUSINESS PLAN FORMAT

When you write your business plan, you don't have to stick to the exact business plan template. Instead, use the sections that make the most sense for your business and your needs.

Executive Summary

Briefly summarize your company and why it will be successful. Include your mission statement, your product or service, and basic information about your company's leadership team, employees, and location. You should also include financial information and high-level growth plans if you plan to ask for financing.

Company Description

Go into detail about the problems your business solves. Be specific as to audience and location. List out the consumers, organizations, or businesses your company plans to serve.

Explain the competitive advantages you have that will make your business successful. Are there experts on your team? Have you found the perfect location? Your company description is the place to boast about your strengths.

Market Analysis

Demonstrate a solid understanding of your industry outlook and target market. This is where it pays to partner with an experienced business counselor from your local Small Business Development Center, SCORE, Women's Business Center, or Veterans Business Outreach Center—all these SBA Resource Partners provide free or low-cost business assistance. Competitive research will show what other businesses are doing and their strengths. In your market research, look for trends and themes. What do successful competitors do? Why does it work? Can you do it better? Now's the time to answer these questions.

Organization and Management

Explain how your company will be structured and who will run it.

Describe the legal structure of your business. State whether you have or intend to incorporate your business as a C or an S corporation, form a general or limited partnership, or if you're a sole proprietor or limited liability company.

Want to see an example of a business plan?

View examples of business plans at **sba.gov/business-guide/plan/write-your-business-plan-template**

TRADITIONAL BUSINESS PLAN CHECKLIST

- ☐ Executive summary
- ☐ Company description
- ☐ Market analysis
- ☐ Organization and management
- ☐ Service or product line
- ☐ Marketing and sales
- ☐ Funding request
- ☐ Financial projections
- ☐ Appendix

Use an organizational chart to show the hierarchy. Explain how each person's experience will contribute to the success of your venture. Consider including CVs of key members.

Service or Product Line

Describe what you sell or what service you offer. Explain how it benefits your customers and the product lifecycle. Share your plans for intellectual property, like copyright or patent filings. If you're doing research and development for your service or product, explain it.

Marketing and Sales

Your marketing strategy should evolve and change to fit your needs in each context.

Describe how you'll attract and retain customers. Show how a sale will actually happen. You'll refer to this section later when you make financial projections, so be thorough.

Funding Request

If you're asking for funding, outline your funding requirements. Specify whether you want debt or equity and the terms you'd like. Your goal is to clearly explain how much funding you'll need over the next five years and how the investment will be used.

Specify if you need funds to buy equipment or materials, pay salaries, or cover specific bills until revenue increases. Explain how you'll pay off the debt.

Financial Projections

Supplement your funding request with a prospective financial outlook for the next five years. Show how your business will be a financial success.

If your business is already established, include income statements, balance sheets, and cash flow statements for the last three to five years. List collateral you could put against a loan.

Include forecasted income statements, balance sheets, cash flow statements, and capital expenditure budgets. For the first year, be even more specific and use quarterly—or even monthly—projections. Make sure to clearly explain your projections and match them to your funding requests.

Use visual organization tools--graphs and charts—to tell your business's financial story.

Appendix

Here you'll attach supporting documents or other requested materials. Common items to include are credit histories, CVs, product pictures, letters of reference, licenses, permits, patents, legal documents, and other contracts.

LEAN STARTUP PLAN FORMAT

Write a lean startup plan if requested from an investor, or if your business is relatively simple or you plan to regularly change and refine as you go.

Lean startup plans use more visual organization tools and only a handful of elements to describe your company's value proposition, infrastructure, customers, and finances. They're useful for visualizing your company's fundamental facts. Your business counselor can help you edit down into the Business Model Canvas, used here—the most well known style, or another lean startup template.

Key Partnerships

Note the other businesses you'll work with--suppliers, manufacturers, subcontractors, and similar strategic partners.

Key Activities

List the ways your business will gain a competitive advantage. Will you sell direct to consumers or use technology to tap into the sharing economy?

Key Resources

List resources you'll leverage to create value for your customer. Your most important assets include staff, capital, or intellectual property. Leverage business resources that might be available to women, veterans, Native Americans, and HUBZone–certified businesses.

Value Proposition

Make a clear and compelling statement about the unique value your company brings to the market.

Customer Relationships

Describe how customers will interact with your business. Think through the customer experience from start to finish. Is it automated or personal? In person or online?

Customer Segments

Name your target market. Your business won't be for everybody; it's important to have a clear sense of who you serve.

Channels

List the most important ways you'll talk to your customers.

Cost Structure

Will your company focus on reducing cost or maximizing value? Define your strategy, then list the most significant costs you'll face.

Revenue Streams

Explain how your company makes money: direct sales, memberships fees, selling advertising space? If your company has multiple revenue streams, list them all.

LEAN STARTUP PLAN CHECKLIST

- ☐ Key partnerships
- ☐ Key activities
- ☐ Key resources
- ☐ Value proposition
- ☐ Customer relationships
- ☐ Customer segments
- ☐ Channels
- ☐ Cost structure
- ☐ Revenue streams

10 Tips

to Help You Build and Grow a Stand-Out Small Business Brand

Build a better business with these time-tested tips.

Elliot Henry, who received SBA-backed 7(a) and 504 loans, runs Unlimited Water Processing in St. Louis, MO.

The United States loves small businesses. That's according to a survey by the Pew Foundation reported by Small Business Trends, **smallbiztrends.com**, which found that 71% of Americans view small business more favorably than any other institutions, including religious organizations.

Why is this? Well, small businesses are seen as a positive influence. But it's more than that.

Small businesses are in a unique position to create valuable customer experiences. Their products and services are often niche, the target customer is very defined. Business operations are agile and unconstrained by corporate rules and processes. Small businesses are also trusted for their integrity, community engagement, and customer service. When was the last time you called a small business and got put through to an automated call center? These things come together to create a hugely competitive value proposition, the linchpin of your brand.

But what can you do to leverage these experiences and grow the appeal of your brand without breaking the bank?

1 What is Your Brand?

It's important to understand that your brand is much more than your logo, merchandising or products. It is all the experiences customers have with your business, including the visual elements of your business. It also includes what you do, how you do it, customer interactions, and your marketing. All of these elements help establish the trust and credibility of your business.

2 Stand Out

If your brand is going to be strong, you need to be able to pinpoint what makes you different from competitors. A SCORE mentor, **sba.gov/score**, can help you use competitive differentiators to build your business brand. Don't forget to weave your differentiators into your company's messaging and marketing.

3 Have Great Products and Services

Word of mouth is often a small business's greatest lead generator, so having great products and services that people talk about is a critical part of your brand. Even the most outgoing and charming small business owner is not going to succeed in bringing customers back unless the product or service they provide delivers and exceeds expectations. Don't lose sight of your product, keep refining it, testing new offerings, and making sure you always put product first.

4 Make Sure Your Customers Know the Face Behind the Product

One of the biggest reasons that small businesses fail is because of the persistent absence of the business owner. You only need to look at a few episodes of business makeover TV shows to witness what can go wrong when a business is left to run itself. Without an actively engaged owner, employees lose motivation and structure, which can quickly lead to sloppy service, a poor product, and customer churn. Yes, your business needs to be able to function without your constant presence, but it's important to strike a balance. Find ways to make sure your customers know you and connect with the face behind the business. Businesses thrive when the energy of the owner is present.

5 Get Your Name and Logo Right

It's important to get this right the first time because changing your name and logo later can be costly. Your logo and name should be easily recognizable and reflect the nature and tone of your business as well as appeal to your target market. I'm a dog owner, and two of my absolute favorite small businesses cater to pet owners: my local provider of dog walking services and a healthful pet food store. When I see their logos, it makes me feel good; I feel an affinity with them. That's what you need to shoot for.

6 Have a Distinct Voice

A great way to ensure your distinct brand message is delivered consistently across your business is to focus on how you and your employees interact and communicate with customers in person, on the phone, and on social media. Not sure what your "voice" should be? Look to other brands. What do they do that you'd like to emulate? How do they greet and interact with you? What is it they do that makes you feel good about doing business with them?

7 Build Community Around What you Do

A successful brand is one trusted and respected by customers. Building a strong community online and off can help you achieve this. You don't have to spend a lot of money to do this. In fact, many successful brands concentrate almost exclusively in online and offline community building. Offline participation in community activities, such as local events, fundraisers, and charities, as well as hosting your own events, such as workshops or loyal customer events, can all help you build community and extend the trust your brand has earned.

8 Be an Advocate for Your Business—Not Just a Salesman

You don't have to be the greatest salesman to succeed in business. Selling takes many forms, and being a brand advocate gels them. For example, many small business owners strive to be the number one salesman, the number one cheerleader, and the number one fan of their own business. If you are passionate about your business, be an advocate for it. Invite people in!

9 Be Reliable

Letting your customers down by failing to live up to your own promises and brand standards can be particularly harmful for small businesses that depend heavily on referrals. The foundation of brand loyalty lies in great service; a happy customer is a loyal customer. Make sure you aren't making promises that you can't keep, whether you run a pizza business and pledge to deliver within 30 minutes, or you're a painting contractor who promises to start a job on a Monday at 9 a.m. sharp. Stand by your promises.

10 Have a Value Proposition

Value, not to be mistaken with price, can help define your brand and differentiate you from the competition. This goes back to my second point about standing out. What niche do you serve? What do you do well in that niche that makes you different from everyone else? What are the emotional benefits of what you do? The answers to these questions will help define what your value is to your customers. It could be your great customer service, product quality, innovation, or a combination of these.

WRITTEN BY **Caron Beesley**, CONTRIBUTOR

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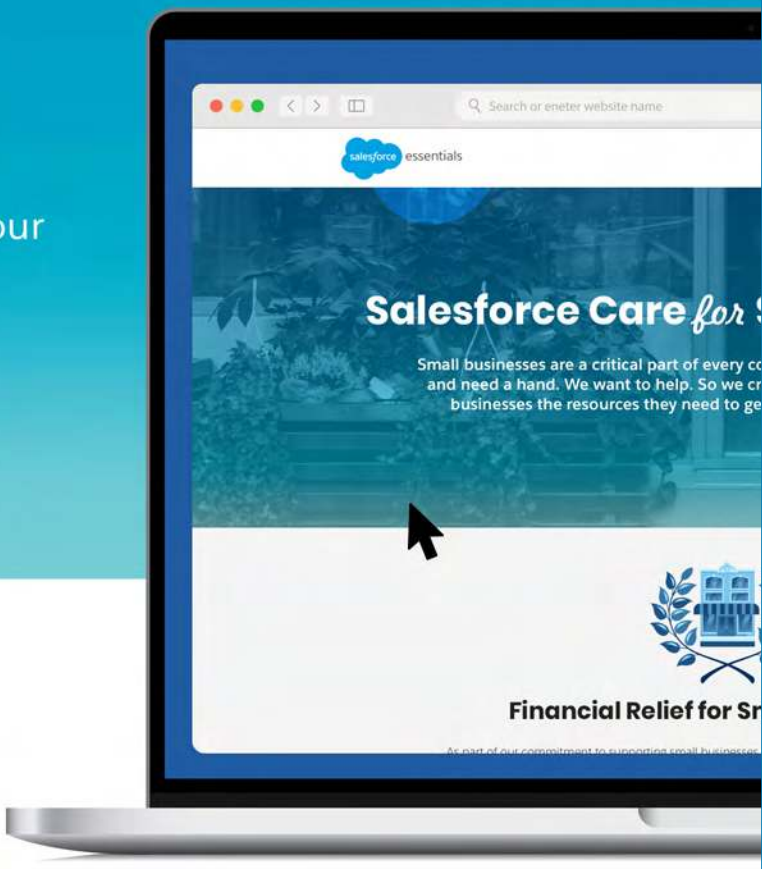


SALESFORCE CARE

*New customers only. Restrictions apply.

John and Jan Tatham Shelley Bramstedt

CO-OWNERS, PIP PRINTING OF ALASKA INC.

Anchorage, AK

“The SBA helped finance our expansion.”

John and Jan Tatham and Shelley Bramste
Co-owners, PIP Printing of Alaska Inc.

Shelley Bramstedt, left, John and Jan Tatham

COURTESY OF PIP PRINTING OF ALASKA INC.

- **The Challenge** Sisters Jan Tatham and Shelley Bramstedt together with Jan’s husband, John Tatham, wanted to grow their family-owned business in a historically underused business zone in Anchorage. Even though the business has recorded continuous profit since opening in 1979, they still couldn’t find traditional financing to expand their 1,400-square-foot space. Lenders were hesitant to show confidence in a printing business located in a distressed neighborhood.

- **The Solution** Jan, Shelley, and John turned to the SBA to help finance their expansion so that they could create more jobs and uplift their local economy. The SBA guarantees loans made by lending institutions to small businesses that would not otherwise be able to obtain financing. The business owners qualified for a $100,000 SBA-backed 7(a) loan to add a second building, which they eventually expanded to three structures totaling 19,000 square feet.

- **The Benefit** PIP Printing grosses nearly $7 million in annual sales and employs over 40. The family advocates for employing untapped talent, such as formerly incarcerated men and women who are now advancing their skills and earning healthcare and retirement benefits. Not only are Jan, Shelley, and John providing employment opportunity, they’re also meeting hiring needs critical to their own small business success.

FUNDING PROGRAMS

Financing Your Small Business

How We Did It

Crafting a Business

SBA-backed financing helped Superstition Meadery expand into a multimillion dollar enterprise.

WRITTEN BY **Becky Bosshart**

COURTESY OF SUPERSTITION MEADERY

Jennifer and Jeff Herbert's home-based brewing has expanded into a global, multimillion dollar enterprise thanks to SBA assistance. Using Arizona honey and ingredients they've sourced from around the world (such as Tahitian vanilla and Moroccan saffron), the Herberts are selling nearly 30,000 gallons annually of their honey-based fermented beverage. They operate a downtown Prescott, Arizona tasting room and state-of-the-art production facility, creating jobs and building a local craft industry. The Herberts, founding members of the American Mead Makers Association, have traveled around the world hosting pairing events and pouring at craft beverage festivals.

Challenge

The Herberts wanted to scale up their meadery while also staying true to their values of quality ingredients and craft process. It is often difficult for new entrepreneurs or unique concepts like a meadery to get traditional financing, even though they knew they had a great idea, the backing wasn't there to expand. They say that choosing to do something new breaks the mold, which can be uncomfortable for traditional lenders.

Solution

Thanks to guidance from an SBA Resource Partner, the Small Business Development Center at Yavapai Community College, Jennifer and Jeff learned about financing that worked for them. The SBA guarantees loans made by lending institutions to small business that would not otherwise be able to obtain financing. Their small business qualified for two SBA-backed loans totaling more than $600,000. The Herberts' first SBA-backed loan allowed them to acquire commercial property to design and build their mead production facility. Their second SBA-backed loan provided the funding for professional brewing equipment to complete their 7,450-square-foot production space. The Herberts recently purchased a historic building in downtown Phoenix, Arizona to open a mead-pairing restaurant.

Benefit

The Herberts started with two employees and now have over 20 producing 29,000 gallons this year. From a homegrown setup, Jennifer and Jeff are now charting revenue in excess of $2.6 million and distributing to 37 states, across Europe and Southeast Asia. They have plans for another expansion, including a shipping warehouse to manage their online retail and wholesale orders.

COURTESY OF SUPERSTITION MEADERY

Jeff & Jennifer Herbert, owners of Superstition Meadery, completed their 7,450-square-foot production space and opened a tasting room in Prescott, AZ with the assistance of SBA-backed financing. See their story on YouTube by searching for the 2019 National Small Business Persons of the Year.

5 Tips for Success

Get guidance.
Develop a working relationship with an SBA Resource Partner (see page 10) to help you find the funding that works best for you.

Define your lending needs.
Determine if a loan is right for you. Is this the right time? How much do you need? What are you going to use it for?

Talk to multiple lenders.
See who best matches you and your business. Has the lender successfully worked with other businesses in your industry?

Check all options.
Consult with your lender to see if you're eligible for SBA financing programs, determined by your industry & experience; collateral; credit score; and the relationship & transparency you develop with the lending agent.

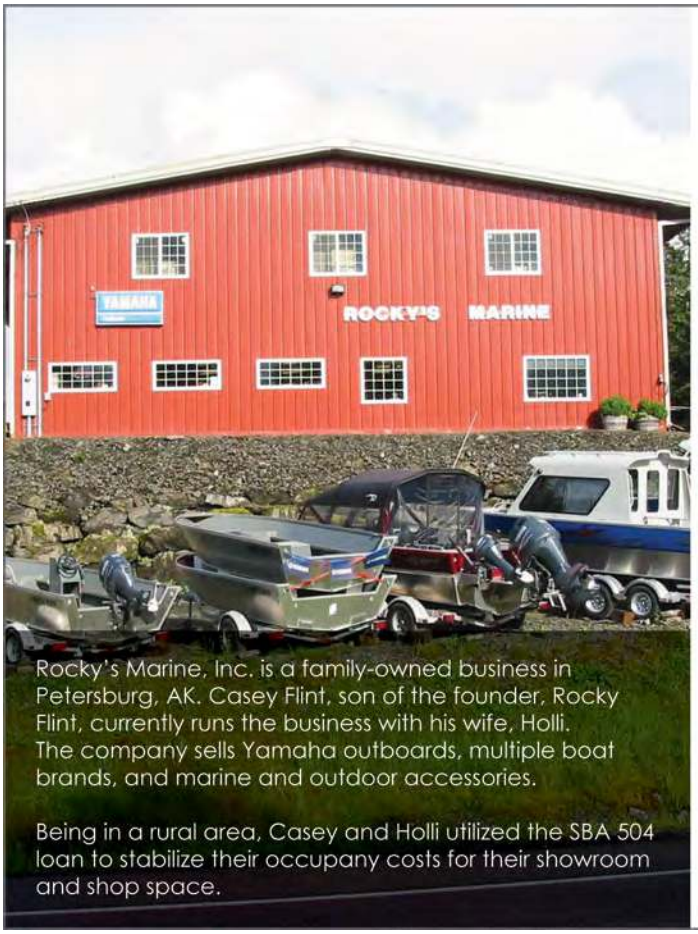
Be ready for the ups and downs.
Your entrepreneurial endeavor will be a roller coaster ride filled with challenges and successes. The path is all consuming so make sure that you love what you do. Passion is the price of admission.

Lender Match

Find a lender interested in working with you at sba.gov/lendermatch. This matching tool connects entrepreneurs with SBA Lenders in your area.

SBA-backed Loans

help small business owners and entrepreneurs who are creditworthy but don't qualify for conventional financing. If you cannot obtain a business loan with reasonable rates and terms, contact your local SBA Lender to see if you are eligible for SBA programs. The SBA works with participating lenders to reduce their risk, increasing the likelihood your loan will be approved with the terms that work best for you. The guarantee is conditional on the lender following SBA program requirements. Just like with any other loan, you make your loan payments directly to your lender in accordance with your terms.



Rocky's Marine, Inc. is a family-owned business in Petersburg, AK. Casey Flint, son of the founder, Rocky Flint, currently runs the business with his wife, Holli. The company sells Yamaha outboards, multiple boat brands, and marine and outdoor accessories.

Being in a rural area, Casey and Holli utilized the SBA 504 loan to stabilize their occupany costs for their showroom and shop space.

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EVERGREEN BUSINESS CAPITAL COMMUNITY FINANCE

Your Partner for Small Business Financing Solutions

For nearly 40 years, entrepreneurs throughout the Pacific Northwest have relied upon our partnerships with local lenders to fulfill their dreams and help their small business revitalize their communities. Through a combination of low rates and the popular 25-year SBA 504 financing option, our goal is to strengthen existing relationships and forge new partnerships to continue funding small business growth throughout the region.

www.evergreen504.com
www.ebccf.org
(800) 878-6613
Alaska · Washington · Oregon · Idaho

SBA Lenders

These active participating SBA Lenders serve all Alaska. Visit the lender's website for more bank locations.

ANCHORAGE

Alaska Growth Capital Bidco Inc.
(907) 339-6776 or (907) 339-6778
alaskagrowth.com

Alaska USA Federal Credit Union
(907) 786-2324
alaskausa.org

Denali Federal Credit Union
(907) 257-7240
denalifcu.org

First National Bank Alaska
(907) 777-5650
fnbalaska.com

KeyBank
(425) 208-1098
key.com

National Cooperative Bank
(907) 561-5799
ncb.coop

Northrim Bank
(907) 261-8771
northrim.com

Wells Fargo Bank
(907) 787-9016 or (971) 930-7402
wellsfargo.com

FAIRBANKS

Alaska USA Federal Credit Union
(907) 786-2324
alaskausa.org

Denali Federal Credit Union
(907) 257-7240
denalifcu.org

Denali State Bank
(907) 458-4228 or (907)378-6777
denalistatebank.com

First National Bank Alaska
(907) 777-5650
fnbalaska.com

KeyBank
(425) 208-1098
key.com

Mt. Mckinley Mutual Savings Bank
(907) 452-1751 or (907) 452-1751
mtmckinleybank.com

Northrim Bank
(907) 455-1101 or (907)455-1105
northrim.com

Spirit of AK Federal Credit Union
(800) 478-1949 or (907) 378-7614
spirtofak.com

Wells Fargo Bank
(907) 787-9016 or (971) 930-7402
wellsfargo.com

JUNEAU

Alaska USA Federal Credit Union
(907) 786-2324
alaskausa.org

Denali Federal Credit Union
(907) 257-7240
denalifcu.org

First Bank
(907) 907-228-4416 or (800) 478-6101
firstbankak.com

First National Bank Alaska
(907) 777-5650
fnbalaska.com

KeyBank
(425) 208-1098
key.com

Northrim Bank
(907) 790-5143 or (800)478-2265
northrim.com

Wells Fargo Bank
(907) 787-9016 or (971) 930-7402
wellsfargo.com

KENAI PENINSULA

Alaska USA Federal Credit Union
(907) 786-2324
alaskausa.org

Denali Federal Credit Union
(907) 257-7240
denalifcu.org

First National Bank Alaska
(907) 777-5650
fnbalaska.com

KeyBank
(425) 208-1098
key.com

Wells Fargo Bank
(907) 787-9016 or (971) 930-7402
wellsfargo.com

KETCHIKAN

Alaska USA Federal Credit Union
(907) 786-2324
alaskausa.org

First Bank
(907) 907-228-4416 or (800) 478-6101
firstbankak.com

First National Bank Alaska
(907) 777-5650
fnbalaska.com

KeyBank
(425) 208-1098
key.com

Northrim Bank
(907) 228-4655
northrim.com

Tongass Federal Credit Union
(907) 225-9063
tongassfcu.com

Wells Fargo Bank
(907) 787-9016 or (971) 930-7402
wellsfargo.com

KODIAK ISLAND

Alaska USA Federal Credit Union
(907) 786-2324
alaskausa.org

First National Bank Alaska
(907) 777-5650
fnbalaska.com

KeyBank
(425) 208-1098
key.com

Wells Fargo Bank
(907) 787-9016 or (971) 930-7402
wellsfargo.com

MATANUSKA SUSITNA

Alaska USA Federal Credit Union
(907) 786-2324
alaskausa.org

Denali Federal Credit Union
(907) 257-7240
denalifcu.org

First National Bank Alaska
(907) 777-5650
fnbalaska.com

KeyBank
(425) 208-1098
key.com

Matanuska Valley Federal Credit Union
(907) 761-4713
mvfcu.coop

Northrim Bank
(907) 261-8771
northrim.com

Wells Fargo Bank
(907) 787-9016 or (971) 930-7402
wellsfargo.com

SITKA

Alaska USA Federal Credit Union
(907) 786-2324
alaskausa.org

ALPS Federal Credit Union
(907) 747-6261
alpsfcu.org

First Bank
(907) 907-228-4416 or (800) 478-6101
firstbankak.com

First National Bank Alaska
(907) 777-5650
fnbalaska.com

Northrim Bank
(907) 261-8771
northrim.com

Wells Fargo Bank
(907) 787-9016 or (971) 930-7402
wellsfargo.com

SKAGWAY

Wells Fargo Bank
(907) 787-9016 or (971) 930-7402
wellsfargo.com

DILLINGHAM

Wells Fargo Bank
(907) 787-9016 or (971) 930-7402
wellsfargo.com

VALDEZ/CORDOVA

First National Bank Alaska
(907) 777-5650
fnbalaska.com

Wells Fargo Bank
(907) 787-9016 or (971) 930-7402
wellsfargo.com

OUT OF STATE LENDERS

Banner Bank
(509) 527-3636
bannerbank.com

Celtic Bank Corp.
(800) 854-7848 or (801) 363-6500
celticbank.com

First Home Bank
(727) 685-2083
firsthomebank.com

Live Oak Banking Co.
(541) 388-8453 or (541) 408-7851
liveoakbank.com

Native American Bank
(303) 988-2727 x128, (720) 402-6784 or (303) 988-2727 x115
nabna.com

Newtek Small Business Lending
(212) 273-8213
newtekone.com

SeaCoast Commerce Bank
(541) 521-7881
sccombank.com

United Midwest Savings Bank
(850) 249-6886 or (850) 527-5310
umwsb.com

Participating Certified Development Company

Evergreen Business Capital
(907) 982-5045 or (800) 878-6613
evergreen504.com

Community Advantage Lender

Evergreen Business Capital
(907) 982-5045 or (800) 878-6613
evergreen504.com

Export Assistance Lenders

Alaska Growth Capital Bidco Inc.
(907) 339-6776 or (907) 339-6778
alaskagrowth.com

First National Bank Alaska
(907) 777-5650
fnbalaska.com

Northrim Bank
(907) 261-8771
northrim.biz

United Midwest Savings Bank
(850) 249-6886 or (850) 527-5310
umwsb.com

Need Financing?

Visit your local SBA office or lender to learn about these funding options.

The 7(a) Loan, the SBA's Largest Financing Program

If you cannot get conventional financing and you meet the eligibility requirements, you can use a 7(a) loan to buy real estate, equipment, or inventory for your small business. It may also be used for working capital, to refinance business debt or purchase a small business.

MAX LOAN AMOUNT: $5 million

INTEREST RATE: generally prime + a reasonable rate capped at 2.75%

TERMS: loan term varies according to the purpose of the loan, generally up to 25 years for real estate, 10 years for other fixed assets and working capital

GUARANTEE: 50 to 90%

CAPLines

Meet your revolving capital needs with lines of credit. CAPLines can be used for contract financing, seasonal lines of credit, builders line of credit, or for general working capital lines.

SBA Express Loan

Featuring a simplified process, these loans are delivered by experienced lenders who are authorized to make the credit decision for the SBA. These can be term loans or revolving lines of credit.

MAX LOAN AMOUNT: $350,000

INTEREST RATE: for loans less than $50,000, prime + 6.5%; for loans of $50,000 and greater, prime + 4.75%

TERMS: loan term varies according to the purpose of the loan, generally up to 25 years for real estate and 10 years for other fixed assets and working capital

GUARANTEE: 50%

Community Advantage

A financing program for women, veterans, low-income borrowers, and minority entrepreneurs just starting up or in business for a few years. Receive free business counseling as you work with a community-based financial institution.

INTEREST RATE: prime + 6%

TERMS: up to 25 years for real estate, 10 years for equipment and working capital

GUARANTEE: 75 to 90%

Microloans

Eligible businesses can startup and grow with working capital or funds for supplies, equipment, furniture and fixtures. Borrow from $500 to $50,000 and access free business counseling from microlenders.

INTEREST RATE: loans less than $10,000, lender cost + 8.5%; loans $10,000 and greater, lender cost + 7.75%

TERMS: lender negotiated, no early payoff penalty

504 Certified Development Company Loan

If you do not qualify for traditional financing, but would like to purchase or renovate real estate or buy heavy equipment for your business, ask about the 504 loan. It provides competitive fixed-rate mortgage financing through a lender and a Certified Development Company.

MAX LOAN AMOUNT (UP TO 40% OF THE TOTAL PROJECT): up to $5 million; $5.5 million for manufacturing or energy public policy projects

INTEREST RATE: below market fixed rates for 10, 20 or 25 year terms

TERMS: 20 or 25 years for real estate or long-term equipment, 10 years for general machinery and equipment

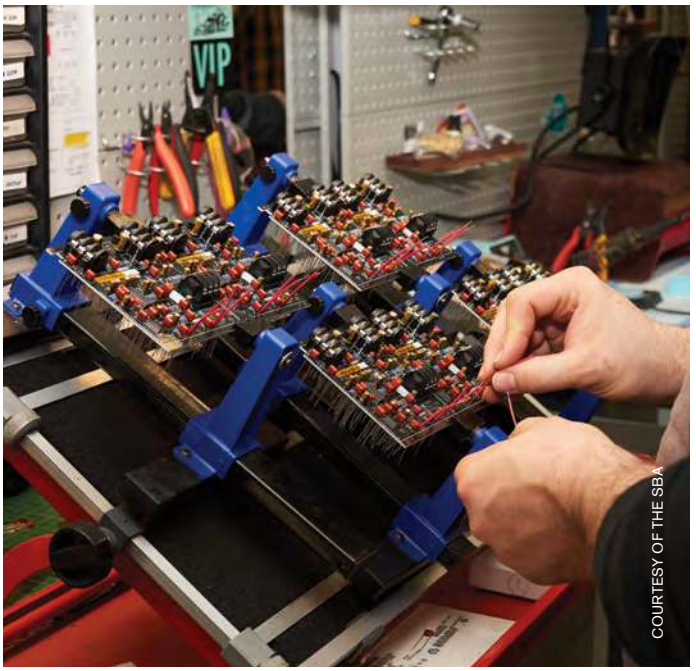
GUARANTEE: the lender provides a senior loan for 50% of the project cost (with no SBA guarantee); the CDC finances up to 40% in a junior lien position (supported by the SBA guarantee)

SPECIAL CONDITION: a minimum borrower contribution, or down payment, is required, amounts vary by project but are usually 10%

Go Global with International Trade

Businesses that export are more resilient—they are less dependent on any one market. Exporting also stabilizes sales for those who make seasonal products.

COURTESY OF THE SBA



COURTESY OF THE SBA

Expand your Market

Small businesses can enter and excel in the international marketplace using State Trade Expansion Program grants and training. Visit **sba.gov/internationaltrade** to find out if your state is participating.
You can:

- learn how to export
- participate in foreign trade missions and trade shows
- obtain services to support foreign market entry
- translate websites to attract foreign buyers
- design international marketing products or campaigns

Financing for International Growth

Having trouble securing capital to meet your small business exporting needs? Use SBA international trade programs to cover short or long-term costs necessary to sell goods or services abroad. Loan proceeds can be used for working capital to finance foreign sales or for fixed assets, helping you better compete globally. You can apply for lines of credit prior to finalizing an export sale or contract, so adequate financing is in place by the time you win your contract. If you've been in business for at least a year, ask your area SBA regional finance manager about the Export Working Capital program. The International Trade Loan program also helps exporters who have been adversely affected by foreign importing competition, helping you better compete globally.
Max loan amount: $5 million
Interest rate: for Export Working Capital, the rate is negotiated between borrower and lender. For the International Trade Loan, it also cannot exceed prime + 2.75% for loan amounts over $50,000 and maturity of seven years or more
Terms: For Export Working Capital, typically one year, cannot exceed three years. For International Trade Loans, up to 25 years for real estate, up to 10 years for equipment
Guarantee: up to 90%

Export Express uses a streamlined process that expedites the SBA guarantee—what small businesses need most when preparing to export or ramping up international trade on a fast timeline.
Max loan amount: $500,000
Interest rate: typically not to exceed prime + 6.5%
Terms: up to 25 years for real estate, up to 10 years for equipment, up to seven years for lines of credit
Guarantee: up to 90%
Approval time: 36 hours or less

Expert Advice on Exporting

Find an SBA professional in one of the 21 U.S. Export Assistance Centers, **sba.gov/tools/local-assistance/eac**, located in most major metro areas. The centers are also staffed by the U.S. Department of Commerce and, in some locations, the Export-Import Bank of the United States and other public and private organizations. Visit your local Small Business Development Center (see page 10) for exporting assistance from professional business counselors.

COURTESY OF THE SBA

▲HOW THE SBA HELPED US SUCCEED

Small businesses that qualify for the SBA State Trade Expansion Program use grant proceeds to bolster their international market presence, which EarthQuaker Devices has done in a seismic way. A manufacturer of guitar special effects pedals in Akron, OH, EarthQuaker has built an international social media fanbase delivering content in seven languages, generating millions of website page views.

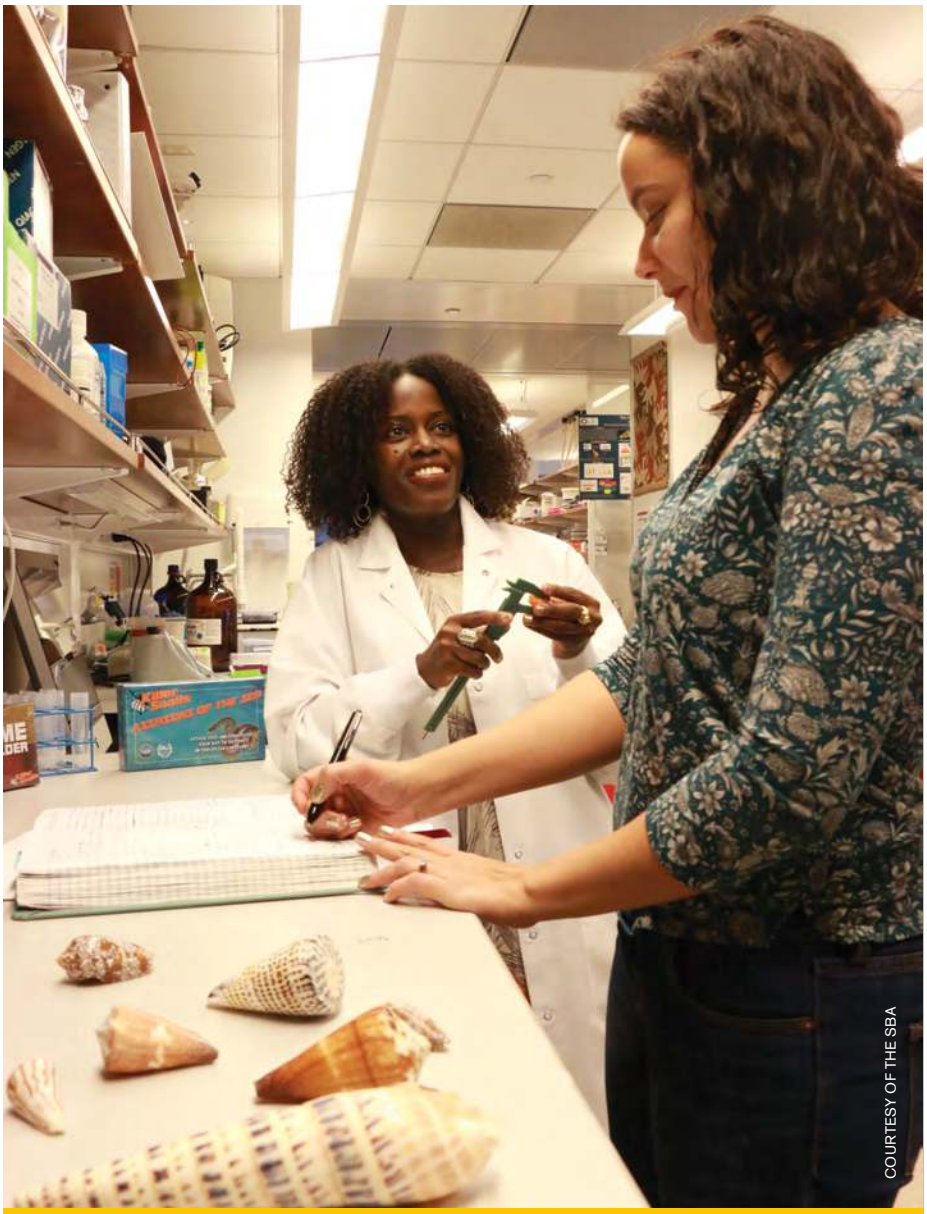
EarthQuaker owners Julie Robbins & Jamie Stillman developed their global marketing strategy and multilingual promo materials with the SBA State Trade Expansion Program. The couple also received global marketing counseling and research assistance from the Ohio Small Business Development Center Export Assistance Network.

Help with Trade Barriers

If you need assistance with international trade regulations, the SBA can be your advocate in foreign markets. Call toll free (855) 722-4877 or email your contact information and trade issue to international@sba.gov.

R&D Opportunities for High Growth Startups

Engaged in high-risk research and development? Compete for funding to develop your cutting-edge technology.



COURTESY OF THE SBA

▲HOW THE SBA HELPED US SUCCEED

Killer Snails brings science out of the laboratory and into classrooms and living rooms with award-winning educational games, such as BioDive, Assassins of the Sea, and Biome Builder. The Brooklyn, NY-based business gained access to startup funding thanks to the Small Business Innovation Research seed funding program. Dr. Mandë Holford, left, Jessica Ochoa Hendrix, right, and Dr. Lindsay Portnoy envisioned how venomous marine snail research could be used in extended reality and digital learning to engage students and meet educators' needs. The business has raised more than $1.2 million to support a team of full-time employees. Killer Snails's tabletop, digital, augmented and virtual reality games have won national and international awards.

Do you work in one of these areas?

- advanced materials
- agTech
- artificial intelligence
- biomedical
- cybersecurity
- energy
- first response
- national security
- space exploration

The Small Business Innovation Research and the Small Business Technology Transfer programs, also called America's Seed Fund, provide more than $3.5 billion in early stage capital through a competitive awards process.

How it works

Every year, participating federal agencies announce topical areas that address their R&D needs. Eligible businesses submit proposals to win either grants or contracts.

There are three phases:

- The proof-of-concept stage typically lasts from 6-12 months, and ranges from $100,000-$225,000.
- The full R&D period lasts about 24 months and typically provides $600,000-$1.5 million.
- The commercialization stage is when you seek public or private funds for your venture.

How your startup benefits

The funding agency does not take an equity position or ownership of your business. The federal government also protects data rights and the ability to win sole-source phase III contracts.

Participating agencies:

- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Commerce

- National Institute of Standards and Technology
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

- Department of Defense
- Department of Education
- Department of Energy
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of Transportation
- Environmental Protection Agency
- NASA
- National Science Foundation

Visit **sbir.gov** to find funding opportunities and helpful program tutorials, as well as past award winners, such as Qualcomm, iRobot, Illumina, and Symantec.

SBIR Road Tour

Visit **sbirroadtour.com** to learn about national events connecting entrepreneurs working on advanced tech to the country's largest source of early stage funding. Each SBIR Road Tour stop introduces participating federal agency program managers, who oversee over 5,000 new awards annually.

Investment Capital

Looking for investors? For mature, profitable businesses with sufficient cash flow to pay interest, a Small Business Investment Company can help scale up your small business.

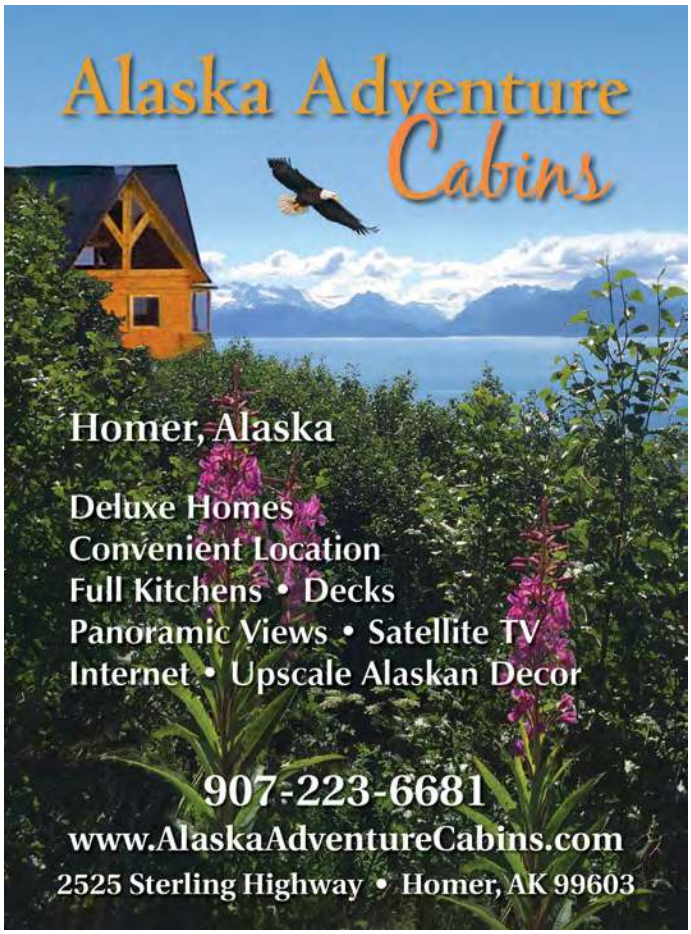
How an SBIC works

Investment companies with financing expertise in certain industry sectors receive SBA-guaranteed loans, which means the federal government is responsible in case of default. These investment companies then use the SBA-guaranteed capital and private funds to invest in qualifying small businesses. Each SBIC has its own investment profile in terms of targeted industry, geography, company maturity, the types and size of financing they provide.

To be eligible

The majority of your employees and assets must be within the United States. Some ineligible small businesses and activities include relenders, real estate, project financing, and foreign investment.

Visit **sba.gov** and click on Funding Program and then Investment Capital.



COURTESY OF THE SBA

How I Did It

Smiling After the Storm

With SBA assistance, Stephanie Vitori rebuilt her Miami Beach, FL restaurant after Hurricane Irma.

WRITTEN BY **JESS WALKER**

If you ask Stephanie Vitori, the person who coined the term "bittersweet" must have run a business. In the 15 years Stephanie has owned Cheeseburger Baby, the Florida burger joint has endured recessions, multiple hurricanes, and competition from corporate franchises. She has grown along with Cheeseburger Baby, changing with each stage of the business lifecycle.

Vitori worked as a delivery driver before purchasing the business in 2004. Since then, she's expanded by purchasing two food trucks. She runs an open kitchen, which means customers can watch their 100% Angus beef cheeseburgers sizzle on the flat-top grill. Burgers are kept classic, no extra frills. "People feel at home," Stephanie says. "You're not just another table somebody has to serve." Here, everybody feels like somebody, she says. So many people love a good cheeseburger, which is why all kinds of people are attracted to her restaurant. Cheeseburger Baby's handcrafted patties have been featured on the Food Network and consumed by celebrities such as

Jay-Z and Kanye West. Stephanie has met famous chefs "all through a cheeseburger." But just as special to her is the Vietnamese couple who came in one day, speaking little English. They were eager to meet Stephanie and show her a napkin with "Cheeseburger Baby" scrawled on it. On the other side of the world, a friend had told them to come, so they did. It all just goes to show you, Stephanie says, people come together for a great cheeseburger.

Challenge

Despite these sweet moments, there have also been bitter ones. Hurricane Irma struck in 2017, and Cheeseburger Baby lost equipment and food supplies. Thirty percent of sales blew away with the wind. "It was a zombie zone in South Beach. People were scared to come since they thought everything was destroyed," Stephanie says. "It was the roughest road I've ever traveled."

Solution

An SBA disaster assistance loan aided Cheeseburger Baby's recovery. The SBA provides direct low-interest loans to businesses of all sizes, nonprofits, homeowners, and renters to repair damage or replace property not covered by insurance or other forms of assistance. SBA disaster assistance loans can also be used to rebuild stronger, protecting your home or business against future damage caused by a disaster. The SBA also introduced Stephanie to her local

When you're affected by a disaster the SBA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and other organizations work together to provide assistance. Once immediate safety and security needs are met, the SBA helps get you and your community back to where you were before the disaster. Since low-interest SBA disaster assistance loans are government aid, creditworthiness and the ability to repay are taken into consideration before a loan is awarded.

What to do after a Disaster Declaration

After a disaster is declared by the President

Register with FEMA at **disasterassistance.gov** or call (800) 621-3362, TTY (800) 462-7585, or visit a Disaster Recovery Center. Locations can be found at **fema.gov/drc**. Businesses are automatically referred to the SBA. Most homeowners and renters will be referred by FEMA to the SBA to apply for disaster loan assistance. You must complete the SBA application to be considered for assistance. If the SBA cannot help you with a loan for all your needs, we will in most cases refer you back to FEMA. If you do not complete an SBA application, you may not be considered for assistance from other agencies.

Express Bridge Loan Pilot Program

Businesses affected by a Presidential disaster declaration are eligible to receive expedited financing through an SBA Express lender. These funds may be used for disaster-related purposes while the business waits for long-term financing through the SBA's direct disaster loan program.

Loan Amount: $25,000

Terms: up to seven years

Guarantee: 50%

After a disaster is declared by the SBA

Businesses of all sizes, nonprofits, homeowners, and renters are eligible to apply for an SBA disaster assistance loan. Visit a Business Recovery Center or Disaster Loan Outreach Center in your area or visit **disasterloan.sba.gov/ela** to apply for a loan. You can also call the SBA customer service center at (800) 659-2955, TTY (800) 877-8339, and ask for an application package. FEMA grant assistance for homeowners or renters is not available under an SBA declaration.

Information you need to get started:

- address of damaged residence or business and contact information
- insurance information, including type of insurance, policy numbers, and amount received
- household and/or business income
- description of disaster-caused damage and losses

COURTESY OF THE SBA

Small Business Development Center, which provided assistance with financing options and marketing. She continues to meet with SBDC advisers to remain competitive in an ever-changing economy.

During disasters, the responsibility falls on the owner's shoulders. But one lesson Stephanie has learned is the value in reaching out to others for assistance and counsel. While her brick-and-mortar restaurant was being rebuilt, she sold from a food truck. When the restaurant was operational again, she advertised that with spray paint on the plywood covering the broken windows. Stephanie and her wife, Gabrie Vitori, rebuilt Cheeseburger Baby by depending on each other and SBA assistance. See their story on YouTube by searching for the 2019 Phoenix Award for Small Business Disaster Recovery. "You've got to have resiliency. You've got to swallow your pride sometimes," Stephanie says. "But you also have to believe in your product."

Benefit

For Cheeseburger Baby, that product will continue satisfying the burger hankerings of locals, celebrities, and tourists alike. Vitori sees expansion in her future—she'd like to have a brick-and-mortar restaurant and food truck in each growing town in South Florida. "My whole life is this. I've always felt a love for business ownership, " Stephanie says. "That drive keeps you going."

The SBA provides direct low-interest loans to businesses of all sizes, nonprofits, homeowners, and renters to repair or replace damaged property not covered by insurance or other forms of assistance. SBA disaster assistance loans can also be used to rebuild stronger, protecting your home or business against future damage caused by a disaster. For information visit **sba.gov/disaster**.

Keep in mind

Since an SBA disaster assistance loan is a direct loan from the government, other organizations may reduce or not award you a grant if you have received an SBA loan or other assistance for your disaster loss. Be sure to check with the organization offering assistance to see how an SBA loan might affect your eligibility for their program. In general, recovery expenses covered by insurance, FEMA or other forms of assistance may reduce the amount provided by your SBA disaster assistance loan.

Get Ready

The Ready Business program, ready.gov/business, gives step-by-step guidance on how to prepare your business for a disaster. The series includes preparedness toolkits for earthquakes, hurricanes, inland flooding, power outages, and severe winds/tornadoes. Spanish materials are available.

U.S. Small Business Administration

Getting Back to Business:

Six essential preparedness steps for creating a continuity plan

The financial and emotional cost of rebuilding a business after a disaster can be overwhelming. With a business continuity plan in place, you can recover more quickly.Your plan also puts you in a better position to contribute to the economic recovery of your community.

Establish a communications plan

- Test your calling tree or communications list to reach employees to ensure they and their families are safe.

Protect your documents

- Keep copies of vital business documents in a digital format or in an accessible, protected off-site location.

Review insurance coverage

- Contact your insurance agent to find out if your coverage is right for your business; make sure you understand the policy limits and deductibles.
- Ask about business interruption insurance, which compensates you for lost income and covers operating expenses if your company has to temporarily shut down because of a disaster.

Establish a solid supply chain

- If your vendors and suppliers are local and the disaster is widespread, you will all be in the same situation—struggling to recover. Put a disaster response plan in place to get key supplies from companies outside your area. Create a contact list of contractors and vendors you plan to use.

Plan for an alternative location

- Identify several places to relocate your operations in case you must close your primary location for an extended time.
- Consider creative options for available office space, including sharing space and resources with other businesses.
- Allow employees to telecommute until your location reopens.

Practice your plan with your staff

Based on your location, assess your risk for every type of emergency.

- Discuss as a group how your plan would be affected by different types of disasters, such as an earthquake, tornado, flood, mudslide, or hurricane.

Surety Bonds

SBA-backed surety bonds help small businesses succeed.

Eligible small businesses in the construction, supply, and service sectors better compete for contracting and subcontracting jobs using SBA-backed surety bonds.

How you benefit

Surety bonds help small businesses receive the bonding assistance they need to win contracts by providing the customer with a guarantee the work will be completed.

How surety bonds work

Many contracts require surety bonds, which are offered by surety companies. The SBA guarantee provides an incentive for surety companies to work with small businesses that would normally not be able to obtain the bond.

Is the program right for you?

Small businesses that often come to the SBA for surety bonds:

- startups and firms in business less than three years
- businesses with credit issues or internally prepared financial statements
- those who cannot secure bonding through regular commercial channels
- subcontractors with a desire to establish their own bonding as a prime contractor
- those wishing to increase their current bonding limits

COURTESY OF AZTEC CONTRACTORS

▲ HOW THE SBA HELPED ME SUCCEED

With SBA-backed surety bonds, Frank Spencer III has been able to better compete for commercial and government contracts. Aztec Contractors of El Paso, TX received the bonding support it needed to compete for construction contracts with the General Services Administration, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Mission and Installation Contracting Command. Frank acquired Aztec in 2006 with no capital and only two employees. Now he employs 25 full time and provides internship opportunities. Sales have grown to about $30 million annually. Aztec now qualifies for bonding in the standard surety market without SBA support.

For all contracts and subcontracts up to $6.5 million, the SBA guarantees bid, payment, performance, and ancillary bonds issued by surety companies. For federal contracts up to $10 million, the SBA makes a guarantee if it's in the best interest of the government.

The SBA reimburses surety companies in case of default 90% of losses sustained for veteran & service-disabled veteran, minority, 8(a), and HUBZone-certified small businesses, and all projects up to $100,000. The SBA reimburses 80% for all other small businesses.

Need a surety bond guarantee fast?

For contracts under $400,000, the process is streamlined using the SBA QuickApp program.

- easy application
- no need to submit financials to the SBA
- online applications submitted to SBA authorized agents approved within hours

Ready to start?

The SBA partners with 40 surety companies and hundreds of bonding agents. Find authorized agents at sba.gov/osg. Do you want to discuss the advantages of the SBA Surety Bond Guarantee program? Contact a bonding specialist:

Tamara E. Murray
Denver, CO
(303) 927-3479

Jennifer C. Bledsoe
Washington, DC
(202) 205-6153

Office of Surety Guarantees
(202) 205-6540

CONTRACTING

Doing Business with the Government

COURTESY OF THE SBA

How I Did It

Taking the Helm

Jennifer Rahn steers Admiral Engineering and Manufacturing to success as a government subcontractor.

WRITTEN BY MICAELA MORRISSETTE

COURTESY OF THE SBA

Jennifer Rahn was first hired as an office assistant at Phoenix, Arizona-based Admiral Engineering and Manufacturing Co. Rising to the top in a sector dominated by men, Rahn's career sounds a lot like the classic American success story. She got there with the help of a mentor and business growth earned as a federal government subcontractor.

For 16 years, Rahn worked side-by-side with then-owner David Schlosser, who became her mentor. Rahn says she learned "everything it takes to run a machine shop. I naturally just picked it up and wanted it."

The learning curve was steep—Admiral specializes in complex machined parts for industries including aerospace and communications—and Schlosser expected as much as he gave. "When I did something wrong, he told me, and I didn't do that again," Rahn said, laughing.

One of their largest clients, aerospace and defense company L3 Technologies, nominated Admiral for the SBA Subcontractor of the Year award. As a subcontractor for L3 Technologies, Rahn said she gets great satisfaction from knowing soldiers are able to communicate with their leaders because of parts her company has made.

When Schlosser decided to retire, he asked Rahn to purchase Admiral.

"He did not want to sell to a corporation that would bring in their own people or end up foreclosing," Rahn says. "Then all your hard work is gone. I agreed because it was everything I had spent my life working on, too."

In September 2017, she took over as owner and president. Ownership transition poses a unique set of challenges. Rahn wanted to maintain relationships with her existing clients, which include major government contractors. She's grateful prime contractors have incentive to subcontract with small business, and that helps businesses like Admiral.

Rahn has plans to grow, but not in the typical ways. She's investing in replacing equipment, enhancing efficiency and productivity while leading Admiral into new arenas like 3D printing. Because of the stability provided by being a government subcontractor, she's able to do all of this.

5 Tips for Success

Find a mentor.
I had a great mentor in my company, and I reached for opportunity when it was in front of me.

Always move forward.
The SBA has educational resources to improve your business know-how. To learn more about government contracting and SBA certification programs, call your local SBA district office or procurement center representative.

Compete smart.
See if your company can use the SBA Subcontracting Network database, **https://eweb1.sba.gov/subnet/client/dsp_Landing.cfm**. SubNet connects businesses with subcontractors & small businesses with contract opportunities.

Know your industry.
I see everything; I have my hands in everything. I don't want to expand to where I can't do that anymore.

Build a team.
Everybody feels like this is our work family. My employees are as big a part of my company as I am, so I make sure they know that.

How to do business with the government

1. Identify your product or service number at **naics.com**.

2. Search **https://beta.sam.gov** to see if any federal agencies are looking for your product or service.

3. Attend an SBA district office workshop on contracting. Visit **sba.gov/localassistance** to find your local office.

4. Talk to a local Small Business Development Center counselor (see page 8) or visit a Procurement Technical Assistance Program adviser. Find your closest center at **aptac-us.org**.

5. Obtain a free DUNS number at **fedgov.dnb.com/webform**.

6. Register with the System for Award Management (**sam.gov**) to start doing business with the government.

7. Are you eligible for SBA certification programs? Read more about the 8(a), woman-owned small business, and HUBZone programs. Find out if you are eligible and upload all required documents to **certify.sba.gov**. Submit an offer at **beta.sam.gov** on a contract that fits your business.

Government Contracting

Is it right for you? Government contracting can be a valuable tool to grow your small business, but it isn't for everyone. Complete the following readiness assessment to help you decide whether your company can successfully compete for government contracts.

1

Does the government buy the product or service that you sell?

- ✓ Continue to question 2.
- X Government contracting may not be for you at this time.
- ? Start with your local SBA district office. If you can't identify at least three federal agencies that might buy what you sell, contracting might not be right for you.

2

Are you capable of fulfilling a government contract (e.g., time, staffing, and materials)?

- ✓ Continue to question 3.
- ? Your local SBA district office can help you gauge ramp-up time and other factors that contribute to government contracting success.

3

Confirm your answer to all of the following:

- Is the majority owner(s) a U.S. citizen?
- Does your company have a place of business in the U.S.?
- Is your business organized for profit?
- Does your business generate revenue?

- ✓ Continue to question 4.
- X These are requirements for participation in government contracting programs.

4

Are you credit worthy?

- ✓ Continue to question 5.
- X Visit an SBA Resource Partner for tips on repairing your credit.
- ? Talk to an SBA Lender about how to build credit.

5

Do you have an accounting system that produces financial statements, such as profit and loss statements, balance sheets, and cash flow projections?

- ✓ Continue to question 6.
- X Before you get into government contracting, make sure your accounting system is compatible with the government's requirements.

6

Do you have cash on hand to purchase working inventory, if needed?

- ✓ Continue to question 7.
- X Talk to an SBA Lender about getting a line of credit or a loan to do business with the government.

7

Do you already have federal/state/local government contracting experience?

- ✓ Continue to question 8.
- X If you don't yet have contracting experience, you won't reap the full benefit of opportunities like the 8(a) Business Development Program. You can participate in the 8(a) program once, so make sure it's the right time for you.

8

Do you know where to find contracting opportunities?

- ✓ Continue to question 9.
- X Ask an SBA business opportunity specialist for help.

9

Make sure you have:

- a DUNS number
- the NAICS codes and size standards for your industry
- SAM registration

- ✓ Continue below.
- X This is a requirement for participation in some government contracting programs.

It sounds like you may be a good fit for government contracting!
Visit your local SBA district office or **sba.gov/contracting** for more information.

SBA Certification Programs

Your business could earn profit and gain valuable work experience by providing goods or services to the government.

COURTESY OF THE SUNDANCE CONSULTING

◀ HOW THE SBA HELPED ME SUCCEED

September Myres knew that becoming a government contractor would empower herself and other native peoples, while also growing her small business to the next level. She sought business development assistance from the SBA, qualifying for the SBA 8(a) Business Development Program, which helps small disadvantaged businesses compete in the federal marketplace. This program helped September strategically grow her company to become a competitive force in the environmental services industry. Sundance Consulting of Pocatello, ID has won contracts from the Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Forest Service. She has continually secured Department of Defense contracts to improve Native American lands adversely affected by past department activities. September often assists Native American tribes and Alaska Native villages with developing projects and community plans.

American Indians, Alaska Natives, and native Hawaiians seeking entreprenurial development training can start, grow, and expand their business with the help of the SBA, **sba.gov/naa**. The Office of Native American Affairs also consults with tribal governments prior to finalizing SBA policies affecting tribes.

Contracting certification programs are designed to help you better compete for and win federal contracts set aside for small businesses. Visit **sba.gov/contracting** to learn more about set-asides and whether one or more of these government certification programs is right for your business. To see if you are eligible and then certify as a woman-owned, HUBZone, 8(a), or All Small business, visit **certify.sba.gov**.

8(a) Business Development Program

If you're an entrepreneur who is socially or economically disadvantaged, you may be eligible to receive business training and government contracting assistance through the 8(a) Business Development Program, **sba.gov/8a**. It includes free business development education, training workshops, and match-making opportunities with federal buyers. Firms owned by Alaska Native Corporations, Indian tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, and Community Development Corporations are also eligible for 8(a) business development assistance.

To be eligible for the 8(a) program, your small business must:

- be owned and controlled by U.S. citizens who are socially and/or economically disadvantaged
- demonstrate at least a two-year track record and have potential for continued success
- have a net worth and adjusted gross income of less than $250,000 and assets under $4 million

Socially disadvantaged: those subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice or cultural bias without regard to their individual qualities because of their identity as members of certain groups. The following groups often fit this status: Black Americans, Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, Hispanic Americans, Asian Pacific Americans, and Subcontinent Asian Americans. A person who is not a member of one of these groups must establish that it is more likely than not that he or she has suffered social disadvantage.

Economically disadvantaged: those whose ability to compete in the marketplace has been impaired because they have not had as much capital and credit opportunities compared to others in the same or similar line of business.

The benefits of the 8(a) program:

- You are assigned an SBA professional to help coordinate business development assistance.
- You could be awarded an 8(a) sole-source contract up to $4 million for goods and services, $7 million for manufacturing, exceptions apply.

8(a) small business that can provide the needed services. This is an accelerated process saving time for both you and the government agency or office.

All Small Mentor-Protege Program

Looking for an opportunity to partner with a more experienced firm for mentorship? That effort can be rewarded in the All Small Mentor-Protege Program, **sba.gov/allsmallmpp**. At the same time you're gaining invaluable direction and experience, you and your mentor can compete for government contracts, further growing your business.

To qualify for this program:

- Proteges must have a mentor prior to applying for the program. Visit your local SBA office for guidance. Ask about the SBA's Resource Partners and the Procurement Technical Assistance Program for help in connecting you with a mentor business.

» You must be certified as a small business within your NAICS industry classification (**naics.com**).

» Mentors and proteges must be organized for profit or as an agricultural cooperative.

» Mentors cannot own more than 40% equity in the protege's business.

» An SBA determination of affiliation must not exist between the mentor and the protege. All Small-approved partnerships receive an exclusion of affiliation for contracting purposes.

HUBZone

Businesses located in Historically Underutilized Business Zones, **sba.gov/hubzone**, can gain special access to federal contracts. To qualify for the certification, your small business must:

» be owned and controlled by U.S. citizens, a Community Development Corporation, an agricultural cooperative, Indian tribal government, Alaska Native Corporation, or a Native Hawaiian organization

» have a principal office located in a HUBZone, which includes Indian reservations and military facilities closed by the Base Realignment and Closure Act. Enter your address in our interactive map, **maps.certify.sba.gov/hubzone/map**, to see if you qualify.

» have at least 35% of your employees living in a HUBZone

Service-Disabled Veterans

If you're a service-disabled veteran looking to enter the federal marketplace, you may be eligible for this small business certification. To determine your eligibility, contact a veterans business development officer at your local SBA office, or the SBA's Office of Veterans Business Development, **sba.gov/ovbd**. After you have set up to do business with the government in **sam.gov**, update your status as a service-disabled veteran business. Keep in mind, the SBA does not officially certify this designation, so when a contract awarded based on this eligibility is protested, the SBA will determine if your business meets the eligibility status, ownership, and control requirements.

Women-Owned Small Business Certification

If you're a woman proprietor looking to sell to the federal government, you may be eligible for the Women-Owned Small Business certification, **sba.gov/wosb**.

Here's how to get certified:

1. Make sure you're eligible

- Your business must be at least 51 percent owned and controlled by one or more women who are U.S. citizens. The ownership must be direct and unconditional.
- A woman must hold the highest officer position and have managerial experience required to run the business.
- One or more women must manage the daily business operations on a full-time basis and conduct long-term decision making and planning.

To qualify as an economically disadvantaged woman-owned small business, your company must meet these criteria and the business owner and/or manager must meet certain income and asset requirements.

2. Register

- Register with the System for Award Management (sam.gov) to start doing business with the government.

3. Certify

Self-certify as a woman-owned small business or an economically disadvantaged woman-owned small business for free, or obtain certification from one of the SBA's approved third-party certifiers (which costs a fee):

- El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- National Women Business Owners Corporation
- U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce
- Women's Business Enterprise National Council

All required documents must be uploaded to **certify.sba.gov** prior to submitting an offer on a contract set aside for the program.

4. Update your status

- Update your status as a woman-owned small business in **sam.gov**.

5. Search the database

- Search the FedBizOpps database (**fbo.gov**) for your new business opportunity.

An O'Fallon Casting Inc. employee at work in O'Fallon, MO. Owner Vince Gimeno grew his business thanks to expert SBA business counseling.

Get Expert Contracting & Certification Help

Federal contracting can be complex, but you don't have to do it alone. A Procurement Technical Assistance Center adviser can help you determine if your business is ready for government contracting. An adviser can also help you register in the System for Award Management (**sam.gov**), and see if you're eligible for any small business certifications and/or programs. One-on-one counseling is free or low cost. Visit sba.gov/localassistance to find your local SBA office or an SBA Resource Partner near you (see page 8).

Procurement Technical Assistance Centers

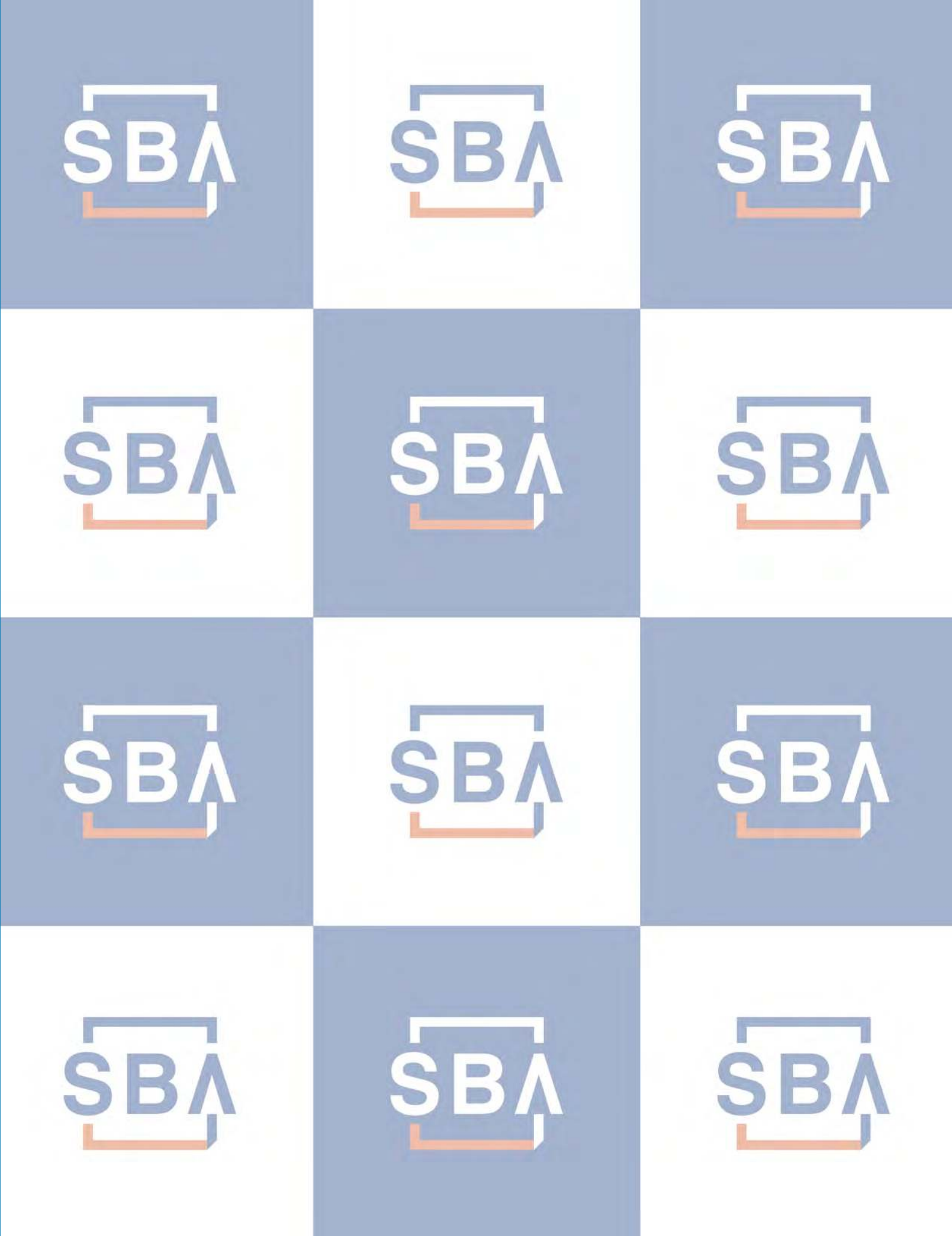
ptacalaska.org

Anchorage PTAC
1901 Bragaw St., suite 199
Program Manager Carolyn Pratt
(907) 786-7201
Fax (907) 786-5446
capratt@uaa.alaska.edu

Fairbanks PTAC
3750 Bonita St.
Contract Specialist Pierre Thompson
(907) 456-7232
pierre.thompson@aksbdc.org

Regional/ State Contracting Programs

SBA Office of Government Contracting
Procurement Center Representative
Randy Miller
(907) 271-2297
randall.miller@sba.gov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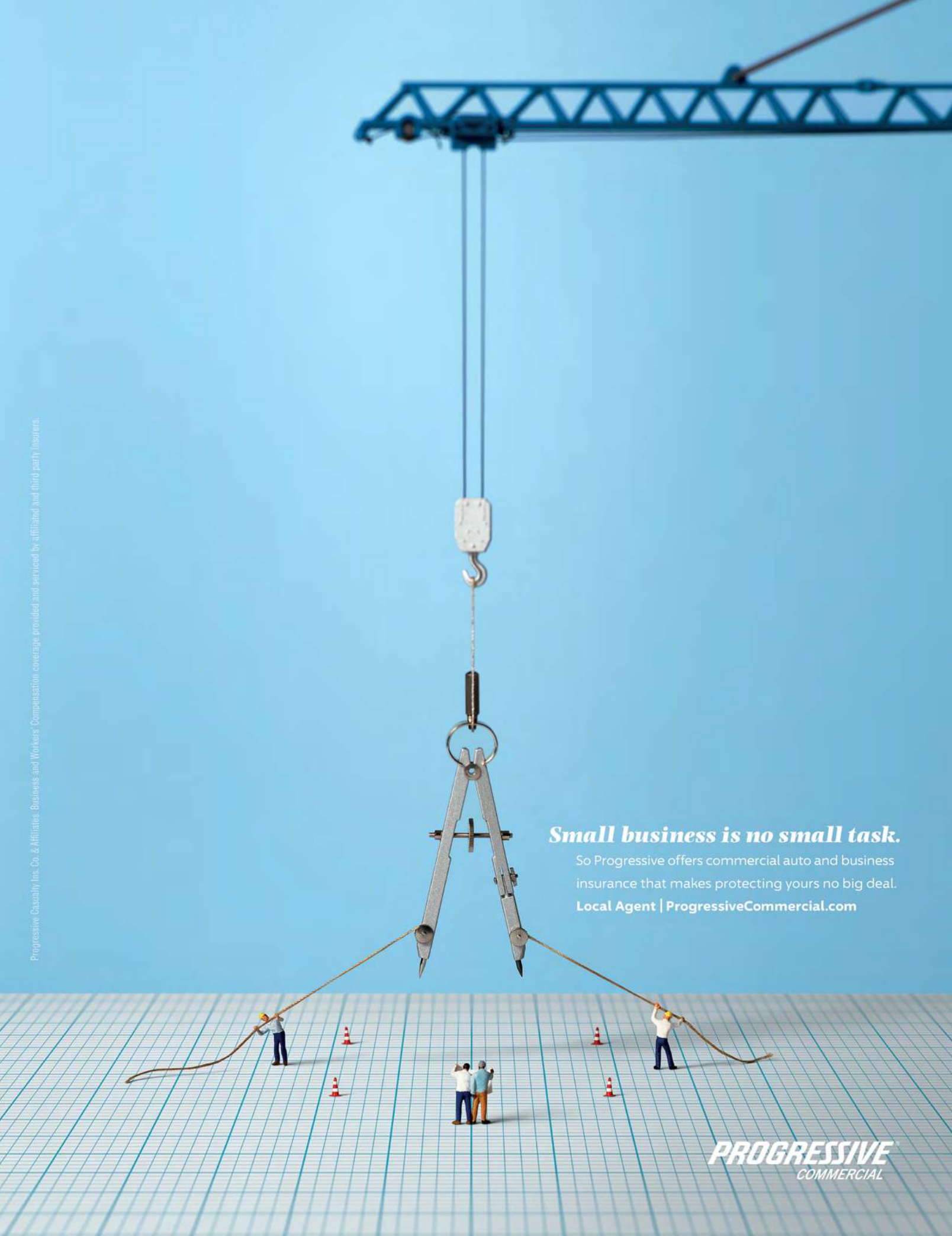
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