



News Release

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Small Business Administration Officials Visit Mid-Coast Businesses

Officials use visits to promote Small Business Saturday

Augusta, Maine— To promote Small Business Saturday and shopping local this holiday season the U. S. Small Business Administration’s Region 1 Administrator, Seth Goodall visited multiple small businesses in Maine on Wednesday, November 26th to hear from the business owners and see first-hand the positive impact they have on the communities where they live.

Administrator Goodall was joined by the Department of Economic and Community Development, Senator Angus King’s Office, Rockland Maine Street, the City of Rockland, and the Town of Camden on visits to multiple businesses in Camden, Rockport, and Rockland.

Their first stop was in Camden to speak with Clean Bee Laundry owners Jennifer and Broo Temple along with Cyndi Prince of LooHoo, LLC. “It’s great to see how Cyndi has developed and produced LooHoo Wool Dryer Balls in Camden, and Clean Bee Laundry has partnered with LooHoo to market those products in the Laundromat, showing how local businesses can support each other and the wonderful level of collaboration that takes place in our state,” Said Goodall. Clean Bee used an SBA Microloan to upgrade equipment in the laundromat and LooHoo, LLC was the SBA’s Home Based Business of the Year in 2014.

The group then continued on to Rockport to visit a local restaurant, Willow Street Bake Shop to remind consumers that it’s important to eat local as well. Willow Street Bake Shop changed ownership a few years ago with the assistance of SBA guaranteed financing and has recently expanded their wholesale production and sales while maintaining quality of their products and their charming local shop.

The next stop for the group was in Rockland where they visited Heidi Vanorse Neal of The Loyal Biscuit Co. Loyal Biscuit Co was nominated for Woman Owned Business of the Year in 2014 and has been a Small Business Development Center client. The company has shown remarkable growth over the last few years and recently expanded into a fourth location yet continues to give back to the local community. While there, Ms. Vanorse Neal told the group about their upcoming “Fill our Window, Fill Their Bowls” fundraising campaign to help local animal shelters which is further proof of the value of small business dollars staying in our local communities.

The final destination of the day was down the road at Fiore Artisan Olive Oils and Vinegars to visit with Pat and Nancy O'Brien. Fiore was the SBA's Woman Owned Business of the Year award winner in 2013 and the business started and expanded with the assistance of SBA guaranteed loans. "Fiore is another local small business that has shown tremendous growth with six locations yet they continue to contribute to every community where they are located with Pat a very active member of the Rockland Main Street movement," Said Geroux. The store was recently featured on the Food Producers Walking Tour during the Juice Conference and continues to give back to local charities currently supporting the Meals on Wheels program through the sale of that organization's cookbook in their store.

Another interesting point that should be made about all of these retail businesses is they all sell their products online, so even if you choose to shop online, you can still shop local this holiday season.

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