



# News Release

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## **SBA opens enrollment for its Emerging Leaders Initiative in Atlanta; helping small businesses to thrive**

*Program is designed to increase small business development in underserved communities*

**ATLANTA** – The [U.S. Small Business Administration](#) today announced the launch of the 2018 Emerging Leaders Initiative. The seven-month executive-level training program targets small businesses with high-growth potential in metro-Atlanta.

The SBA [Georgia District Office](#) is now accepting applications for the class that is scheduled to begin on **March 26**. Interested small business owners can learn more about eligibility requirements and apply by visiting the SBA's website: [www.sba.gov/emergingleaders](http://www.sba.gov/emergingleaders).

“Statistics show that while the number of small businesses, particularly in underserved communities, is increasing, many remain non-employer firms with limited revenue growth,” said [Terri Denison](#), director of the SBA's Georgia District Office. “Emerging Leaders affords existing entrepreneurs the opportunity to develop a strategic action plan to grow their businesses.”

The initiative delivers entrepreneurship education and training focused on small, poised-for-growth companies that are potential job creators. This intensive executive entrepreneurship training includes nearly 100 hours of classroom time per participant and provides the opportunity for small business owners to work with experienced coaches and mentors, attend workshops and develop connections with their peers, local city leaders and the financial community.

Nationwide, the program has trained more than 5,000 small business owners since its inception in 2008. It continues to be a catalyst for expanded opportunities. Nearly 70 percent of graduates have achieved revenue growth and over 80 percent have either retained all existing jobs or created new positions. Additionally, its graduates have secured federal, state, local and tribal contract awards of over \$3.16 billion

For additional information on the SBA's Emerging Leaders Initiative, or to contact the Georgia District Office, go online to [www.sba.gov/emergingleaders](http://www.sba.gov/emergingleaders).

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