

# emerging leaders

## PHILADELPHIA

*U.S. Small Business Administration*



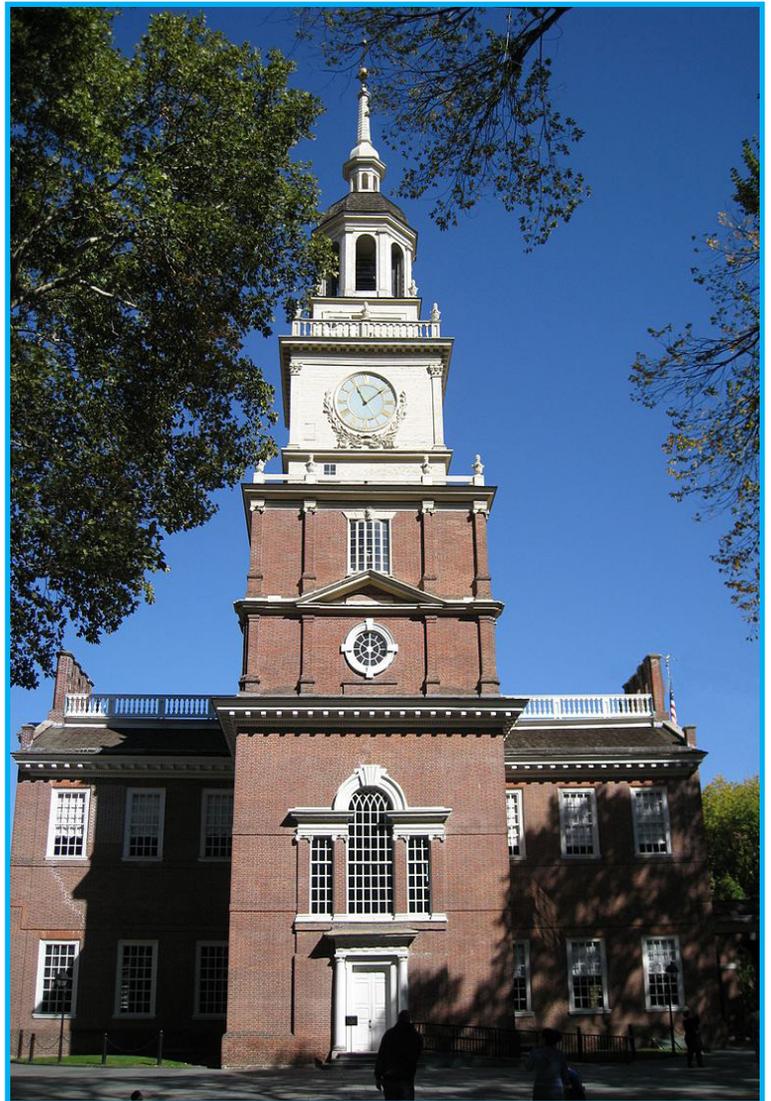
U.S. Small Business  
Administration

2019

# EMERGING LEADERS GRADUATION

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OCTOBER 30<sup>TH</sup>  
NOON - 2 P.M.



U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION  
EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA DISTRICT OFFICE

# AGENDA

**11:45 Networking/Arrival**

**12:00 Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Lenin Agudo, Director, Widener SBDC

**12:10 Congratulations from Interise**

Jenn Ricciardi, Program Associate, Interise National Programs

**12:15 Successful Businesses = Successful Communities**

Steve Dixel, SBA Eastern Pennsylvania District Director

Michael Kane, SBA Eastern Pennsylvania Deputy District Director

**12:25 Importance of Small Businesses**

Sherwood Robbins, Managing Director, Seedcopa

**12:35 Emerging Leaders Class Speaker**

Introduction by Hugh Connelly, Emerging Leaders Instructor

**12:45 Introduction of Emerging Leaders Graduates,  
Graduation Ceremony and Photos**

Steven Dixel, Director, SBA Eastern Pennsylvania District

Hugh Connelly, Philadelphia Emerging Leaders Instructor

Kimberly Stout, SBA Philadelphia Emerging Leaders Project Manager

***\*Luncheon immediately following ceremony***



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# *SBA's EMERGING LEADERS PROGRAM HELPS SMALL BUSINESSES STEP IT UP!*

In 2008, Philadelphia joined with a group of major cities across the country to participate in the U.S. Small Business Administration's "Emerging Leaders" training initiative that immerses owners of promising businesses in a condensed, MBA-like curriculum designed to stimulate the local economy by helping their most promising businesses grow.

Each class participates in intensive, comprehensive training to develop business growth strategies and attract capital to fuel growth. Participants also work with experienced mentors, attend workshops, and develop connections with banks and the private equity community.

"The Emerging Leaders program has a proven track record of helping small businesses get to the next level," said Steve Dixel, Director, SBA Eastern Pennsylvania District. "Program graduates have increased revenue, created jobs and helped drive economic growth in their communities. The program's class-



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## **Emerging Leaders Class of 2019**

**Anthony's Barbershop**  
**Brandywine Photonics**  
**CB Construction Services, Inc.**

**Commercial Flooring Professionals, Inc.**

**Dynamic Learning Academy**  
**Paramount Security Partners**

**Play-a-Round Golf America, Inc.**

**Pulse Beauty Academy**  
**Resolution Pest**

**Ritz-Craft Corporation**

**River Oaks Homecare**

**Silver Crest Insurance, Inc.**

**Solve IT Solutions, LLC**

**Tee Hunt, LLC**

**TMT Logistics Inc.**

**Wheel Restaurant**

work helps participants build more tools for success and provide access to the resources and skills to succeed."

"Since its 2008 Philadelphia launch, the program has been going strong. The rising stars who have participated each year come into this training with their businesses poised on the brink of real growth," Dixel said. "There seems to be no limit to what they can accomplish with the skills and relationships they build in the program."

The program's formal curriculum and diversity of industry continues to provide a unique educational experience. Each Emerging Leaders class attends sessions focusing on growth goals, marketing, sales, financials, government contracting and accessing capital. Through this coursework, participants work with area lenders and government procurement experts, draft growth plans for their own businesses, and develop connections with a new network of resources.

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mentor at Drexel University's Close School of Entrepreneurship, he founded small business equipment finance company Univest Capital, Inc. in 2006. He led the development of a business banking group at Univest Bank in 2015 and introduced new technologies to speed the lending process and drive down origination costs. While running cash management at Univest, he expanded the bank's international payments with a SWIFT code and additional deposit-gathering products. A frequent volunteer in the micro-finance sector, he received a Professional Certificate in Microfinance from the University of Rome. In 2014, he worked on a team that helped an Angolan Bank develop a small business lending strategy and coordinated a U. S. study tour for the bank's executives. In 2018, he facilitated a U.S. study tour for Mongolia's Golomt Bank, whose executives wanted to see how Connelly integrated technology into the business banking workflows to streamline and automate the lending process. He started in the financial services industry as a specialized lender at CoreStates Bank (now Wells Fargo) in Philadelphia. His corporate banking experience includes leading multi-bank credit facilities, international finance, asset securitization, venture capital and investment banking. He holds a bachelor's degree from Temple University, a Master of Science in Finance-Bank Management from Drexel University, as well as the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) and Certified Treasury Professional (CTP) professional designations. He retired from Univest to pursue his volunteer and technology interests. Current projects include angel investing, The DealX, Community Capital and The Oasis Business Network. Follow him on Twitter @growthologist, or [www.growthologist.me](http://www.growthologist.me).

## INSTRUCTOR

**Hugh W. Connelly**, Inter-ise instructor for the Philadelphia Emerging Leaders Program, is a lifelong believer in the power of small business. A Start-Up



*Hugh Connelly*

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District in October 2013. Stout is responsible for promoting the SBA's lending programs and maintaining a network of collaborative partners to assist, promote and protect small businesses. Prior to joining the SBA team, Stout worked as a Business Development Director for Community Action Development Corporation of Allentown. She trained and mentored small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs on how to start and operate a small business, focusing on the areas of business planning, marketing and financial assistance. Stout gained her small business experience while owning and operating a restaurant in Shippensburg, PA. Stout earned her bachelor's degree in Geography/Regional Development and a master's degree in Organizational Development and Leadership from Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania.

## PROJECT MANAGER

**Kimberly Stout**, Economic Development & Lender Relations Specialist, joined the U.S. Small Business Administration Eastern Pennsylvania



*Kimberly Stout*

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the richness of life in the comfort of their own homes. With offices in Blue Bell and Norristown, Pa., her agency is licensed to provide services in five counties: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Philadelphia and Montgomery. Akingbade is very passionate about seniors and this motivated her to start the agency in order to reach out to and assist as many seniors as possible. The agency provides quality home care services with the help of qualified Certified Nursing Assistants and helps families navigate the right care solution and the different available ways to pay for it. As a Certified Senior Care Manager, Akingbade hopes to continue to help and educate as many seniors as possible in the communities her agency serves. Akingbade holds a Bachelors of Arts in Philosophy and volunteers her time as a Support Group Coordinator for the Alzheimer's Association's Delaware Valley Chapter. She feels fortunate to have the full support of her husband and her two kids; her family has been her driving force for success and looks forward to going home every evening to meet them. She says the SBA's Emerging Leaders Program has been a great resource for her business.

## GRADUATE



*Bolanle Akingbade*

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Pennsylvania. Baessler started Resolution Pest in 2014 as an owner operator and is responsible for all business operations on a day-to-day basis. He has grown the business to its current level, servicing hundreds of customers on a monthly basis with a great team of dedicated employees. With more than 17 years in the pest management industry, Baessler says the company's goal is to provide excellence service to customers and provide great job opportunities for its employees.

## GRADUATE



*John Baessler*

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age agency specializing in Medicare insurance plans located in Bethlehem, PA. He began his insurance career in 2000 as an agent for the Guardian Life Insurance Company. In 2009, he launched Lehigh Valley Senior Solutions and began helping Medicare-eligible individuals research and secure their Medicare supplemental insurance plans. After five years of successfully acquiring new clients, he made the decision to take on a business partner and grow the agency. Together, they changed the name to Silver Crest Insurance, Inc. and hired their first agent. Presently, the agency has a total of five agents (two full-time salaried agents and three contracted agents and one full-time employee for administrative/customer service). Banks earned his Bachelor's of Arts in Psychology from Kutztown University and a Pennsylvania Life, Accident and Health insurance license and is also currently licensed in seven other states. Banks says that the SBA's Emerging Leaders program has been invaluable to him and came at a perfect time because although the agency has thrived, he was uncertain as to what his next steps should be. He says the program helped him organize the agency's goals, create an action plan, synch up its finances on a monthly basis and overhaul its marketing. Banks says that he feels he can see the future of the agency as clearly as if he had programed growth into the company's GPS.

## GRADUATE

**Daniel Banks** is President and co-owner of Silver Crest Insurance, Inc., an insurance broker-



*Daniel Banks*

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day operations, including accounting and human resources responsibilities. With more than 30 years experience in the insurance and risk management industry, Barker was inspired to help craftsmen who are good in their trade, but need help in managing their businesses. Certified as a Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) through the U.S. Small Business Administration, the company has recently become third-party-certified as a Women's Business Enterprise by WBENC, which helped enable the firm to gain Women Business Enterprise (WBE) certification through the Pennsylvania Department of General Services Bureau of Small Business Opportunities. Recognizing the crisis resulting from an aging workforce in the skilled trades, Barker is passionate about workforce development and mentoring young men and women in the construction industry. She serves on committees such as Associated Builders & Contractors Workforce Development Committee, Cumberland-Perry Area Vocational Technical School Occupational Advisory Committee, Northern York County School District School Counseling Advisory Council, and the Pa. National Guard Associations Business Advisory Council. Barker earned her bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Elizabethtown College and a master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Messiah College.

## GRADUATE

**Denise Barker** is President and majority owner of CB Construction Services, Inc. Since 2017, Barker has led the firm's day-to-



*Denise Barker*

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Active specializes in ecommerce and B2B lead generation, with services for branding, marketing strategy, programming development, search engine optimization, social media marketing and email marketing. He is also the founder and host of Relish The Journey, a podcast devoted to highlighting the unique stories and experiences every person has to share. “I had to drive nearly three hours from central Pennsylvania to and from King of Prussia for class each week,” Biggs said, “and I would absolutely do it again – the programming was fantastic! A big thank you to everyone at the SBA.” For more information on Myles, follow along with him at [www.RTJMedia.com](http://www.RTJMedia.com) and for more on MoJo Active, visit [www.MoJoActive.com](http://www.MoJoActive.com).

## GRADUATE

**Myles Biggs** is the Director of Digital Marketing for MoJo Active, Inc., an integrated marketing agency based in Watsonstown, Pa. Founded in 2001, MoJo



*Myles Biggs*

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ments in Exton, PA. The firm develops innovative spaceflight instruments to “Save Lives and Homes through Better Weather Data.” Brandywine was awarded two Air Force Phase II SBIRs in 2019, one for the Theater Weather Imaging & Cloud Characterization Payload and another for the Compact Hyperspectral Infrared Sounding Interferometer Payload. The firm’s most successful instrument project was the Hyperspectral Imager for Coastal Observing, which was operational on the International Space Station from 2010-2015. Other customers include NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman and several universities. Prior to founding Brandywine Photonics, Fisher worked as an Optical Engineer at the U.S. Naval Research Labs and IBM. He graduated from Penn State University with a B.S. and M.S. in Electrical Engineering in 1986 and 1987 respectively. He is an author on 10 publications and is a member of the Society of Photo-Optical Instrumentation Engineers and the American Meteorological Society. Fisher says that being in the “Space 2.0” market is both exhilarating and incredibly challenging, and that he couldn’t do it without a fantastic team and support from his wife and family.

## GRADUATE

**John Fisher** is Founder and President of Brandywine Photonics, an emerging provider of small weather satellites instru-



*John Fisher*

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apparel using a heat press and now offers screen and direct-to-garment printing services. Gordiyenko believes the customer is the single most valuable asset an organization can have, and is driven by the pursuit of customer-driven focus, ideals and user experience. As a motivated entrepreneur who is always looking for new ways to grow, he has decided to take his company to the next level and is looking to spread the firm's services into the wholesale sector as well as print-on-demand services. Gordiyenko feels honored to be in the Emerging Leaders program, which he says has helped him form the development strategy for his company and network with like-minded entrepreneurs.

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the company you've worked at for 30 years? In 2006 Graves and his wife Sue began Play-a-Round Golf America, Inc. The entrepreneurial couple leveraged his 30 years of experience developing software for the medical industry, their 401k retirement savings, his recently completed MBA from Eastern University, and an SBA loan to start the business. But it wasn't enough. Coming from big business hadn't prepared Steve for the struggles of a start-up during the 2008 recession. After 18 months, the Graves found themselves out of money and facing liquidation. But Graves says God was just getting started. He joined a small group of CEOs who met once a month to work on and pray for each other's businesses. Over the next year, the Graves received the support of other CEOs, friends and even their landlord, who enabled them to remain while the puzzle pieces were being put in place and also identified a smaller store they could use. One of the CEOs gave them a steel mezzanine for FREE. Business that winter was the best to date and, in addition to meeting expenses, provided enough funds to fit out the smaller store and open in April 2009. The business now has two locations and is looking to grow. Graves says the SBA's Emerging Leaders program has provided him the opportunity to apply a MBA-type focus to examine each component of the business and determine how to grow by 30% over the next three years. The Graves believe golf is "the greatest game" and they are eager to help open doors for others to realize the game's benefits in their lives.

## GRADUATE

**Vladislav Gordiyenko** is President and founder of Tee Hunt, LLC, a screen printing company. Founded in 2014, the company initially specialized in creating custom



*Vladislav Gordiyenko*

## GRADUATE

**Steven R. Graves, Sr.**, is Chief FUN Officer/CEO of Play-a-Round Golf America, Inc. At 55, he faced a tough question: Where do you go after being laid off from



*Steve Graves, Sr.*

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shop, it offers today's modern clients a sense of home in a traditional environment, with a unique nostalgia. A historical landmark and a staple in the Berks County community, Anthony's has served the community since 1888. Veteran-owned and operated, the shop was recently nominated for the 2019 HIREVets Medallion Award from the U.S. Department of Labor. A Navy veteran, Holland served in the South Pacific Surface Fleet as a Main Propulsion and Auxiliary system engineering supervisor aboard the aircraft carrier USS Constellation. After his military service, he studied Mechanical Engineering at Temple University with a minor in business administration. His primary occupation is Mechanical and Technical Instruction in the nuclear industry. He has been with Exelon Nuclear for 22 years in various positions directly related to nuclear safety, production, planning, and project oversight.

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Information Technologies) in 2000. He has led the firm to 20-30% yearly growth with a 69.1% increase in 2017 and 89.6% in 2018. He attributes his success to starting to work at age 13 and has always held the highest work ethic. Asked for the secret to his success, his answer is "It's simple: treat people with respect, keep the highest ethical standards at all times and in all situations, and build a relationship database – not a customer database." His approach is succeeding: already up 68.7% from 2018, Kantner expects to hit a record \$4 million in revenue. He served 10 years in the U.S. Navy as an Aviation Electrician's Mate, starting his education in computers and network troubleshooting, working on the F-14 Tomcat fighter jet and computer circuit boards. In the Navy he helped design a troubleshooting program that enabled the service to fix faulty circuit cards rather than purchase new ones, saving millions of dollars. After his service, he pursued a career in computers and network setup and enrolled at Berks Technical Institute. While working full time he started his IT company and a DJ company. After completing his education, with his IT firm growing faster and faster, he has focused full-time on Solve IT Solutions.

## GRADUATE

**William Holland** is sole proprietor and CFO of BD Anthony's LLC, a full-service traditional barber shop in Wyomissing, Pa. A well-established gentleman's barber



*William Holland*

## GRADUATE

**Troy Kantner**, President and CEO of Solve IT Solutions, LLC located in Wyomissing, PA and Longmont, CO founded the firm (originally Kantner



*Troy Kantner*

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your-own grilled cheese concept from the ground up in 2016 and will soon open a second location in Tamaqua, Pa. Wheel has enjoyed significant success in its first three years and was nationally recognized by Travel+Leisure Magazine on its 2018 Best 25 Diners in the entire country. Locally, Wheel has won awards for Friendliest Service, Best Family Restaurant, and Best Kept Dining Secret each year it has been in business. In 2018 Logothetides was also named Entrepreneur of the Year by the Schuylkill County Chamber of Commerce. In addition to owning Wheel, Savas is the Executive Director of the Pottsville Area Development Corporation (PADCO). As the executive director he helps facilitate small- and medium-sized business growth in the city of Pottsville through technical assistance and the management of a multi-million dollar revolving loan fund. Prior to opening Wheel, Logothetides worked operating 22 corporate restaurants across Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Although a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh with a bachelor's degree in political science, he has worked solely in the restaurant business. He has also had an exciting year outside of his professional life marrying his longtime girlfriend, Kelly and having his first child, Cleo.

## GRADUATE

**Savas G. Logothetides** is the owner of Wheel Restaurant in Pottsville, Pa. He designed the build-



*Savas Logothetides*

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Professionals, Inc. (CFP), a certified small business specializing in floors that work for public spaces. "Floors that work" is CFP's trademark and a commitment to its clients. Building relationships has brought CFP recurring orders and the trust of their clients as professional advisors of "everything flooring." In 2019 CFP passed two historic milestones: the firm had its fifth straight year of sustained growth and purchased the firm's property, positioning it for continued growth. During his 40 years of sales and management experience in the industry, Macdonald founded the operations and growth of the commercial division of the family retail carpet business his father started after World War II. After overseeing that division for 25 years, he shepherded the delicate separation of it from parent company. With an advanced commercial flooring certification as a Certified Installation Manager, Macdonald enjoys bringing solutions to the challenging flooring needs of senior living communities, schools, government buildings, churches, and private businesses. He believes trust is earned by creating a culture of continual learning, an attitude of serving others, and intentionally acknowledging God's provision of, and concern for, all the people in CFP's typical day. Macdonald says he is excited to employ the tools, best practices, guidance and networking he received to improve the quality of service and fiscal sustainability of CFP.

## GRADUATE

**Jim Macdonald** is co-owner with his wife, Joy, of Commercial Flooring



*Jim Macdonald*

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installation, and maintenance of electronic security systems such as access control, video surveillance, intrusion detection, perimeter protection, and visitor management. With business partner Jon McCormack, the two industry veterans strive to be the subject matter experts their customers need. The firm has grown into a well-respected, trusted security partner for commercial, industrial, educational, property management, bio-tech, and medical facilities throughout eastern Pennsylvania, the Lehigh Valley, and southern New Jersey. His experience in site evaluation to determine appropriate security solutions adds significant value for customers. Prior to taking the helm at Paramount, at his prior firm Patitucci was instrumental in serving the security needs of prestigious institutions such as the University of Pennsylvania, Drexel University, the University of Kentucky; California State University Monterey Bay, Florida State University, and many others. He served as an Area Manager responsible for sales, installation and service teams supporting Philadelphia's highly-regarded University City District. Following a major acquisition, he was appointed National Director. Patitucci is a graduate of Cabrini University with a double major Bachelor Degree's in Criminology and Political Science. He has attended and participated in numerous physical and electronic security seminars, a member of ASIS International, IACLEA, CUPSA, and the National Police Defense Foundation, holds a CVI Certification with Department of Homeland Security and has CFATS training.

## GRADUATE

**Remo Patitucci** is the Owner/Managing Partner of Paramount Security Partners, specializing in design,



*Remo Patitucci*

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Services. She and her husband launched Pennsylvania's first Paul Mitchell Partner School in 2005 to provide award-winning education to aspiring cosmetologists. A busy entrepreneur, mom, lifelong equestrian, and boutique breeder of Italian mastiffs, committing to the class was an intimidating proposal she says was well worth it: "Not only am I learning new skill sets and ways of doing things to make my businesses more successful, I'm networking with other small business leaders and learning their best practices. This class is a must-do for any small business owner, no matter the industry. Come meet new people and get inspired and excited about your business again. I wish there was an Emerging Leaders Two - I don't want this to end." Sahagian attended Immaculata University, has 18 years experience in the professional beauty industry (sales, manufacturing, distribution, and education) and received Modern Salon's national Excellence in Education award several years in a row. She received the Beauty Changes Lives award for her decade-long service providing prom day hair and make-up for intellectually disabled and handicapped children and young adult students. Considered a founding funder of Wings for Success, a non-profit providing services to disadvantaged women reentering the workplace, she has provided hair and makeup services for their clients since 2006.

## GRADUATE

**Heather Sahagian** is Co-founder and Owner of GLOSS Salon and Style Bar and REVOLUTION Premium Salon



*Heather Sahagian*

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has been helping Fortune 500 and other leading companies get their products to market damage free, with speed and efficiency while remaining cost effective since 1999. Now celebrating its 20th year in business, the firm's services have expanded to include TL "truckload" and LTL "less than truckload" for dry freight, refrigerated and frozen products for shipments throughout the U.S. and Canada. The company also handles flatbed, expedited products, white glove, blanket wrap, power-only and driver-only services. The company is a WBENC-certified Women's Business Enterprise and a certified Woman-Owned Small Business. Zaleski began her career in sales and marketing in the transportation industry in 1994. After taking a few years off to raise her family, she decided it was time to get back into the business and TMT Logistics Inc. was born. A past president of the Delta Nu Alpha Transportation Fraternity, Zaleski served on the Board of Governors of the Traffic Club of the Lehigh Valley for three years. She says she is honored to be part of the Emerging Leaders program and the lifelong friendships she has made from it. She and her husband are both very proud of their daughters: a chemist working on method development and validation for drug testing prior to clinical trials while another is working full time on a psychiatric unit while pursuing a master's degree in social work with a minor in sociology.

## GRADUATE

**Karen Zaleski** is President and Owner of TMT Logistics, Inc., a third-party logistics provider based in Pennsylvania. TMT Logistics expertise



*Karen Zaleski*

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ment are hallmarks. Zanetti's focus is to provide experiences that draw on the children's abilities and interests while stimulating curiosity and students are provided opportunities to learn more about the world around them. Each year, Dynamic Learning Academy students participate in a number of community service and special projects throughout the year to learn, through philanthropic opportunities, that their efforts – no matter how small – truly make a difference in their community. Zanetti says her three daughters are her inspiration every day. "My eldest and youngest children are 15 years apart. I quickly found that the same concerns I had fifteen years earlier with childcare programs continued to persist. My 'a-ha!' moment was deciding to create the program I sought for my children. My amazing team and I watch the future blossom daily!" She says she feels she hasn't "worked" a day since, because she gets to do what she loves.

## GRADUATE

**Lynnette Zanetti** is owner of Dynamic Learning Academy, where the growth and development of each child in a fun, nurturing and safe environ-



*Lynnette Zanetti*



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The SBA Eastern Pennsylvania District congratulates all current and previous graduates and would like to thank the following for serving as guest experts during this year's Emerging Leaders program:

**Kersy Azocar, Finanta**

***Greg Bula, WSFS Bank***

**Michael Ciavarelli, WSFS Bank**

***Lucy Cortez, Community First Fund***

**Mike DiLeo, SCORE**

***Thomas Dowling, WSFS Bank***

**Joseph Gaudio, Gaudio CPA and Business Advisory, P.C.**

***John Packer, SCORE***

**Sherwood Robbins, Seedcopa**

***Adam Schubert, SCORE***

**Chad Shank, M&T Bank**

***Laurie Sterner,***

***Kutztown University Small Business Development Center***

**George Tapia, U.S. Small Business Administration**

***Bruce Thomas, Detweiler Hershey***

**Nate Weaver, Detweiler Hershey**



**Congratulations Emerging Leaders Class of 2019!**

***Bolanle Akingbade, River Oaks Homecare***

***John Baessler, Resolution Pest***

***Daniel Banks, Silver Crest Insurance, Inc.***

***Denise Barker, CB Construction Services, Inc.***

***Myles Biggs, Ritz-Craft Corporation***

***John Fisher, Brandywine Photonics***

***Vladislav Gordiyenko, Tee Hunt, LLC***

***Steve Graves, Sr., Play-a-Round Golf America, Inc.***

***William Holland, Anthony's Barbershop***

***Troy Kantner, Solve IT Solutions, LLC***

***Savas Logothetides, Wheel Restaurant***

***Jim Macdonald, Commercial Flooring Professionals, Inc.***

***Remo Patitucci, Paramount Security Partners***

***Heather Sahagian, Pulse Beauty Academy***

***Karen Zaleski, TMT Logistics Inc.***

***Lynnette Zanetti, Dynamic Learning Academy***