

It's Your Business

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36 counties in state eligible for low-interest disaster loans

NEBRASKA BUSINESSES ALONG FLOODED MISSOURI TO GET SBA RECOVERY HELP

Small, non-farm businesses in the following counties in Nebraska and neighboring counties in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and South Dakota are now eligible to apply for low interest disaster loans from the SBA.

"These loans offset economic losses because of reduced revenues caused by flooding beginning on May 1, 2011 in the following Nebraska primary counties," announced Alfred E. Judd, Director of SBA's Disaster Field Operations Center-West.

Primary Nebraska counties are: Boyd, Burt, Cass, Cedar, Dakota, Dixon, Douglas, Knox, Lincoln, Nemaha, Otoe, Richardson, Sarpy, Thurston and Washington;

Neighboring Nebraska counties are: Antelope, Cuming, Custer, Dawson, Dodge, Frontier, Gage, Hayes, Holt, Johnson, Keith, Keya Paha, Lancaster, Logan, McPherson, Pawnee, Perkins, Pierce, Rock, Saunders and Wayne.

"SBA eligibility covers both the economic impacts on businesses dependent on farmers and ranchers that have suffered agricultural production losses caused by the disaster and businesses directly impacted by the disaster," Judd said.

Small, non-farm businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture and most private, non profit organizations of any size may qualify for Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) of up to \$2 million to help meet financial obligations and

operating expenses which could have been met had the disaster not occurred.

"Eligibility for these loans is based on the financial impact of the disaster only and not on any actual property damage. These loans have an interest rate of 4% for businesses and 3% for private, non-profit organizations, a maximum term of 30 years, and are available to small businesses and most private, non profits without the financial ability to offset the adverse impact without hardship," Judd said.

By law, SBA makes EIDLs available when the U. S. Secretary of Agriculture designates an agricultural disaster. Secretary Tom Vilsack declared this disaster at the request of Governor Dave Heineman.

Businesses primarily engaged in farming or ranching are not eligible for SBA disaster assistance. Agricultural enterprises should contact the Farm Services Agency about the U. S. Department of Agriculture assistance made available by the Secretary's declaration.

Applicants may apply online using the Electronic Loan Application via SBA's secure [web site](#). Disaster loan information and application forms are also available from SBA's Customer Service Center by calling SBA toll free at (800) 659-2955, [by email](#), or visiting SBA's [web site](#). Hearing impaired individuals may call (800) 877-8339.

The deadline to apply for these loans is March 19, 2012.

Looking for a microloan?

Our SBA partners throughout the state can help you with your business plan, and finance your business up to \$50,000.

Visit the [OSBN](#), [CDR](#), the [WBC](#) or the [WCNDD](#) for more details.

Helping small businesses [start](#), [grow](#) and [succeed](#).



Your Small Business Resource

JULY LOAN VOLUME INCHES FISCAL 2011 CLOSER TO RECORD

With two months remaining in Fiscal 2011, Nebraska is poised to challenge the record loan volume of \$153 million in SBA-backed financing set last fiscal year.

From July 1 to July 25, 23 loan approvals for \$6.14 million in loan volume went to small businesses across the state, creating 88 new jobs and helping preserve 141 current jobs. That activity brought the total loan volume for the fiscal year to just over \$143 million.

Eight of the 23 loan approvals for the month to date went to new businesses, while 15 went to existing companies. Moreover, eight loans went to woman-owned firms.

Part of the credit for the district office's success in raising awareness and increasing access to SBA loan programs goes to the lender relations specialists, who are on track to make more than 450 face-to-face visits with banks and credit unions throughout the state.

Don't miss this free workshop:

"Experts Discuss: Learn About the Government As Your Customer"

Winning Federal Contracts for Your Small Business

August 18

8-10:00 a.m.

**SBA Nebraska District Office & SCORE
10675 Bedford Avenue,
Suite 100, Omaha**

Speakers include representatives from:

- SBA Office of Government Contracting
- SBA Office of Business Opportunity
- NBDC Procurement Technical Assistance Center
- In cooperation with
- 55th Contracting Squadron, Offutt Air Force Base
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District

To register:

Call: [Kathleen Piper](#) (402) 221-7205 or [Michael Foutch](#) at (402) 221-7211

Learn: Is this market for you? An overview of selling to Local, State and Federal government

What to do: Registration on [Central Contractor Registration](#).

Where and how to find bidding opportunities on the Internet: Learn about [Federal Business Opportunities](#).

U.S. Small Business Administration certifications: HUBZone and 8(a) Business Development.

Coffee provided.



Looking to start a business? Make visiting your local [SCORE chapter](#) your first step.

Inventors and researchers can apply for SBIR grant

SBA WANTS TO HELP YOU BUILD THE INNOVATIVE JOBS OF THE FUTURE

By Patricia Brown-Dixon,
Region 7 Administrator, U.S.
Small Business
Administration



Could yours be the perfect invention to aid U.S. combat soldiers? Have you created a vaccine that could rid the world of a deadly disease? Have you improved upon or innovated something the world needs in the future? All of these are real world scenarios describing research and development projects funded by the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program, coordinated by the SBA; all are creating needed jobs now and in the future.

If you're seeking to advance your company's technological inventions into the commercial marketplace, look at the SBIR program. It targets the small business

grant awards to specifically help the United States in a variety of significant ways. Some have received the prestigious national Tibbetts award for exceptional work and contributions in innovation and research. Since Roland Tibbetts developed the program as an experimental project at the National Science Foundation almost 30 years ago, more than \$21 billion worth of research has taken place in more than 15,000 small firms, producing more than 45,000 patents.

21st Century Systems, Omaha, produces data-driven decision support software that gives our government and commercial customers help to convert data into information, and information into actionable knowledge. Their Tibbetts was awarded for reducing unmanned vehicle video jitter, noise, glare, motion blur, and other degrading factors that make interpretation difficult.

CEO David Anderson says that today, the

To learn more about the SBIR program and how your small business may be able to participate, visit [SBA's web site](#).

entrepreneurial sector because that's where innovation and innovators thrive, but the risk and expense of conducting serious research and development efforts for new ideas or products are often beyond the means of many small businesses. The SBIR funds the critical development and startup stages and encourages the commercialization of the technology, product, or service, which, in turn, stimulates the U.S. economy.

Following the submission of proposals, agencies make SBIR awards based on the small business' qualifications, degree of innovation, technical merit, and future market potential. Small businesses that receive awards or grants then begin a three-phase program, most commonly covering research, testing and commercialization.

Many small companies in our four-state Region 7 have submitted proposals to federal agencies and have received phased SBIR

company focuses on video analytics for unmanned vehicles; and also business intelligence tools to bridging multiple data to provide decision support for customers to make informed decisions more quickly. 21st Century has received more than 100 continuing SBIR grants and is currently teaming with the Missouri University of Science and Technology on an SBIR grant to detect and triangulate radio signals for a IEDs (roadside bombs), which are often set off by cell phones and other remote devices.

The SBIR program is highly competitive, and encourages small businesses to explore their technological potential and profit from their inventions. The program has helped thousands of small businesses and their contributions have enhanced the nation's defense, protected our environment, advanced health care, and improved our ability to manage information and manipulate data. Their research has paved the way for jobs today and the jobs of the future!

Patriot Express comes to rescue of small business deal **SBA HELPS FORMER AIR FORCE MEDIC OPEN NEW OMAHA LAW FIRM PARTNERSHIP**

The two partners had a great idea and needed a little capital to make it happen. So they got a bank to loan them the money, leased an office, made some improvements to it, and jumped into business.

Wait. There's a little more to the story than that.

Let's go back to when John F. Carroll was a boy, long before he shook the hands of his law partner, Steve Watson, to celebrate their new practice, before he started raising San Clemente Island Goats, before law classes at Creighton, before nursing school, before he was a star on the CBS reality TV show "Survivor," before he enlisted as a medic in the Air Force and served for nearly three years at Scott Air Force base near St. Louis.

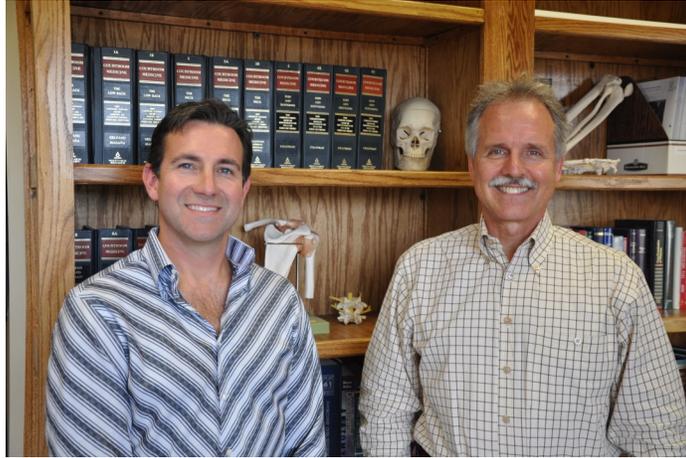
Back to when he brought wounded dogs and birds home to nurse back to health, back when he started an Explorer Post with a few of his grade school friends at the Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha. That's where the seed was planted, an idea that Carroll would spend his life as an advocate for those in need.

After he left the Air Force, Carroll headed off to Los Angeles to work with AIDS patients at the second-largest clinic of its kind in the county. This was long before the miracle cocktail of drugs which today allow people to live with the syndrome; the best Carroll could do was to offer comfort and ease their suffering. But after eight years, during which he raised money and devoted time and effort to various AIDS advocacy organizations, the work took its toll.

Carroll returned to Omaha where he worked as a sales consultant and corporate trainer for Qwest Communications; in return, the company helped him pay his way through Bellevue University and a summa cum laude in criminal justice, and where he delivered the senior commencement address. But he wasn't done with school. He then finished what he had started in Los Angeles, his nursing degree.

"As a nurse, I watched the health care system go from having time for a bedside manner to a corporate machine," Carroll said. "And in that process, I saw people getting hurt, people without recourse, people who needed help. All I wanted to do was give them a voice." So he applied to Creighton's law school.

But Carroll made a small detour in his law studies. He was asked to join the cast for the fourth season of "Survivor" on the island of



John F. Carroll (left) and Steve Watson (right) in their office at 160th and West Center in Omaha.

Marquesas in the South Pacific. Cast by the show's producers as one of the bad guys, Carroll relates, a decade later, the tale of his time spent in the tropical elements for a chance at \$1 million. He didn't win, but he did last 24 grueling days in the game.

He returned to Omaha and as he finished his law studies, he worked as a Legal Nurse Consultant, using his experience in medicine reviewing documents and records for a local firm, and later joining as a full-fledged plaintiff's medical malpractice attorney.

At the same time, Watson was working at a white shoe law firm in downtown Omaha. Every so often, the two would meet at legal conferences. "We were like two dorks always sitting up front and taking notes. As time went on, we'd get together and talk about our own cases, shooting ideas back and forth," Watson said. Of such conversations, a natural professional friendship and soon a business partnership was born.

That brings us to April 15 this year. Carroll had just been let go from his firm, and called Watson to discuss a potential client's case he was considering taking on. The conversation turned from the case to Carroll's decision to strike out on his own. That's when Watson, with 30-plus years with his firm, decided to do the same, and join his friend.

"When you have same desire and drive as the other person you can build on it," Watson said. "You can try new things, while more established firms look in the rear view mirror, smaller firms are more willing and able to embrace the rapid changes occurring around you. Being on your own is more fun."

A lunch and a handshake later, a new

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF LARGER SBA EXPRESS LOAN LIMITS BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE

Take advantage of the \$1 million SBA Express loan limit now, before the Jobs Act provision expires Sept. 27 and limits return to \$350,000.

These loans offer a streamlined application process with reduced paperwork and approval often in a matter of days. Unlike traditional 7(a) loans, SBA Express loans carry a 50 percent guarantee.

Applications often receive a response within 36 hours, or within 20 minutes through E-Tran.

Broad lender discretion to expedite fast service means that in many cases, approval rests with qualified lenders.

SBA Express loans can be used for working capital, accounts receivable and inventory, equipment and machinery, business acquisition and expansion, debt refinancing, real estate and leasehold improvements and short-term needs such as contract performance.

**For more details,
 call one of our helpful
 lender relations
 specialists
 in the
 Nebraska District Office
 at (402) 221-4691.**

Networking at its Best!

Join other Omaha small businesses and area lenders at Omaha's Small Business Empowerment Breakfast

August 12
Regency Lodge
909 South 107th
Avenue, Omaha
7-8:30 a.m.

The cost is \$15 per person, which includes a full buffet breakfast.

[Please register in advance online](#), and make checks payable to Regency Lodge.

The Empowerment Breakfast is simple and effective. Each month, four businesses introduce their services and products in a three-minute presentation. If you wish to be a presenter, please call Barb Foster at 221-7212.

During this event, everyone attending is introduced, so bring your business cards, make some contacts, and have some fun!

partnership was born. But it is one thing to form a partnership; quite another to open the doors and turn on the lights. And for that, the two first turned to Cliff Mosteller at the Nebraska Business Development Center in Omaha for some business plan advice. Mosteller offered advice to make their plan more "bankable," including work on cash flow projections and then correcting some line items; he then provided a list of bankers who might look favorably on a start-up law firm.

One of those was Katey Lenczowski at Enterprise Bank, whose bank had experience financing plaintiff's attorney firms. She was brought aboard due to her experience with the SBA including her work with the Nebraska Economic Development Corp. (NEDCO) working deals through the SBA's 504 program. Enterprise Bank had done very few deals over the years with the SBA, but when Lenczowski joined the bank, she worked with Lead Lender Relations Specialist Mike Niehaus to ensure the lender was signed up for the complete list of SBA Express programs.

Upon learning that Carroll was an Air Force Veteran, Lenczowski knew the Patriot Express program, which allows for up to \$500,000 for a project with a 75 or 85 percent SBA guarantee, would serve to provide the firm with a loan for \$20,000 for computer equipment and a larger amount for a line of credit.

Lender Relations Specialist Suzanne Stearman from the Nebraska District Office also played a role, helping sign up the bank to use the E-Tran system to file applications electronically and receive a quick response from the Sacramento processing center, and Stearman, along with Niehaus and Deborah Wilson on the lender relations team, answered the banker's Patriot Express program questions.

"We have just three commercial lenders in our bank, and we do most of our own work," said Lenczowski, who never had completed a Patriot Express loan before and needed the streamlined application to complete the deal quickly. How quick? The partners went from their handshake April 15, to closing their bank deal May 13, to signing the lease to their office at 160 Centre Place on 160th St. and West

Center Road on May 17, to opening their doors June 6.

Understandably, Lenczowski is a strong supporter of small business. She owned a coffee shop in West Omaha for about five years, and received a 7(a) loan herself through the SBA. "It helps me be a better banker because I can relate to challenges of starting and owning a small business. It really does make me feel good to put people in business."

As plaintiff's attorneys specializing in medical malpractice, Carroll and Watson consider themselves investigators, examining suspicious injuries and deaths as part of their role in oversight of the health care system.

"The problem is when great care doesn't go that way," Carroll said. And other than product liability and mass torts, he added, "often medical malpractice cases are the most expensive cases to litigate, due to the need for practicing medical and nursing experts and other resources."

These cases sometimes take a year or longer to reach a verdict, Lenczowski said, and the line of credit will help the firm survive those long gaps between payments.

"A \$5,000 or \$10,000 medical bill due to medical negligence means the patient is left holding the bag," Carroll said, "That often leads to ruined credit, or a second job they'll have to work for the next five years to prevent bankruptcy. And those are the lucky ones that survive or are not permanently injured. All I want to do is give a voice to those injured and to help the families of those killed by medical mistakes."

"Without the Patriot Express program," Carroll said, "I don't know what we would have done. Certainly, the process would not have been done as quickly. I was working out of my farm kitchen, surrounded by fresh farm eggs and medical records. We had deadlines to meet if this firm was going to survive and I needed a place to meet them." He told the Omaha World-Herald that the program "rescued" him from a potentially disastrous situation.

"That's what it's designed to be there for, for the veterans," he told the newspaper. "All you have to do is access it."

WHAT'S THE PATRIOT EXPRESS LOAN PROGRAM ALL ABOUT?

The SBA makes Patriot Express loans available for veterans and members of the military community wanting to establish or expand small businesses. With a maximum loan amount of \$500,000, and a guarantee of 85% for loans \$150,000 and less, and a 75% guarantee for loans above \$150,000, it's a perfect way for those who have served our country to get the financing they need.

Those eligible include: veterans; service-disabled veterans; active-duty service members eligible for the military's Transition Assistance Program; reservists and National Guard members; current spouses of any of those; and the widowed spouse of a service member or veteran who died during service or of a service-connected disability.

Patriot Express loan proceeds can be used for most business purposes, including: start up costs, equipment purchases, business-occupied real-estate purchases, inventory, infusing working capital, expansion, and preparing your business for the possibility of a deployment, among others.

Patriot Express loans feature the SBA's lowest interest rates for business loans, generally 2.25 percent to 4.75 percent over prime depending upon the size and maturity of the loan.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR RECENT LOAN APPROVALS (JULY 1 TO JULY 25)

Approval Date	City	Loan amount	Lender Name	Created Employment	Delivery Method
7/5/2011	TEKAMAH	635000	U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	2	PLP
7/5/2011	Bellevue	250000	ACCESS BANK	4	RLA
7/5/2011	OMAHA	500000	GREAT WESTERN BANK	0	SBA Express
7/6/2011	OMAHA	100000	UNION BANK AND TRUST COMPANY	0	SBA Express
7/7/2011	NORTH PLATTE	45000	ADAMS BANK & TRUST	0	SBA Express
7/7/2011	OMAHA	15000	U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	0	SBA Express
7/7/2011	OMAHA	65200	WELLS FARGO BANK NATL ASSOC	1	PLP
7/11/2011	Omaha	582000	NEBRASKA ECONOMIC DEVEL CORP	9	504
7/11/2011	Grand island	612000	NEBRASKA ECONOMIC DEVEL CORP	0	504
7/12/2011	KEARNEY	150000	JONES NATL BK & TR CO - SEWAR	4	SBA Express
7/13/2011	Omaha	1552000	WELLS FARGO BANK NATL ASSOC	2	Other 7(a)
7/13/2011	Omaha	26800	GREAT WESTERN BANK	50	Patriot Express
7/13/2011	OMAHA	20000	CENTRIS FCU	2	SBA Express
7/14/2011	LINCOLN	10000	FIRST STATE BANK	1	SBA Express
7/15/2011	Columbus	129000	NEBRASKA ECONOMIC DEVEL CORP	2	504
7/18/2011	OMAHA	212000	U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	0	PLP
7/18/2011	Omaha	350000	UMB BANK, N.A.	5	SBA Express
7/20/2011	Lincoln	637000	NEBRASKA ECONOMIC DEVEL CORP	0	504
7/21/2011	Omaha	100000	FOUNDATION FIRST BANK	0	SBA Express
7/21/2011	LINCOLN	85000	FIRST STATE BANK	2	Patriot Express
7/21/2011	LINCOLN	34000	FIRST STATE BANK	2	Patriot Express
7/21/2011	LINCOLN	20000	FIRST STATE BANK	2	Patriot Express
7/22/2011	OMAHA	10000	U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	0	SBA Express