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U.S. Small Business Administration

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IT'S YOUR BUSINESS

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STARTUP SPOTLIGHT: ALL AMERICAN REAL ESTATE NNY



Starting a business is not an easy feat. Entrepreneurs must be willing to take on risks that others won't. Years of military experience have taught veterans to calculate risks, maintain courage under fire and sus-

tain the discipline to fulfill the mission—all qualities helpful to becoming an entrepreneur. Veterans have the highest self-employment rates in the country, and one out of every five considers starting or purchasing a business after completing their military service. After 21 years in the U.S. Army, retired Sgt. 1st Class James Conlin and his wife Sonia are among the newest to join the ranks of veteran entrepreneurs.

With expert assistance from Watertown Small Business Development Center Business Advisor Sarah O'Connell, the couple developed a sound business plan for a real estate and property-management company serving the Fort Drum and Northern New York area. Starting a real estate business was a natural fit for the Conlins, especially as James gained valuable experience working nights

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SBA ANNOUNCES NEW LENDING INITIATIVES

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Helping small businesses **start, grow** and **succeed**.



Your Small Business Resource

SBA and U.S. Department of Commerce studies have shown the importance of lower-dollar loans to small business formation and growth in underserved communities. With that in mind, the two new loan initiatives – Small Loan Advantage and Community Advantage – are aimed at increas-

ing the number of lower-dollar SBA 7(a) loans going to small businesses and entrepreneurs in underserved communities.

The agency's most popular loan product, 7(a) government-guaranteed loans can be used for variety of general business purposes, including working capital

and purchases of equipment and real estate.

"Over the last two years, we've seen lending to all small businesses tighten up, and that tightening has been even greater in traditionally underserved communities, including among minorities, women and in rural areas," SBA Administrator Karen Mills said.

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STARTUP SPOTLIGHT: ALL AMERICAN REAL ESTATE NNY

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and weekends in real estate before retiring. James had spent the last 10 years of his career at Fort Drum and together the couple had developed quite a network of contacts on and off the post.

The Conlins used the business plan to obtain SBA Patriot Express financing from Community Bank, enabling them to purchase and renovate the former 1,200 square-foot Village Office, a 160-year-old building in the village of Black River. The

Conlins officially launched All American Real Estate NNY LLC in April and have already added two real estate agents to the staff to handle the listing and property-management demands.

“James and Sonia Conlin of All American Real Estate were just great to work with,” said SBDC Advisor Sarah O’Connell. “They were so determined to see this project through, and every time some little obstacle popped up, they’d get through it, over it or

around it. I know they’re going to make the very best of this opportunity that the Patriot Express loan has provided them.”

Starting their business has been quite an experience: “Opening our business has been an exciting adventure, and we are proud to be serving the North Country residents for all of their real estate needs,” said James Conlin.

SBA launched Patriot Express in 2007 and to date the successful loan program has provided access to more than \$7.5

million in capital for the military community across 34-counties in Upstate New York.

Patriot Express loans can be used for most business purposes, including start up, expansion, equipment purchases, working capital, inventory or business-occupied real-estate purchases. More information can be found at www.sba.gov/patriot-express.

NOMINATE A SUCCESSFUL VETERAN ENTREPRENEUR FOR VOBA AWARD

Operation: Start Up & Grow will recognize an exemplary veteran entrepreneur with the 2011 Veteran-Owned Business Achievement Award.

Nominees must be a 51% or more small business owner with military service, in business for at least two years, a resident of the United States, and meet one or more of the following criteria: staying power, growth in employees or

sales, current and past financial performance, innovativeness of product or service, response to adversity, and contributions to community-oriented projects.

Nomination packages will be accepted until February 11, 2010. For award nomination instructions and required forms, contact Cathy Pokines at 315-471-9393 x 241 or cathy.pokines@sba.gov.

OPERATION: START UP & GROW



Operation: Start Up & Grow is the premier veterans business conference in Upstate New York for veterans and members of the military community who want to start or expand their own small business.

This FREE conference features speakers, workshops, networking, exhibitors and much more.

More than 100 veterans with an idea for a business or already in business found valuable information and resources to take their business to the next level at last year's conference.

Please save the date for the fourth annual Operation: Start Up & Grow on Tuesday, March 15, 2010 at Onondaga Community College in Syracuse, New York.

Online registration for the conference will open on February 14. Please contact SBA with questions at 315-471-9393.

SBA ANNOUNCES NEW LENDING INITIATIVES

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“These new Advantage initiatives are aimed directly at getting more loans into these markets so these small business owners can get the capital they need to start or grow their business and create good paying jobs in local communities across the country.”

Built on what the agency refers to as its “Advantage” platform, both Small Loan Advantage and Community Advantage launch on March 15 and will offer a streamlined application process for SBA-guaranteed 7(a) loans up to \$250,000. These loans will come with the

regular 7(a) government guarantee, 85 percent for loans up to \$150,000 and 75 percent for those greater than \$150,000. Small Loan Advantage will be available to the 630 financial institutions across the country in the agency’s Preferred Lender Program (PLP). Under PLP, which includes most of the agency’s highest volume lenders, SBA delegates the final credit decisions to lenders.

With Community Advantage, the agency will expand the points of access small business owners have for getting loans by opening SBA’s 7(a) loan program to

“mission-focused” financial institutions, including Community Development Financial Institutions, Certified Development Companies and non-profit microlending intermediaries. Community Advantage will leverage the experience these institutions already have in lending to minority, women-owned and start-up companies in economically challenged markets, along with their management and technical assistance expertise, to help make their borrowers successful.

“These two new loan initiatives tackle a couple of factors we know exist when it comes to

the challenges small business owners face,” Mills said. “First, to add more incentive for lower-dollar loans in these communities, we are providing a streamlined process for lenders along with the regular 7(a) government guarantee. Second, we are taking steps that will increase the number of places small business owners in underserved communities can go to get loans. And also, with Community Advantage, we are making sure that the additional assistance some borrowers may need through counseling and technical assistance will be available.”

CORPORATE PROTECTION PANEL IN CORNING

JAN.
25

The Corning SBDC will present “Is Your Corporation

at Risk of Losing Its Protection?” on Tuesday, January 25 from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

The panel presentation of will review corporate and limited liability company requirements that are often overlooked by business owners that

could void their liability protection.

Speakers include: Patrick J. Roth, Attorney and Certified Public Accountant, Ronald Klokus, Attorney and MBA in Entrepreneurship, and Michael McCarty, Licensed Insurance Consultant.

Register for \$10 by January 21 by contacting the Corning SBDC at 607-937-6861 or sbdc@corning-cc.edu.

MARKET RESEARCH WORKSHOP IN WATERTOWN

FEB.
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A market research workshop will be presented

by the Watertown Small Business Development Center on Thursday, February 3 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Prospective and existing business owners identify their ideal consumer, and then use a variety of resources to determine

the size of their customer base and how, when, and where they buy. This valuable information will allow the business owners to develop an effective, targeted marketing strategy.

The cost is \$40 and pre-registration is required. Contact the SBDC by phone 315-782-9262 or e-mail sbdc@sunyjefferson.edu to register.

SBA & MICROSOFT INTRODUCE NEW SMALL BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY GUIDE

The U.S. Small Business Administration and Microsoft have teamed up to develop this free, comprehensive guide on how technology can improve the small business owner's chances for success. The Business Technology Simplified guidebook includes fundamentals on the importance of technology, and on how it can be used to achieve a business's goals.

In the guidebook's foreword, Earvin "Magic" Johnson writes about his journey in developing a multimillion dollar company and the value of technology to remain competitive.

"Our goal as an

agency is to get information, tools and services into the hands of small business owners more quickly so they can spend more time doing what they do best – creating the jobs that will drive our economic recovery," said SBA Administrator Karen Mills. "This new guidebook is one more tool available to support small business growth through access to information and resources."

Business Technology Simplified offers straightforward tips on how to use technology and innovation to make businesses work more efficiently. The guidebook incorporates relevant and practical ma-

terial on simplifying work tasks, do it yourself marketing, cloud computing, time management, finding and cultivating customers, and much more.

Business Technology Simplified may be accessed online as an electronic publication and as an electronic distance learning course. The new online course has been created for self-paced access to practical guidance on applying technology to build and grow strong companies.

The Business Technology Simplified online course allows quick access by small business owners to learn more about basic technology

tools that can help their companies run more efficiently. The course features an audio guided lesson indexed by modules that includes information on how to use technology to save time in day-to-day tasks, how to better manage a business, mobile solutions that work, and tips on expanding customer base.

To access the course, go to www.sba.gov/training, then click Business Technology Simplified in the Highlighted Courses section. It is one of nearly 30 online tutorials offered by the SBA, and is available 24/7.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS FORUM IN SYRACUSE

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The Central New York International

Business Alliance (CNYIBA) is hosting an international business forum, Leveraging External Resources, on Wednesday, January 26. The forum is scheduled to run from 3:00 p.m. to

4:45 p.m. at 721 University Avenue at Syracuse University's Martin J. Whitman School of Management.

Topics that will be addressed include: Government Resources and the National Export Initiative, Case Study: Using Interns to Develop New International Business Opportunities, and Planning and

Managing an Effective Student Intern Program.

Guest speakers include John Tracy, U.S. Department of Commerce, Virginia Smith, U.S. Small Business Administration, Alan Fink, ConMed Corporation, and Amy McHale, Syracuse University Martin J. Whitman School of Management.

For more details about the event and future CNYIBA events, please contact John Tracy at 315-453-4070 or john.tracy@trade.gov.

The cost per attendee is \$25, with a 20% member discount.