

NSBW 2022

Building a Better America
through Entrepreneurship

Agenda and Awards Program



U.S. Small Business
Administration

Isabella Casillas Guzman

Administrator



Welcome to the U.S. Small Business Administration's annual celebration, a day to honor and celebrate America's entrepreneurs and innovative startups – National Small Business Week. We congratulate you, as part of the nation's 32.5 million small businesses for your perseverance, ingenuity, triumphs, and creativity.

For nearly 60 years, National Small Business Week has recognized small business giants for their tremendous impact on our economy.

When we talk about our remarkable small business growth, we talk about, you, the entrepreneurs who have faced unpredictable challenges yet continued to pivot and grow, despite an unimaginable world-wide pandemic that has brought on immense challenges we continue to address, such as rising inflation and supply chain disruption, as we build a better America.

Thank you for doing your part to power the nation's historic economic comeback!

Agenda *(all times are EST)*

VIRTUAL SUMMIT DAY 1 - MONDAY, MAY 2, 2022

11:00am-11:15am	Welcome SBA Administrator Welcome SCORE
11:15am-11:20am	Break
11:20am-12:20pm	Google – Coach your Team to Success
12:20pm-12:30pm	Break
12:30pm-1:30pm	T-Mobile – IoT Solutions: Unlock Your Business Growth, Simply
1:30pm-1:40pm	Break
1:40pm-2:40pm	Square – Great Product Photography
2:40pm-4:00pm	Break
4:00pm-5:00pm	Meta – Good Ideas Lead to Big Impact

VIRTUAL SUMMIT DAY 2 - TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2022

11:00am-12:00pm	Visa Live Economic & Small Business Outlook presentation: <i>The times they are a-changing</i>
12:00pm-12:10pm	Break
12:10pm-1:10pm	Constant Contact – Sell More with an Engaging Email Marketing Strategy
1:10pm-1:20pm	Break
1:20 pm-2:20pm	Samsung – Empowering a Hybrid Workforce: Business and tech best practices to unlock productivity and profit
2:20pm-2:30pm	Break
2:30pm-3:30pm	Chase – Your Next Level Business – How to build a foundation that lasts
3:30pm-3:40pm	Break
3:40pm-4:40pm	Amazon – Accelerating Your Small Business Success with Ecommerce
4:45pm-5:25pm	SBA – Navigating Today’s Small Business Landscape
5:25pm-5:30pm	Break
5:30pm-6:10PM	SBA – Securing Capital for Your Small Business - An Overview of SBA Programs

VIRTUAL SUMMIT DAY 3 - WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 2022

11:00am-11:30am	<i>Fireside Chat – Visa and SBA Administrator</i>
11:30am-11:40am	<i>Break</i>
11:40 am-12:40 pm	T-Mobile – <i>A 5G Future: Technology to Transform Business</i>
12:40pm-12:50pm	<i>Break</i>
12:50pm-1:50pm	Visa – <i>Fortifying Your Future: The power of a secure, digital and inclusive network to grow your business</i>
1:50pm-2:00pm	<i>Break</i>
2:00pm-3:00pm	Spectrum Reach – <i>How to build Authentic Relationships and Grow your Business</i>
3:00pm-3:10pm	<i>Break</i>
3:10pm-4:10pm	Vistage – <i>Embrace the Employee Revolution</i>
4:10pm-4:20pm	<i>Break</i>
4:20pm-5:00pm	SBA – <i>Grow Your Sales: Global Entrepreneurs Share Export Success Stories & Advice</i>

VIRTUAL WINNER CELEBRATION – THURSDAY, MAY 5, 2022

11:00am	<i>Welcome – Administrator</i>
	A Message from the President of the United States <i>(pre-recorded virtual remarks)</i>
	Visa Speaker: Veronica Fernandez, SVP and Regional Head of North America Business Solutions
	Announcement 2022 State & Territory Small Business Person(s) of the Year
	Phoenix Small Business of the Year Announced
	Announcement of Specialty Winners, including National Small Business Person of the Year Runner-Up
	National Small Business Person of the Year Announced
	Closing

NSBW 2022 Award Winners

2022 Alabama Small Business Person of the Year



Roland G. Brown, *Co-CEO/CFO*

Brown Precision Inc., Huntsville, AL

In 1986, the Roland E. Brown family purchased SEMCO, Inc., a machine shop company, renaming it to Brown Precision Inc. (BPI).

In 1995, Greg Brown joined the company. Since then, BPI has become a leader in the multi-axis machining and assembly of complex components in Huntsville, Alabama's aerospace, medical, and power generation markets.

In 2016, BPI expanded the business to a new manufacturing facility in Atmore, Alabama. This expansion has grown their square footage from an original 8,000 to a total of 80,000 square feet of manufacturing floor spaces across the two locations.

BPI has taken full advantage of SBA resources, during the pandemic they were able to receive first and second round PPP loans and a COVID19 EIDL in 2020. Most recently, they have utilized an SBA 504 loan of \$3,441,000 in April of 2021 and SBA 7a loan of \$1,718,000 in May of 2021.

2022 Arizona Small Business Person of the Year



Tracey Latham, *Founder & CEO*

Latham Industries, LLC, Phoenix, AZ

Tracey L. Latham is the founder and CEO of Latham Industries – an electronics contract manufacturer located in Phoenix, Arizona. Latham Industries specializes in printed circuit board assembly.

Tracey brings 25 years of industry experience, serving multiple manufacturers before forming her own business in 2016. Tracey's customer base crosses multiple industries, such as aerospace, commercial, medical, military, and security.

Tracey worked closely with the Arizona Women's Education and Entrepreneur Center (AWEEC), SCORE, and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), who guided her through regulatory logistics and connected her with a lender to secure an SBA loan for \$450,000.

Today, Tracey manages eight employees and maintains a healthy growth in revenues. She is a contributor to the Homeless Engagement Lift Partnership (HELP) and serves on the board of U & Improved Leadership Foundation.

2022 Arkansas Small Business Person of the Year



Jaim Krutz, *Owner* **Big Cuppa, LLC, Morrilton, AR**

Jaim Krutz is an owner of Big Cuppa, LLC, a craft coffee shop and roastery in Morrilton, Arkansas.

In 2017, Jaim and her family opened Big Cuppa to give a space for artists, poets, singers, and many others to share their talents. She knew this was what her community needed and deserved.

For two years after opening, Jaim and her husband were homeless. They did not pay themselves and invested all their resources into Big Cuppa. Receiving assistance from SBA Resource Partner ASBTDC and finding unique business opportunities in their community brought success for the business. A 2021 Emerging Leaders Initiative graduate,

Jaim now boasts 12 employees and utilized the lessons learned to open a second drive-thru location and increase their revenues by 55 percent last year.

Jaim assists other business owners, donates heavily to her community, and provides a venue for fundraising events to show appreciation for her neighborhood.

2022 California Small Business Person of the Year



Hernán Luis y Prado, *CEO/Founder* **VetPowered, LLC, San Diego, CA**

U.S. Navy veteran Hernán Luis y Prado and his wife Rachel started VetPowered, an advanced manufacturing services company, in their garage in 2009 to fund, “Workshops for Warriors”, a non-profit advanced manufacturing training and career placement program for veterans.

The Prado’s purchased a building, in 2011, with SBA 7(a) and 504 loans. A number of SBA resource partner organizations provided technical assistance helping VetPowered grow steadily since then, working with private firms and government agencies as a HUBZone certified and 8(a) firm. SBA’s EIDL and PPP funding helped VetPowered during the COVID-19 shutdowns.

In 2020 and 2021, Hernán quickly transitioned into web-based training and sales and pivoted, launching a VetPowered line of Advanced Manufacturing products.

VetPowered has 18 employees and 145,000 sq. ft. of space and is poised for business growth to support Hernán’s mission is to bring manufacturing jobs back to America, one Veteran at a time.

2022 Colorado Small Business Person of the Year



Dr. Jena Questen, *Owner* **Aspen Park Vet Hospital, Confer, Colorado**

Jena Questen graduated as a veterinarian in 2001 and in 2005 became a certified veterinary acupuncturist and started her house call practice.

In 2006 she married and had 2 children. Shortly thereafter, a costly divorce left her and the children homeless for the next 7 years. During these years, she studied business and furthered her education.

In 2016, Jena purchased Aspen Park Vet Hospital when she realized the current owner, in practice for over 50 years and needing to retire, did not have an exit plan.

Through the help of the SBA's Emerging Leaders program and Disaster Assistance loan, she was able to keep her payroll rolling through the pandemic. Jena has steadily grown her business year by year with relatively the same staff and sales from \$650,000/year to over 1 million in 2021.

2022 Connecticut Small Business Person of the Year



Viron Rondo, *Owner* **Viron Rondo Osteria, Cheshire, CT**

Viron Rondos grew up in Greece and began working in restaurants in Athens at the age of 17. In 1999 he moved to New York City and worked for the now famous "Patsy's Pizzeria" chain. He worked diligently as a manager helping to open new locations across the city and at other restaurants' as well.

In 2007, Rondos and his family relocated to Litchfield County, Connecticut where he became a partner in the Italian de Capo restaurants in Avon and Litchfield, where he was responsible for managing operations. In 2014 Rondos launched his own restaurant, Viron Rondo Osteria in Cheshire, CT and the rest is history.

Today, Rondos is the master of what has become one of Connecticut's most popular restaurants. Rondos has created 65 jobs and has annual sales of over \$6 million dollars. Recently the restaurant was awarded the 2021 CT Restaurant Association's Restaurant of the Year for the Southern Region of Connecticut. Rondos says he is living the American dream and without the help of SBA programs such as PPP, EIDL and 504 loans, none of it would have been possible.

2022 Delaware Small Business Person of the Year



Lisa M. St. Clair, *President/CEO*
Tailbangers, Inc., Millsboro, DE

Lisa M. St. Clair is the founder, owner, and President of Tailbangers, Inc., a nationally recognized dog treat bakery.

Tailbangers produces all-natural, human-grade ingredient dog treats. They are aesthetically pleasing and unique, incorporating “every day” and “seasonal” themes. The company’s brand recognition has grown through creative packaging, creative designs, and customization.

Founded in 2003, with just one employee and no revenue, Tailbangers has grown to 46 employees and five million in annual revenues. Along the way, Lisa has benefited from SBA and SBDC assistance. An SBA-backed loan allowed Lisa to buy out her partner.

More recently, another SBA \$ 1.7 million loan allowed Tailbangers to purchase property previously leased and funded a 9500 square foot expansion.

Despite losing a one million dollar per year contract because a major pet store chain closed all of its stores during COVID, Tailbangers used SBA’s Paycheck Protection Program to retain employees and continue growing revenues.

2022 District of Columbia Small Business Person of the Year



Eduardo F. Ortiz, *CEO*
Ashleigh Tara Nicole Axios, *CXO*
Coforma, LLC, Washington, D.C.

CEO Eduardo Ortiz and CXO Ashleigh Axios founded “&Partners” in 2017 to design innovative data systems and user-centered technology products for a diverse clientele. Rebranded as Coforma, the company has grown from three to 60 employees. Eduardo reinvested during the pandemic to overcome challenges around staffing, finances, workplace dynamics, and finding new contracts.

An SBA 8(a) firm since December 2020, revenues have skyrocketed from \$184,000 in 2018 to \$8.4 million in 2021. Also, in 2021, Eduardo and Ashleigh directed \$10,000 to Codesmith’s Veterans Coding Scholarship fund, provided in-kind civic design services valued at \$95,000, and donated \$1,000 to Queer Design Club in honor of LGBT Pride Month.

A military veteran, Eduardo is an active member of the Afghanistan and Iraq Veterans of America. Ashleigh volunteers in leadership roles with the American Institute of Graphic Arts and the Rhode Island School of Design to promote the power of design for positive change.

2022 Florida Small Business Person of the Year



Dennis Chan, *Chef/Owner*

Blue Bamboo Canton Bistro and Bar, Jacksonville, FL

Dennis Chan, owner of Blue Bamboo Canton Bistro and Bar, opened his restaurant in 2005 after attending the Culinary Institute of America. Poised to attend law school, Dennis opted to open the restaurant to continue his family's legacy.

Dennis worked with the SBA's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at the University of North Florida for business and disaster assistance. He also participated in the SBA's ScaleUp Initiative. In 2020, Dennis purchased and rehabbed a building with an SBA 504-loan guarantee. He utilized an SBA Paycheck Protection Program loan after a significant drop in revenue during the pandemic. The business faced opening delays due to the pandemic, and also permit and construction delays.

The restaurant has multiple functional spaces and a glass enclosure for cooking classes. In 2019, sales reached \$666,000 with 21 employees. In 2021, the business recovered and grew to a record \$1.4 million in sales with 29 employees. Chan supports several charities and is part of the SBDC small business advisory council.

2022 Georgia Small Business Person of the Year



Ardina T. Pierre, *CEO*

Nature's Own Herb Shop, Inc., Atlanta, GA

Ardina Pierre is the CEO and owner of Nature's Own Herb Shop Inc., providing natural whole foods, nutritional and body care products, and expert advice in Atlanta for over 20 years.

Ardina has been a client of SBA resource partner Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs (ACE) since 2012, acquiring several loans to improve and expand her business. In 2017, she received an SBA-backed loan to improve her building's energy, further reducing costs and lowering energy consumption. In 2020, she opened a second location with the help of the SBA.

ACE recognized Ardina as the 2019 Outstanding Woman Entrepreneur of the Year, and she has also been recognized by the Atlanta Business League as one of Atlanta's Top 100 Black Women of Influence. Additionally, she is a member of ACE's High Performing Group, a cohort of women entrepreneurs displaying a historical growth pattern with revenues near or exceeding \$500,000.

2022 Hawaii Small Business Person of the Year



Scott E. Loomer, *President*

Truss Systems Hawaii, Inc., Puunene, HI

After lifelong experience in the construction field, Scott Loomer has seen the industry evolve from a labor-intensive operation to an industry utilizing modern technology to minimize cost and product waste and improve working conditions for employees. In 1994, he established Truss Systems Hawaii, Inc. with just six employees.

Twenty-seven years later, Scott now employs 27 that he was able to retain during the COVID-19 pandemic with help from two rounds of the SBA's Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) disaster loan funding. He used this time to make repairs to the property and equipment and also focus on a company he started in 2009, ShedPro Hawaii. Before the pandemic, the Truss Systems Hawaii's revenues were at an all-time high of over \$8.2 million.

Scott is a staunch supporter of Habitat for Humanity. He has donated products and materials and given preferential pricing at cost for homes built at Kahoma Village. He holds leadership roles in several industry groups.

2022 Idaho Small Business Person of the Year



Marcella Medor, *President*

MarCom, LLC, Idaho Falls, ID

An Abenaki Tribal Member, Marcella Medor, was fascinated by science from an early age. She put herself through a two-year Radiation Protection Program and graduated with honors. Marcella worked in the nuclear industry for several years before starting her own radiation protection company in 2003, MarCom, LLC.

With offices in Idaho Falls, Idaho, Butte, Mont., and Fort Collins, Colo., MarCom provides radioactive waste management, environmental services, radiological controls, engineering, industrial hygiene, nuclear operations, and information technology. The business also supplies project planning, staff augmentation, and professional staffing services.

MarCom contracts with the Department of Energy at the Idaho National Laboratory, Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Kentucky, and the Performance Demonstration Program in Carlsbad, New Mexico, at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant. Without the SBA's 8(a) Business Development Program and Native-American certification, these and other projects would likely not have been awarded.

MarCom has grown from 72 employees in 2017 to 125 employees in 2022, with revenue increasing by 51 percent.

2022 Illinois Small Business Person of the Year



Chris Ginder, *Owner/CEO*

Mary Ginder, *Owner/COO*

Gindo's Spice of Life, LLC, St. Charles, IL

Chris and Mary Ginder launched Gindo's Spice of Life in the Spring of 2011 in Los Angeles, California, and relocated the business to Illinois in 2015.

Gindo's fresh pepper hot sauces are handcrafted to inspire creativity in the kitchen and support local farms. Based in the suburbs of Chicago, the company sells their sauces at local farmers markets and wholesale to select stores and restaurants.

The business received an SBA working capital loan in 2018 and a COVID EIDL in 2020, in addition to two PPP loans.

Though the pandemic presented new challenges, they were able to open a storefront location in 2020 with the help of an SBA-backed loan and leverage online sales. From 2020 to 2021, revenue increased by 57% and net profit increased by almost \$60,000. From 2019-2021, Gindo's doubled their employees. (They had zero employees in 2017 and now they have eight).

2022 Indiana Small Business Person of the Year



Donte Lamar Wilburn, *President*

Premier Unlimited LLC, Lafayette, IN

Donte Wilburn grew up in Lafayette, Indiana. During high school, Donte was struggling and turned to illicit activities to make money. In 2004, he was arrested, convicted, and sentenced for his crimes.

While in work-release Donte worked at Premier Detailing as an auto detailer. He saw the effects low wages and no respect had on his peers and vowed to make a change -- for himself, the industry, and his community -- by buying the shop where he worked.

After completing his sentence, Donte began working with the Hoosier Heartland SBDC and in 2018 bought Premier Detailing. In 2020, he opened two more spaces and increased service capabilities. During the pandemic, Donte secured an EIDL and took advantage of the Digital Marketing Assistance Program to re-map marketing strategy. In 2021 Donte won Indiana SBDC Entrepreneur of the Year and was recognized by Governor Eric Holcomb for opening Legacy Courts, a 3000 sq ft sports complex for underprivileged youth.

2022 Iowa Small Business Person of the Year



Kimberly Baeth, *President*
Golden Openings, Inc., Urbandale, IA

“Where on Earth can I find giant scissors that really cut?”

That question led Kimberly Baeth to start Golden Openings in 1997. She worked at a local Chamber of Commerce that received multiple requests to coordinate Grand Openings, but they didn’t provide that service. Business owners had nowhere to turn until Kimberly started her business.

Golden Openings, which offers grand openings, ribbon cuttings, and groundbreakings to small businesses, has helped thousands of businesses open their doors for over 25 years. Kimberly started at home alone, but today Golden Openings employs 14, has an office, has a warehouse space, and has experienced a yearly average annual revenue

growth of 20%.

The COVID 19 pandemic significantly impacted Golden Openings. Kimberly credits two SBA Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans that helped see her through to 2021 when the company had its best revenue year ever.

“The PPP loan was a lifeline that helped our company endure and adjust to changing market needs,” Baeth says.

2022 Kansas Small Business Person of the Year



Daniel J. Smoots *Owner*
Janeice E. Smoots, *Owner*
Fanestil Meats, Emporia, KS

Husband and wife, Daniel and Janeice Smoots, were raised in the same town of McLouth, Kansas. Dan started working in the meat processing sector and eventually became a Director of Personnel for two meat processors. Janeice had 22 years of management experience in the agriculture industry. Starting in 1983, Dan helped manage human resources for the previous owner of Fanestil Meats. That working relationship led Dan and Janeice to buy Fanestil Meats with another investor and

SBA financing in October 1997. The Smoots became the sole owners of Fanestil Meats in 2005.

Since then, Dan and Janeice have doubled the size of their facilities with the help of multiple SBA 504 loans. During the COVID-19 pandemic, they were able to maintain their operations in 2020-2021 with the help of Paycheck Protection Program funding.

Today, Fanestil Meats continues to grow its business with Dan and Janeice’s two sons joining in management of the family business. Dan and Janeice also donate food, shoes, and funds annually to seven local nonprofits that assist the homeless and youth.

2022 Kentucky Small Business Person of the Year



Alejandro Ramirez, *Owner*
Universal Spartan, LLC, Vine Grove, KY

Alejandro Ramirez, owner of Universal Spartan, LLC, launched his own business with one employee after retiring from the military.

SBA programs have enabled Universal Spartan to be awarded contracts with the Federal government and to expand its business internationally through exports. With SBA's help, Alejandro changed his business model by becoming 8(a) certified and SDVOSB certified and receiving a STEP grant to assist in doing business globally. He credits the SBA, SBDC, PTAC, U.S. Export Assistance Center, SBA Boots to Business, and the SBA Emerging Leaders program with getting him on the path of success.

Today, Universal Spartan employs 12 independent contractors and has transformed into a defense contractor that provides tactical, IT, medical, electrical equipment, and supplies. Universal Spartan, LLC has revenue that exceeds \$1.8 million.

Alejandro also founded the Kentucky Veterans Business Alliance in 2017 to provide education and empowerment to all veterans with the resources and assistance to prepare them for their move beyond the military.

2022 Louisiana Small Business Person of the Year



Craig A. Stevens, *President*
Genesis 360, LLC, Baton Rouge, LA

Craig Stevens started Genesis 360, LLC in 2011. His first jobs were stripping parking lots. When he was asked to perform painting, sign removals, and lawn services, his "aha" moment happened when he was asked to perform construction services. Because Mr. Stevens wanted a "one stop shop" for maintenance and construction, he worked hard to obtain his commercial and residential construction license.

In three years, the company grew from one full-time employee to over 50. Revenues grew from \$1,594,170 annually to \$7 million.

Genesis 360, LLC is 8(a), HUBZone, SDVOSB, MBE, and DBE certified. With a goal of progressive expansion, the firm has performed numerous contracts with Federal, State, and local agencies across the United States.

Mr. and Mrs. Craig Stevens were elected as Ambassadors for the March of Dimes in 2019. In addition to the pair continuing to support and advocate for the March of Dimes, Mr. Stevens is a huge and strong supporter of St. Jude for Children. He furthers his community service by volunteering time to work on projects with Leadership Ascension.

2022 Maine Small Business Person of the Year



Tyler A. Frank, *President & Founder* **Garbage to Garden**, Portland, ME

In 2012, Tyler Frank started Garbage to Garden out of his Portland, Maine apartment with \$300 and a pickup truck. Garbage to Garden is a food scrap recycling business, providing curbside composting to clients throughout Maine and the Boston area. The company provides services to over 11,000 households and hundreds of businesses, schools, and events.

When Tyler started his business, with food waste going to his mother's backyard, customers started pouring in, so he had to move into a larger commercial space. Garbage to Garden has continued to grow, and with the help of an SBA 504 loan, Tyler was able to purchase and develop a composting site in Cumberland County. The company is well-positioned for future growth.

Tyler's company is based on the principle of sustainability, and he supports local organizations through the company's volunteer program. He also donates hundreds of yards of compost to school and community gardens annually.

2022 Maryland Small Business Person of the Year



Tarandeep Singh Bawa, *President and CEO* **ITegrity, Inc.**, Silver Spring, MD

Tarandeep Bawa founded ITegrity, an IT services firm in 2009 and was the company's lone employee. Today, Mr. Bawa's team includes 80 workers. SBA helped Bawa overcome challenges in navigating ITegrity's day-to-day business operations and increasing the company's bottom line through teaming arrangements, marketing strategy refinements, and federal contracting opportunities through his 8(a) certification.

ITegrity grew its annual revenues from \$1.7M in 2017 to \$15M in 2021, with forecasts to surpass \$25M in 2022. Bawa believes that ITegrity must cultivate successful relationships with a variety of stakeholders to have long term success. ITegrity continues to build a caring corporate culture by providing volunteer service events in Silver Spring, MD, where many of the firm's employees live and work. Those opportunities allow

employees to connect with one another and the community in ways that promote openness and diversity.

2022 Massachusetts Small Business Person of the Year



Gregory Acerra, *Owner*
Fireking Baking Company, Braintree, MA

Greg Acerra, a restaurateur, started Fireking Baking Company in 1995 to provide freshly baked European style breads to his restaurants, clubs and catering company.

Fireking Baking Company is an innovator in the baking industry, delivering fresh and frozen baked goods through a national distribution network. Although Fireking rustic loaves are still formed by hand and baked in hearth ovens by artisan bakers, most of the bread is produced using a stress-free semi-automated artisan process.

Acerra loves growing his business and seeing his people share in the success of the company. He continues to reinvest in new state-of-the-art equipment with the cash flow flexibility achieved through SBA 504 financing. As a result, Fireking Baking Company's return-on-investment is efficiencies in production and effectiveness in his 137 full-time and 152 temporary employees.

The Fireking line has grown to include over 300 types of breads baked for food service, retail and private labeling.

2022 Michigan Small Business Person of the Year



Tarolyn Buckles, *President and CEO*
Onyx Enterprises, Inc., Detroit, MI

Tarolyn Buckles is the President and CEO of Onyx Enterprise, Inc., a certified woman and minority owned engineering consulting firm headquartered in Detroit with offices in Cleveland, and Atlanta. Onyx Enterprise, Inc. was established in 2007, and launched full-time in 2011. Some of Onyx's signature projects are M-1 Rail, I-94 Bridge Municipal Utility design; MDOT I-69, I-94 Jackson, and I-75 Construction Engineering; DWSD Construction Inspection services (Prime Consultant), Joe Louis Greenway; GLWA and Wayne County Airport Projects.

Buckles is a graduate of the University of Michigan Civil Engineering Structures. She has worked 34 years in the civil engineering, construction and real estate industry.

Buckles is also alumni of the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Business program and the SBA's Emerging Leaders program. She serves as U of M Civil Engineering Alumni Board Chair, on the board of the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) and Founder of National Association of Minority Consulting Engineers (NAMCE).

2022 Minnesota Small Business Person of the Year



Kristen Marie Denzer, CEO & Founder
Tierra Encantada, Minneapolis, MN

Kristen Marie Denzer is the owner of Tierra Encantada, a Spanish immersion center with nine locations in Minnesota and Illinois.

In 2013, while searching for quality early education for her child, Denzer founded Encantada's first location in Eagan, Minnesota. Encantada provides childcare that is focused on teaching a respect for diversity, and includes organic meals designed to expand young palates. The company has 175 employees.

Like most businesses, Encantada faced roadblocks during the pandemic but adapted with distance learning to improve cashflow and meet the needs of their families. The business has received multiple 7(a) and 504 SBA-backed loans since its inception,

which have been instrumental to the company's growth.

Denzer contributes money, time and resources to her community and charities, including Wildcat Sanctuary, Women-Venture (an SBA WBC), and more.

2022 Mississippi Small Business Person of the Year



Lesia Daniel-Hollingshead,

Owner

William Walter Daniel, Jr.,

Owner

Funtime Afterschool of Clinton, Inc, Clinton, MS

Lesia Daniel Hollingshead and Walter Daniel, Jr., are the owners of Funtime Afterschool of Clinton, a family business located in Clinton, Mississippi.

In 2000, Daniel-Hollingshead, and her brother, Walter Daniel, acknowledged the growing need for quality after-school care for children. They opened Funtime Afterschool using their parents' skating rink facility. The need for childcare extended to younger children and infant care in the community. Presently, Daniel-Hollingshead and Daniel have three locations and manages 128 employees. Funtime Afterschool credits SBA's COVID-19 programs for keeping the doors open when the pandemic hit in 2020. It received two rounds of PPP and EIDL loans. Funtime Afterschool was able to maintain operation of the childcare facilities amid increased overhead and day to day operational costs.

It has several service projects in the community, church, and schools. Funtime hires interns in early childhood education from local colleges.

2022 Missouri Small Business Person of the Year



Jennifer Garrett Hart, *President/Owner* **Hartline Construction, LLC**, Kansas City, MO

In 2011, Jennifer Garrett-Hart founded Hartline Construction, a woman-owned, economically-disadvantaged small business based in Kansas City, Missouri. Hartline specializes in carpentry, painting, flooring, selective concrete, and demolition in Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska.

Hartline increased sales from \$3.9 million to \$11.5 million and employees from 78 to 287 between 2019 and 2021. In 2019, Hartline won the carpentry bid to build the terminal project at the Kansas City International Airport—one of the largest construction projects in Kansas City’s history.

Hartline received counseling from the Missouri Small Business Development Center at University of Missouri Kansas City and received SBA funded PPP and EIDL financial assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic. The company also gives back locally by donating construction resources to people and entities in need.

2022 Montana Small Business Person of the Year



Natalie R. VanDusen, *Chief Caffeinator*

DeeJay Newell, *Bean Ambassador* **Treeline Coffee Roasters**, Bozeman, MT

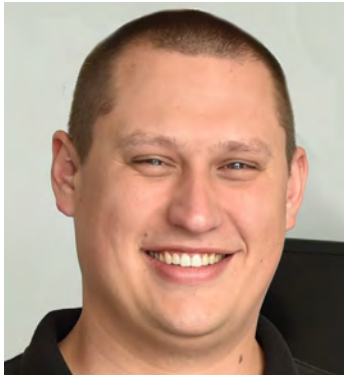
Natalie Van Dusen and DeeJay Newell are co-owners of Treeline Coffee Roasters, a coffee roastery and two cafes in Bozeman, Montana. Van Dusen and Newell work alongside a stellar team of 24 baristas, roasters, designers, and bakers to create a brand rooted in community, driven by craftsmanship, and inspired by the story of how coffee

finds its way into our bellies to fuel the things we love.

Treeline’s sales grew exponentially during COVID because Treeline pivoted its focus to local deliveries, a subscription program, and building new outdoor seating. SBA’s COVID assistance programs helped catapult the business forward, and Treeline shows no signs of stopping. They have customers in all 50 states and export to 14 countries.

Treeline strives to get more women involved in outdoor activities, donating to various organizations in the outdoor industry. Newell also serves on the Prospera Women’s Business Center Board.

2022 Nebraska Small Business Person of the Year



Taylor Korensky, *Chief Executive Officer*

Jade Jensen, *Chief Operations Officer*

Spencer Robinson, *Chief Technology Officer*

Appsky, LLC, Omaha, NE

Taylor Korensky, Jade Jensen, and Spencer Robinson are the dream team for Appsky, LLC, a human-centered creative agency that specializes in software design and consulting services in Omaha, Nebraska.



Taylor started Appsky in 2016 shortly after graduating from the University of Nebraska Omaha's Information Technology Innovation program. Jade joined Appsky in 2017 as their first employee and quickly became the COO, and Spencer joined early on as a partner and Chief Technology Officer. Despite the pandemic, Appsky, LLC experienced phenomenal growth between 2019 and 2021, with sales soaring from \$300k in 2019 to over \$1.2M in 2021. Taylor and Jade worked extensively with the Nebraska Business Development Center in Omaha to develop their business plan and financial projections to secure a microloan with SBA microlender Nebraska

Enterprise Fund. All three are dedicated to furthering entrepreneurial development in Omaha and are involved in many organizations such as Tech Omaha, Omaha's One Million Cups, and the Greater Omaha Chamber's Engagement Council.

2022 Nevada Small Business Person of the Year



Andrea Vigil, *COO*

Allegiant Electric, LLC, Las Vegas, NV

Founded in 2015, Allegiant Electric is a full-service electric commercial, industrial, and residential service. Vigil established a woman minority-owned company in a predominately male industry. Starting with three employees, by 2019 Allegiant Electric had 27. Revenue increased from 2017 to 2018 by 24% and from 2018 to 2019 by 59%.

Two PPP loans, an EIDL, and skills learned through SBA's Emerging Leaders Initiative, insured Allegiant Electric's survival during the COVID-19 pandemic. They met payroll, hired eight new employees, purchased three service vehicles, and increased job bidding capacity to \$1,000,000.

Certified as WBE, MBE, DBE, SBE, ESB, they contract with the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Allegiant Electric is currently pursuing SBA 504 financing to purchase a building so it may expand operations.

Mrs. Vigil holds a bachelor's and master's degree, is enrolled in the prestigious Stanford Latino Entrepreneurship Initiative-Scaling Program; and sits on the Lutheran Social Services board.

2022 New Hampshire Small Business Person of the Year



Sara B. Nadeau, *Administrator/Owner* **Carriage Hill Assisted Living**, Madbury, NH

Sara's entrepreneurial journey began in 2013 after separating from the U.S. Air Force with the rank of Major. Partnering with her husband and brother, Sara designed and opened an assisted living facility in Madbury, New Hampshire. Carriage Hill Assisted Living opened in 2015 offering a 24-bed residence. The project was financed with a 504 loan from Granite State Development Corporation and third-party lender, Optima Bank & Trust (now Cambridge Trust).

Due to the pandemic, Carriage Hill Assisted Living faced some challenges but was able to sustain their workforce of 44 with a PPP loan and achieved \$1M in sales for the past 3 years.

Sara also finds time to work in another family business offering a space for events, is on the board of directors for NH Association of Residential Care Homes (NHARCH) and supports many local scholarships and projects.

2022 New Jersey Small Business Person of the Year



Beverly Zaccherio, *President and Founder* **Senior Solutions for the Jersey Shore, LLC**, Point Pleasant, New York

Beverly Zaccherio, President and Founder of Senior Solutions for the Jersey Shore, LLC, started her business in 2013 after she was downsized from her longtime marketing position at a manufacturer. Beverly pivoted and reinvented herself, turning an idea into a staple of the South Jersey senior care community.

After working in the industry for almost a decade, Beverly noticed gaps in care and seniors having difficulty navigating the health care industry and independence-altering choices. With counseling and a strong business plan, Beverly grew her business with ten dedicated employees who provide services for seniors in their homes. When COVID

hit, Beverly used the proceeds from an SBA COVID EIDL Advance to retain workers and safely provide services to customers – a vital resource to meet the crucial needs for families caring for the seniors in their lives.

2022 New Mexico Business Person of the Year



Joy Colucci, *Owner and CEO*

Metis Technology Solutions, Inc., Albuquerque, NM

Dr. Joy Colucci owns Metis Technology Solutions, Inc., a woman-owned small business based in Albuquerque, New Mexico—operating in New Mexico, Colorado, California, Ohio, Virginia, and Maryland. Metis began in 2011 and currently employs 150 systems and software engineers. Metis provides aeronautics and space systems development expertise to NASA, the U.S. Air Force, and other federal agencies. Metis has received over 45 NASA achievement awards.

The SBA assisted Dr. Colucci in her business endeavors, including SCORE counseling, business-certification workshops, and the SBA’s Mentor Protégé program. She received valuable insights working with a mentor, aspiring a joint venture, allowing Metis to pursue larger federal contracts. The New Mexico PTAC was also instrumental in providing

knowledge, guidance, and resources.

Metis has a “Volunteering Time-Off” employee program and supports STEM careers and educational programs for young women, providing two female engineering students full scholarships.

Dr. Colucci resides in Placitas, New Mexico, with her husband Tony and hikes in the Sandia Mountains most weekends

2022 New York Business Person of the Year



Steven Olschewski, *President/CEO*

Clubhouse Fun Center, Rochester, NY

Steven R. Olschewski is the owner of Clubhouse Fun Center, a family entertainment centers with two locations in his hometown of Rochester, New York.

In 1996, Steven started his own vending business and ran that business successfully for 12 years until selling the company to focus on his second business, Big Boy Entertainment which he formed in 2002 after purchasing a former Putt-Putt location he had worked at during his teenage years.

With a growth in sales and second location, today Steven manages 26 employees.

Like most businesses, Steven’s centers suffered during the pandemic. Combating a major loss in revenue, Steven credits SBA’s COVID-19 EIDL relief program for his success

in re-opening and maintaining his staff. Since reopening, revenues have increased and 2021 is now the centers best year yet.

2022 North Carolina Small Business Person of the Year



Kristen M. Hess, AIA, *Founder, CEO*
HH Architecture, Raleigh, NC

In 2005, Kristen Hess founded HH Architecture as a full-service design firm focused on creating spaces that promote discovery, wellness, recreation, and civic service. The firm uses a collaborative, partner-style design approach in its work.

Hess's biggest challenge was ensuring her staff of 40 could continue working during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, Hess obtained a \$369,839 Paycheck Protection Program loan that was fully forgiven. HH Architecture concluded 2020 with \$6.2B in sales.

HH Architecture is the recipient of two SBA 504 loans (for \$313,000 and \$902,000) for the purchase of its buildings in Raleigh.

Hess currently serves on the Greater Raleigh Chamber Executive Committee, the Governor's Council on Historically Underutilized Businesses, and the Board of Directors for the Girl Scouts of North Carolina Coastal Pines.

Additionally, Hess was bestowed the Award of Excellence for Professional Service by the North Carolina Historically Underutilized Business Office as a woman/minority-owned firm.

2022 North Dakota Small Business Person of the Year



Sylvia Lunski, *Owner & President*
Design Direction Inc., Fargo, ND

Sylvia Lunski is the founder and President of Design Direction Inc., a design firm that sells and installs floor covering products, rugs, and furniture to both residential and commercial clients. The second oldest of eight children, Lunski gained her entrepreneurial spirit while growing up on a small dairy and grain farm. This experience established her strong work ethic and importance of community service. Today, her business employs seven employees and has revenues of over one million dollars.

Over the years, Lunski had to overcome adversity including the 2008 recession that adversely affected sales, and in 2018 when smoke damage destroyed her inventory when a nearby warehouse caught on fire. As an essential business, Lunski was able to keep her business open during the pandemic.

Lunski graduated from the SBA's Emerging Leaders program, and credits SBA-sponsored training and mentors for helping to develop her business knowledge and leadership skills.

2022 Ohio Small Business Person of the Year



Laura Licursi, *Owner*
Elite Virtual Assistants, Strongsville, Ohio

After working as a virtual assistant for 20 years, Laura Licursi founded Elite Virtual Assistants in 2015. She wanted to give women, especially mothers, the opportunity to work from home in a rewarding career. The company provides administrative, technical, and marketing services to small businesses.

Elite Virtual Assistants was profoundly impacted by the pandemic. However, because Laura used SCORE, Women's Business Center of Northern Ohio, SBDC and PTAC services, two PPP loans and an EIDL loan, the company emerged from COVID thriving, with robust two-year growth and 50 plus employees.

Laura is deeply involved in her community: she volunteers for Cleveland Food Bank, Dress for Success, the Rene Jones Empowerment Center, and local schools. She serves on the program committee of Cleveland NAWBO. In addition, Laura has led national SCORE webinars, conducts seminars for Cleveland SCORE, teaches workshops for the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association, and authors blogs promoting women's entrepreneurship.

2022 Oklahoma Small Business Person of the Year



John Adam Oglesbee, *CEO*
Warfeather, LLC, Coweta, OK

J. Adam Oglesbee is the President/CEO of Warfeather, LLC. Warfeather provides General Contracting and Construction Management Services for Local, State and Federal Agencies.

Warfeather received counseling from the Oklahoma SBA District Office, Tulsa SCORE and OKPTAC. SBA assistance includes the 8(a) program in 2018; SBA backed Lines of Credit; PPP Round 1, 2 and EIDL.

In 2017, Warfeather was still a home-based business. In 2020 it purchased an office building to house its 20 employees. Since 2015 Warfeather has grown every year from \$1m in gross sales to \$12m in 2021.

Oglesbee joined the US Army at age 17 and served from 1997 to 2006. While serving, he completed a degree in Construction Management. He founded his company in 2008 and chose the name Warfeather as a tribute to his proud Choctaw Heritage and military service.

Oglesbee consistently supports charitable organizations focusing on foster children and veteran support.

2022 Oregon Small Business Person of the Year



Kevin Shaw, LCSW, CADC III/
Co-Owner

Angie Shaw, Co-Owner
Brightways Counseling Group,
LLC, Redmond, OR

Husband and wife team Kevin and Angie Shaw are the co-owners of Brightways Counseling Group whose counselors offer whole person care for people suffering from a variety of different mental health issues in Central Oregon.

The couple combined Kevin's 10 years of experience in providing supervision and oversight for a community behavioral health clinic in Central Oregon with Angie's extensive experience in operations management to stand up Brightways Counseling Group in 2017. What started with one clinic and eight employees has grown to four locations in Bend, Madras, Redmond, and Woodburn, Oregon with 58 employees.

The demand for mental health services has increased over the past few years and with the help of the SBA 504 loan program, Kevin and Angie were able to secure financing to purchase two of its locations they were previously leasing. In 2021, Brightways Counseling Group helped 2,634 patients be the best version of themselves.

2022 Pennsylvania Small Business Person of the Year



John Martincic, President

Forest Scientific Corporation, Tionesta, PA

John Martincic, president of Forest Scientific Corporation, is a global leader in Computerized Numerical Control machinery, supplying the U.S. and 52 countries. Headquartered in rural Forest County, Pennsylvania, an area with no traffic lights or radio station, Forest Scientific Corporation is experiencing exponential growth.

An SBA-backed loan helped construct a new, 67,000 square foot building to manufacture specialized equipment controlling complex machinery, such as lathes and grinders, that cut and create parts. It's a dream come true for John, who started his one-man, garage-based business 33 years ago. Today, his products span the globe and industries from guitar companies, sign makers, and schools.

John used the SBA's Exporting Assistance and COVID-19 EIDL Programs to grow and stabilize operations. It proved successful. Sales have nearly doubled in the past year, and he's hiring more employees.

John donates millions of dollars in equipment and time to provide training to schools and foundations.

2022 Puerto Rico Small Business Person of the Year



Carlos Cosme Marrero, *President* **JK Logistic Transport Inc.**, Toa Baja PR

Carlos Cosme Marrero is the President of JK Logistic Transport Inc., a cargo transportation company based in Toa Baja, Puerto Rico.

Carlos started his trucking business with two vehicles. The company has grown over 14 years to a fleet of 27 trucks, with 23 employees. It has also specialized in hazardous materials transportation, including liquid natural gas.

Carlos' growth has been linked hand in hand with SBA assistance. Since 2013, he secured six SBA-guaranteed commercial loans and a PPP loan in 2020. Like most businesses, JK Logistic Transport Inc. suffered financially in 2020. However, revenues rebounded 42% in 2021.

Carlos is well respected in his local community, where he supports chosen charities. Following Hurricane Maria in 2017 and the 2020 earthquakes in Puerto Rico, Carlos, his family, and employees were instrumental in delivering essential goods at no cost to many who had lost everything in the disasters.

2022 Rhode Island Small Business Person of the Year



Byron Sheldon Delmonico, *Owner & CEO* **The Riddle Room, LLC**, North Scituate, RI

The Riddle Room, LLC is owned and operated by Byron Delmonico. The company currently operates two locations, with 16 employees between them. Each escape room is an interactive, movie-quality set that Byron handmade himself, with a multitude of puzzles that need to be solved to escape.

With only his middle school best friend, \$12,500 of startup capital, and his entrepreneurial spirit, Byron quickly grew his business and expanded to a second location in the business' second year of existence. Utilizing assistance from the Rhode Island Small Business Development Center, the company adopted new marketing strategies and watched as the company continued to grow.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Byron quickly utilized SBA's COVID EIDL program, and he secured two Paycheck Protection Program loans to keep paying his staff. Since reopening, revenue continues to soar, with 2021 being the company's best year yet.

2022 South Carolina Business Person of the Year



Ann Son, *President & CEO*
Holy City Linen, Inc., North Charleston, SC

Ann Son is a second-generation business owner in the dry-cleaning industry. She opened Holy Linen Services in 2004 and designed a greener alternative, cleaning clothes with specialized machines that do not require chemicals.

Holy Linen Services has 42 employees and continued to grow through the pandemic by opening a second location using an SBA 504 loan. She has used many other SBA programs, including PPP, EIDL, frequent Small Business Development Center counseling, and was a recent graduate of South Carolina's first Emerging Leaders class.

Ann is no stranger to triumphing over disaster. She had to rebuild her business in 2014 after a car crashed into her building and then again three months later due to a fire.

Her Mount Pleasant building also suffered severe flooding in 2017.

The business gives back to the community by donating unclaimed clothing to a local shelter for abused women and children.

2022 South Dakota Business Person of the Year



Karla Deann Santi, *Chief Executive Officer/Founder*
Blend Interactive, Inc., Sioux Falls, SD

Sioux Falls, South Dakota-based Blend Interactive, Inc. works to help guide clients through complex website and content problems. Nearly 25 years ago, Blend CEO Karla Santi recognized the new possibilities within the web development industry when she started her first business before co-founding Blend Interactive in 2005. Seventeen years later, she has grown Blend into a multi-million-dollar company with an international client base.

As CEO, Karla is responsible for this innovative tech business's leadership and strategic direction. The business has grown to 20 employees, and annual revenues exceed \$3 million.

The business received a \$307,200 Paycheck Protection Program loan during the pandemic. In 2021, Karla graduated from the SBA's Emerging Leaders Program and represented the South Dakota class at the national graduation ceremony.

Karla actively mentors aspiring entrepreneurs and encourages young women to explore STEM programs and pursue careers in technology.

2022 Tennessee Small Business Person of the Year



Robert Scott Underwood, CEO
Maxwell Industries, LLC, Athens, TN

Scott Underwood, CEO, founded Maxwell Industries, LLC in 2006, which netted \$500,000 its first year. Operating from a rented 2,000 sq. ft. space, Maxwell started as a welding and fabrication business, providing parts and services to original equipment manufacturers. It evolved into a nationwide operation, specializing in hydraulic oil reservoirs and fuel tanks manufacturer, serving numerous mobile equipment markets.

COVID-19 greatly reduced business, leaving the company suddenly overstaffed by 12 employees. Rather than firing them, Scott used a PPP loan to reassign them to repaint the building and renovate the grounds. He not only retained all his employees during the pandemic but also increased the building's value by \$500,000. Last year, the company generated \$6.6 million in revenue and now owns the building.

Scott serves the community by speaking to local high school students about existing opportunities in the manufacturing field.

2022 Texas Small Business Person of the Year



Denise Navarro, President/CEO
Logical Innovations, Inc., Houston, TX

Denise Navarro is the owner of Logical Innovations, Inc., a technical services company in Houston, TX. Logical Innovations specializes in financial and acquisition services, strategic communications, administrative services, and logistical support. Logical Innovations has provided technical, business, and administrative services for the federal government since 2006. Their federal client experience includes NASA, the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the U.S. Department of Transportation. The company is a 2016 graduate of the SBA 8(a) program and the Emerging Leaders initiative.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Logical Innovations has experienced tremendous growth with a nearly 40% increase in revenues and a total of 293 employees, with further expansion across new customers, new locations, and development within existing client bases. Denise Navarro also mentors other growing small companies, serving as a formal mentor through the SBA's mentor/protege program and serving on various technology and business advancement boards.

2022 Utah Small Business Person of the Year



Lucy Cardenas, *Owner and President*

Bill Coker, *Owner, Corporate Director, Director of Business Affairs*
Red Iguana, Salt Lake City, UT

In 1985, Red Iguana opened in Salt Lake City, Utah. The original family restaurant sat only 18 patrons but was an immediate success.

In 2005, after the passing of her mother and brother, Lucy and her husband Bill Coker assumed leadership

of the Red Iguana. The restaurant now employs 157 employees and continues to offer the Mexican Cuisine preserved by her parents. With SBA funding, Lucy and Bill added two locations while preserving the recipes and friendly atmosphere the Cardenas Family. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Red Iguana regularly served more than 750,000 customers from its three locations, including its original four-table restaurant.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Red Iguana was closed for 111 days, but kept 100 hourly employees at reduced rates. The restaurant pivoted overnight to curbside service, using servers and managers for taking orders and running food. With funds from the Paycheck Protection Program, the Red Iguana was able to restore full pay retroactively to these employees.

2022 Vermont Small Business Person of the Year



Vicky Allard, *Owner*
and Joseph Hanglin, *Owner*
Blake Hill Preserves, Windsor, VT

In 2009, Blake Hill Preserves began as a home-based jam and preserves business. The business quickly expanded to a 2,000 square foot commercial kitchen, and then to a new 6,000 square foot facility. Now, Blake Hill Preserves is doubling its square footage for jam and preserves production. The company currently has 45 employees and had \$3.3 million in sales in 2022 and \$4.9 million in sales in 2021.

To help facilitate its previous expansions, Blake Hill Preserves obtained two 7a loans from SBA and is currently working with SBA partners to obtain a 504 loan for its newest expansion.

Vicky is a graduate of the SBA Vermont District Office's 2018 Emerging Leaders class and has used her experience to assist Blake Hill Preserves with its strategic planning. Vicky and Joseph worked with SCORE to help with the business' growth.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Blake Hill Preserves utilized two Paycheck Protection Program loans to keep its staff of 45 employees on the payroll.

2022 Virginia Small Business Person of the Year



Jeri Dee Prophet, *CEO*
Intellectechs, Inc., Virginia Beach, VA

Jeri D. Prophet founded Intellectechs, Inc., a firm specializing in a full range of information technology products and services to businesses nationwide, in 2008 after a successful transition from Naval Service. Starting with just one employee, who remains with the company, the business now employs more than 200. IntellecTechs serves over 25 states across the U.S. and Guam.

Jeri used SBA services and resources from her company's start. In 2019, the SBA's Paycheck Protection Program loan assistance was instrumental in helping retain the business's employees, and in 2020 it had a record year.

A Service-Disabled Veteran, Jeri started Mentoring Our Veterans into Tomorrow, a non-profit organization employing veterans through a mentor program, and NowHiringVeterans.com, a free veteran-an-employer matching job placement service. Jeri is an active sponsor of Hampton Roads Pride, Equality Virginia, Judeo-Christian Outreach Center, and the HER Shelter.

2022 Washington Small Business Person of the Year



Efrem Fesaha, *CEO and Founder*
Boon Boona Coffee, Seattle, WA

In 2012, Efrem Fesaha started selling green coffee beans from Ethiopia in hopes to open his own roastery and café. After six years of operations and failed funding attempts, SCORE and the WBC helped Efrem obtain a \$100,000 SBA Microloan to open his Renton café in 2019.

Boon Boona coffee supports the local community by providing an inclusive space for BIPOC, LGBTQI+, and other marginalized individuals, providing pop-up space to artists, non-profits, and small businesses, donating free coffee, and bringing crucial resources into the café for easy access.

Like others, the COVID-19 pandemic threatened to close Efrem's dream. Efrem saw his revenues decline by 80% in the first two months and turned to the SBA's Paycheck Protection Program, Restaurant Revitalization Fund, and Economic Injury Disaster Loan programs to sustain his operations. Today, Efrem has grown to a second location, employs 17 people, and has diversified his revenue streams.

2022 West Virginia Small Business Person of the Year



Jill Rae Scarbro, *Owner* **Bright Futures Learning Services, Winfield, WV**

Jill Scarbro is the CEO of Bright Futures Learning Services (BFLS), a provider of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy services for children with autism.

BFLS began in 2007, helping one child in Scarbro's grandmother's kitchen. Scarbro saw a need for ABA services in WV and expanded her practice to help more children throughout the state.

In 2016, with the help of an SBA's 504 loan, BFLS moved to their 7,300 square foot home in Winfield, WV. In 2021, BFLS opened a second location in Hurricane, WV, and has 36 employees educating and advocating for children with special needs.

Scarbro has benefited from multiple SBA programs and services including SCORE, SBDC Counseling, the 504 Loan, Emerging Leaders Program, SBA District Office training and counseling, COVID-19 EIDL, PPP, and Debt Relief funding.

BFLS was able to retain all employees and pay creditors throughout the pandemic due to the assistance.

2022 Wisconsin Small Business Person of the Year



David Heide, *Chef/Owner* **Liliana's Restaurant, Fitchburg, WI**

Dave Heide is the owner and Le Cordon Bleu-trained chef of Liliana's Restaurant in Fitchburg, Wisconsin.

Since opening in 2007, the business has garnered more than 60 awards and interest from beyond Wisconsin for its New Orleans-style cuisine.

Before COVID, Chef Dave quadrupled the restaurant's profits and increased its net worth with 90 employees. He also provided \$100,000 annually in non-profit community help. With the onset of COVID-19, the restaurant pivoted to 100% online service with take-and-bake meals. Dave also collaborated with local chefs and farmers to sell food baskets to fund both restaurants and farms.

SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loan, Paycheck Protection Program, and Restaurant Revitalization Fund dollars helped Liliana's survive in challenging times.

Chef Dave also runs the nonprofit Little John's which turns excess food into delicious chef-made meals for 7,000 food-insecure people weekly, including at its pay-what-you-can restaurant. He is on the boards of Madison Originals and the YWCA and volunteers with 100 Men of Madison.

2022 Wyoming Small Business Person of the Year



Lena Dirck, *Owner and Executive Chef*
The Aspen House Restaurant, Rawlins, WY

Lena and Jim Dirck are the owners of Aspen House Restaurant, a fine-dining steakhouse with an Asian flair, located in rural Rawlins, Wyoming.

Lena, born and raised in Singapore, a food “mecca,” started slowly by catering small parties and cooking for neighbors, eventually opening Aspen House Restaurant – with her husband, Jim, in 1993.

After 27 years of business, they’ve proven their business to be successful and have 12 employees.

Unfortunately, on January 2, 2019, the restaurant flooded due to a pipe burst. The renovations took almost a year, but on December 1, 2019, they were finally ready to

re-open the restaurant.

Aspen House saw firsthand the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Lena leaned on SBA’s COVID-19 Economic Injury Disaster Loan and Paycheck Protection Program relief programs to keep their doors open. Lena also credits the Wyoming Small Business Development Center with providing valuable advice over the years.

Lena and Jim sponsor local non-profits and events throughout the year.

2022 8(a) Graduate of the Year



Necole Parker, *Principal & CEO*
The ELOCEN Group, Washington, DC

Necole Parker is CEO of The ELOCEN Group, a woman-owned construction management firm founded in 2007. Under Ms. Parker’s guidance, ELOCEN completed more than 100 new construction and renovation projects, involving over 200 million square feet of managed space.

Ms. Parker is a 2018 graduate of the SBA’s 8(a) Business Development Program and currently has 47 employees. At the height of the pandemic, Ms. Parker applied for and was granted a PPP loan, which she used to retain staff and make payroll due to COVID-induced work stoppages. Between 2017 and 2019, the company generated sales topping \$28M.

Always a believer in giving back to her community, Ms. Parker established the ELOCEN Group Foundation (EGF) in 2013 to benefit teen mothers and African American males raised in single-parent households. Since its establishment, EGF has sponsored over \$300,000 in scholarships, endowments, trainings, and small business support through multiple charities.

2022 Small Business Subcontractor of the Year



Douglas Carlberg, *President & CEO* **M2 Global Technology LTD, San Antonio, TX**

Douglas Carlberg is the President and CEO of M2 Global Technology, LTD, a service-disabled veteran-owned small business located in San Antonio, TX. M2 is a manufacturing company equipped to respond to prototype, quick turn and full rate production.

M2 Global's two divisions employ 65 individuals. Its facility is equipped with the latest computer numerically controlled precision machining, fabrication, welding, brazing, and electromechanical assembly for materials ranging from sheet metal to titanium.

There have been several instances when the nominee went above and beyond to maintain a high level of performance. During the week-long Texas Winter Storm and power outages in February 2021, M2 Global sent daily updates on its facility status and worked overtime post-freeze to make up for lost production time. As a result, there was no schedule impact to work or orders. The business has also never shut down or furloughed any employees since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, even with the downturn in commercial orders. M2's success came from investments in PPE equipment, seeking out additional defense orders, and enrolling staff in peer meetings through The Association for Manufacturing Excellence and The San Antonio Manufacturing Association in their free time to increase their individual knowledge of different types of manufacturing.

2022 Small Business Prime Contractor of the Year



Aliahu K. Bey, *President & CEO* **Haight Bey & Associates, Inc., West Haven, UT**

Aliahu "Alli" K. Bey, is the President & CEO of Haight Bey & Associates, Inc. or HB&A, a minority and veteran-owned small business, founded in early 2015 and located in West Haven, UT. HB&A specializes in system sustainment and cybersecurity engineering solutions.

In July 2015, HB&A won its first Department of Defense contract. Over the years, HB&A has consistently been given an exceptional rating on awarded contracts. As one DOD official stated, "HB&A's commitment to quality, fiscal responsibility and customer satisfaction continues to improve our system and reduces the cost to the Government."

In June 2021, Utah Governor Spencer Cox appointed Alli to the Utah Personal Privacy Oversight Commission. The purpose of the 12-member Commission is to develop guiding standards and best practices concerning government privacy. When not involved in the business, Alli volunteers his time assisting other veterans with starting and expanding their own businesses. He currently attends Harvard Business School and will graduate in September 2023.

2022 Small Business Exporter of the Year



Tom Britz, *President & CEO*
Glacier Hops Ranch, Inc., Whitefish, MT

Tom Britz's career has spanned decades of both marketing and new business development, the latter of which led to him being the visionary behind what is now Glacier Hops Ranch (GHR).

Tom spent 12 years in the ski resort industry, elevating to marketing leadership roles. Moving from the ski industry, Tom spent over 25 years in the payments industry. In 2012, Tom started GHR, intending to be Montana's first commercial hop farm. GHR ceased farming in 2018, evolving to its current model of servicing two distinct business segments (1) a global broker/dealer of premium hops sourced directly from other hop growers around the world, and (2) as the sole global producer of Hopzoil™.

In 2015, Tom was elected the first-ever National At-Large Director of the Hop Growers of America (HGA). He was subsequently appointed as National Chairman of the HGA's Small Grower Council. Today, he continues to steer GHR's rapid sales growth, while managing the company's 11 employees.

Glacier Hops Ranch has been the recipient of several SBA/Montana Dept. of Commerce STEP grants, as well as SBA EIDL and 7(a) loans.

2022 Veterans Business Outreach Center Excellence in Service



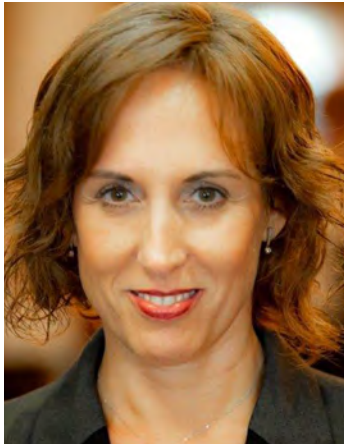
Amy Amoroso, *VBOC Director*
McNulty Veteran Business Center, Watervliet, NY

Since 2014, the McNulty Veteran Business Center (VBC) has helped veterans, service members, and military spouses, start and grow their businesses. The center serves as a critical host organization for the U.S. Small Business Administration Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC), covering New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

McNulty VBC provides a range of services and networking opportunities, through entrepreneurial training and counseling to veterans, transitioning service members, and military spouses. Utilizing emerging technologies, the center strengthens the veteran business ecosystem by providing services both virtually and in person.

Originally, founded as an accelerator program, the Michael R. McNulty Center for Veteran Entrepreneurial Activity, helped veteran entrepreneurs overcome obstacles to starting a small business and provided access to business resources in the Capital Region. The McNulty Veteran Business Center strives to build on that legacy of empowering business success for those who served.

2022 Women's Business Center of Excellence Award



Sandra Font, *Director*
Metro-Atlanta Women's Business Center,
Norcross, GA

Sandra Font is the Director of the Metro-Atlanta Women's Business Center. Under her leadership, the Metro-Atlanta WBC has supported 1,277 jobs; created more than 240 businesses; helped businesses access \$37,069,809 in capital, 44% through SBA loans; and served more than 5,000 unique clients.

Since joining Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs in 2017, Ms. Font has been an innovator implementing inclusive entrepreneurship initiatives such as the Hispanic Entrepreneurship Series, ACE Annual Speed Coaching, and the Annual Minority Business Expo.

Notably, the Metro-Atlanta WBC has consistently exceeded its performance goals. The Metro Atlanta WBC is a program of Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs, a Georgia 501(c)(3) nonprofit and community development financial institution (CDFI) that provides capital, coaching, and connections to help borrowers create and grow sustainable businesses that generate jobs.

In addition to supporting the women's entrepreneurial ecosystem of Metro-Atlanta, the Metro-Atlanta WBC is a valued partner of the Georgia District Office.

2022 Small Business Development Center Excellence and Innovation Award



David Oetken, *Center Director*
Louisville Small Business Development Service
Center - Kentucky, Louisville, KY

Since 2014, the McNulty Veteran Business Center (VBC) has helped veterans, service members, and military spouses, start and grow their businesses. The center serves as a critical host organization for the U.S. Small Business Administration Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC), covering New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

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2022 Small Business Investment Company of the Year— Established Manager



**Brian N. Burns, Brian S. Smith, and
Sherman Chu** *Managing Partners*

Grayhawk Ventures Fund II, L.P., Scottsdale, AZ

Grayhawk’s objective is to provide capital to early growth stage companies in B2B disruptive SaaS solutions across a variety of verticals, including cybersecurity, healthcare IT, financial technology, communications, business intelligence and digital marketing industries located primarily in the Southwest U.S.

Grayhawk believes small business management teams are the key to investments, focusing on outstanding entrepreneurs that are leaders, ambitious, and coach-able in dynamic, rapidly growing technology markets with innovative and disruptive product offerings.



Grayhawk’s 7-member management team with 80-plus years of collective experience and a consistent investment philosophy has been in the SBIC program for 22 years, having successfully managed two prior SBICs and currently managing a third SBIC licensed in 2021.

2022 Small Business Investment Company of the Year— Emerging Manager



**Bud Moore and Heather
Hubbard,** *Managing Partners*
**Valesco Commerce Street Capital,
L.P.,** Dallas, TX

Valesco’s objective is to provide needed long-term subordinated debt and equity capital to growth-oriented small- and lower-middle-market businesses engaged in manufacturing, distribution and business-to-business services located primarily in the South Central U.S.

Valesco specializes in partnering with a company’s management team to support their growth objectives. As long-term industry veterans, the principals have capitalized and built numerous successful businesses, serving those companies in varying roles as investors, managers, advisors and directors.

Valesco’s 12-member management team has been in the SBIC program for 12 years and is enthusiastic about the opportunity to put capital to work in growth-oriented small businesses that have survived the recent economic turmoil and emerged as leaders in their industries with meaningful impacts to grow and add jobs in a recovering economy.

2022 Dwight D. Eisenhower Award for Excellence—Construction



Brad D. Lewis, *Corporate Director of Supplier Diversity* **Hensel Phelps Construction Co.**, Tysons Corner, VA

The Dwight D. Eisenhower Award for Excellence recognizes large prime contractors that have documented excellence in their use of small businesses as suppliers and subcontractors in the categories of Construction, Manufacturing, Research & Development, Services, and Utilities.

Hensel Phelps Construction Co. has been selected as the national winner in the Construction category.

As a leading general contractor within the construction industry, Hensel Phelps, under the direction of Brad Lewis, Corporate Director of Supplier Diversity, feels it is important to set an example. Hensel Phelps conducts regular outreach to small businesses across the country. It customizes an overall plan for each construction project that enlists small and emerging businesses in the preconstruction, purchasing, and construction efforts. It also seeks to achieve the highest possible level of diversity on each of the jobs the company undertakes. Hensel Phelps' outreach is designed for maximum interaction with local small business communities, elected officials and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Hensel Phelps' supplier diversity and estimating groups work tirelessly to identify new opportunity-ready small business trade partners and support them throughout all stages of the Hensel Phelps procurement process. The company exceeded all of its small business goals and the majority of its socio-economic goals over the past five years.

2022 Dwight D. Eisenhower Award for Excellence—Manufacturing



Daisy Galvan, *Supplier Diversity Manager* **L3Harris Technologies – CSB Sector**, Greenville, TX

As L3 Harris Technologies' Supplier Diversity Manager and Small Business Liaison Officer (SBLO), Daisy Galvan consistently provides management support to the small business program through ongoing efforts to educate, engage and solicit the commitment of senior leadership. Additionally, she counsels other SBLOs around the country on the importance of small business, while overseeing and stressing the necessity of compliance with federal regulations governing small business.

L3 currently has two SBA Mentor Protégé Agreements and two Mentor Protégé Agreements through the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD). Small businesses, through these agreements, received payment for enrollment fees to attend a Project Management Training Institute course and counseling to improve their opportuni-

ties to obtain subcontracts.

Over the past five years, small business contract awards increased from 42.2% to 51.4% which consistently exceeded the DOD subcontracting goals. In addition, L3's Small Business program received four consecutive "Exceptional" ratings by the Defense Contract Management Agency.

2022 Dwight D. Eisenhower Award for Excellence—Services



Barbara Petersen, *Director of Contracts and Procurement, SBLO*

Tetra Tech, Inc., Pasadena, CA

Barbara Petersen leads Tetra Tech’s national small business subcontracting program and serves as their Small Business Liaison Officer where she is responsible for affirming the commitment to ensure maximum equitable opportunities for small businesses across their global operations of 21,000 employees. Their commitment to the small business program is illustrated by consistently meeting or exceeding their socio-economic goals for federal contracts. Tetra Tech subcontracted more than \$390 million to small businesses in the past five years.

Tetra Tech has been an active mentor since the Department of Defense first introduced its Mentor Protégé program and has mentored more than 40 protégés in programs sponsored by the SBA, Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Transportation, Department of Energy, Federal Aviation Administration, and Environmental Protection Agency. Through these programs, they assist small businesses in developing their capabilities and in turn, gain viable subcontractors to support their projects.

2022 Phoenix Award for Outstanding Contributions to Disaster Recovery by a Public Official



Nic E. Hunter, *Mayor City of Lake Charles, LA*

Nic E. Hunter is a life-long resident of Lake Charles, Louisiana and a small business owner. He was elected to the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury in 2011 and was in his second term when he was elected to the office of Mayor of Lake Charles on Saturday, April 29, 2017.

Early in life, Mayor Hunter acquired his work ethic by bussing tables and washing dishes at his grandparents’ restaurant, Harlequin Steaks & Seafood, which they opened in 1956. With his grandmother’s blessing, he began running the restaurant full-time at the age of 17. Today, he is a partner in The Villa Harlequin restaurant.

Mayor Hunter graduated from St. Louis Catholic High School in 2002. In 2007, he received a Bachelor of Arts in History from McNeese State University. Mayor Hunter credits his experience at McNeese for sparking an interest in public service. He established an endowed scholarship through the McNeese State University Foundation, the Dr. Robert Forrest History Scholarship.

2022 Phoenix Award for Outstanding Contributions to Disaster Recovery by a Volunteer



Howie Kaplan, *Owner* **The Howlin' Wolf**, New Orleans, LA

In the late 1990s, Howie Kaplan, a lawyer, moved to Louisiana for work. But his love of music led him to buy the historic Howlin' Wolf music venue in 2001. Mr. Kaplan also manages music groups, including the Grammy-nominated Hot 8 Brass Band.

While the Howlin' Wolf is a music venue, it's also a meeting place for people in New Orleans' Central Business District. The venue hosts diverse entertainment acts, including comedians, burlesque shows, and a wide variety of musical artists.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Howlin' Wolf utilized the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant program and Restaurant Revitalization Fund to ensure business remained solvent while helping with the effort to feed musicians and service workers affected when restaurants and bars were closed. After Hurricane Ida passed through New Orleans in 2021, leaving millions without power, Mr. Kaplan and his small Howling Wolf staff quickly mobilized and, working with other organizations, fed approximately 10,000 people.

2022 Phoenix Award for Outstanding Small Business Disaster Recovery



Brittany Lynn Moog, *Owner & Instructor* **Bitty Bubbles Swim School**, Panama City, FL

A Missouri native, Brittany Lynn Moog moved to Panama City, Florida in 2016 with the goal of opening a year-round indoor swim school. With over 14 years of experience in childcare and swimming instruction, Brittany knew it was the next step to take, and the swim school would be something that families in Panama City would enjoy. When she's not in the water, Brittany can be found spending time with her family or relaxing on the beach.

Bitty Bubbles started in 2016 with Brittany teaching lessons from backyards and the local physical therapy pool. Bitty quickly grew, and within the first year, Bitty moved into its current building with a 12-person team. Hurricane Michael, a Category 5 storm, shut down the Bitty facility for nine months in late 2018. SBA disaster loans helped Bitty rebuild.

COVID shut down the Bitty Bubbles facility for three months. PPP funding was used to pay the coaches. An SBA EIDL loan helped bridge the gap for expenses over the closedown from COVID-19 that the PPP loan did not cover and gave Bitty the ability to fill in any gaps in facility maintenance left over from the hurricane.

For Brittany, Bitty is so much more than a place to work. It is a way to help children learn a lifesaving skill. Bitty Bubbles' coaches are dedicated to creating happy, confident swimmers and have succeeded in doing so for thousands of Bay County children.

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