

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2017



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
YOUR SUCCESS IS OUR BUSINESS!

Lowell Celebrates National Small Business Week

April 30th-May 6th

The City of Lowell's Economic Development Office will be celebrating National Small Business Week for the month of May with our partners throughout the city.

We look forward to hosting workshops, seminars, and office hours throughout the city. Check out our website for up-to-date [National Small Business Week information](#).

THE CITY OF LOWELL CELEBRATES



NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

April 30 – May 6, 2017

Kronos Partners with UTEC

The City of Lowell is always proud when Lowell's business community partners with non-profit service providers. Kronos employees will be moving into Crosspoint Towers in the upcoming weeks and they are already making a positive impact in the community.



The [Kronos GiveInspired](#) team committed to a 3 year grant to assist the [UTEC Mattress Recycling](#) program and is excited to be involved in their new community. The Mattress Recycling program is the foundation of the work experience for all UTEC young adults.

Mattress Recycling begins the journey of providing access to socio-economic success by providing employment opportunities for Lowell and Lawrence youth with proven risk factors, such as gang or criminal involvement. UTEC Mattress Recycling enables Lowell's youth to gain on-the-job experience and learn valuable work place skills while learning the values of reuse, re-purposing and recycling.

If you're interested in learning more about UTEC recycling programs, and services, please contact UTEC at 978-856-3997.

Is your business interested in partnering with a local non-profit service provider? [Email](#) the Economic Development Office and we can assist.

5 Ways to Spring Clean Your Business

Put away your shovels because Spring has finally arrived! This is always an exciting time for business owners to plan for the upcoming season. Consider these solutions to help grow your business in Lowell.



- Revitalize your web presence by updating your website and social media
- Freshen up window displays with new inventory and sale items
- Keep windows and doorways clean to attract new customers
- Go Green - Install energy efficient LED light bulbs, replace outdated energy draining POS systems, and consider an alternative to plastic bags
- Dust off your business plan and consider your long term goals

Need assistance with your business? [Contact](#) the Economic Development Office and we will use our resources to help!

Are you interested in obtaining an outdoor seating permit? Call the License Commission at 978-674-1513

Lowell Welcomes...

Smiley Dentist
1141 Bridge Street
[Website](#)

Are you interested in opening a business in Lowell? Call 978-674-4252 or [email](#) the Economic Development Office for assistance.



Economic Development Partners Spotlight:

U.S. Small Business Administration

Lowell's economic success depends on strong partnerships. The City of Lowell's Economic Development Office is fortunate to work with some great local and regional organizations. Together we offer a wide variety of services and assistance to Lowell businesses.



Bob Nelson
SBA District Director - Massachusetts

Could you explain the main purpose of the Small Business Administration? How long have you been working with the SBA and what has been your role as the District Director?

The mission of the SBA is to foster, preserve and promote the interest of small business with a goal to strengthen the economy and to create jobs. We accomplish this by delivering three C's - Capital, Counseling and Contracting. Capital is what businesses need to grow and SBA lending plays an integral role within the spectrum of entrepreneurial financing. We work with over 150 lending partners in Massachusetts to deliver access to capital in a variety of different ways.

Counseling and technical assistance is also a critical service we support to make sure that small businesses have the knowledge and skills necessary to run successful small businesses. Additionally, Contracting can be a way for small businesses to expand their customer base and create new revenues streams -- the government buys everything from furniture to IT services to new construction projects and many other things in-between - our job is to make sure that 23% of all government buys come from small businesses.

I have been the District Director now since November 2007 and have been with the SBA for 19 years. Working for the SBA and helping our businesses through our programs is extremely rewarding work!

What business sectors does your office work most closely with?

Currently the predominant industry benefiting from the SBA loan programs are businesses involved with construction. It has been this way for the past couple of years and it is no surprise when you travel across the Commonwealth, the tremendous amount of construction taking place. Our second most active industry segment is Professional, Scientific and Technical Services which again is not surprising given the MA economy. An area that we also are very active in is food service businesses and restaurants. Often these businesses are only able to get access to capital is with the help of an SBA guaranty. We do help businesses in virtually all segments of the economy, however, it should be noted that nonprofits are not eligible for SBA loans.

How does your office partner with Lowell's Economic Development Office?

The SBA is a small agency with a big mission -- and the only way we are able to achieve our successes and impacts, is with our strong partnerships across the Commonwealth. We work closely with the City of Lowell and the Lowell Economic Development office and other municipal economic development offices across the state. The local partnerships are critical. I'd like to point out just a few of our past and continuing efforts for example:

- We recently collaborated on a workshop to connect businesses with contracting opportunities and services offered by the state supplier diversity office, the Procurement Technical Assistance Center, the City of Lowell and SBA.
- Last April, SBA organized Senator Warren's 3rd annual business matchmaker which was held at the Tsongas Center with approximately 400 attendees and included SBA's former Administer and Governor Baker. Matchmakers provide an opportunity for small businesses to meet with large prime contractors, federal agencies, and other large businesses looking to do business with small businesses. Many successful and fruitful relationships are started through these events.
- Our Northeast SCORE Chapter has a branch office in Lowell located at the Merrimack Valley Small Business Center and our NE Regional Small Business Development Center also counsels and is available locally to help entrepreneurs with free and confidential business advisory services.
- We have many lenders that we work closely with who are based in Lowell and Merrimack Valley and each year we provide a number of lending trainings and visits to make sure folks know how to use the SBA programs to help their customers with startup or growth capital and we also have the Merrimack Valley Small Business Center in Lowell (SBA Microlender) providing access to capital and technical assistance for smaller dollar loans of \$50,000 or less.

What is your main goal in helping the Greater Lowell business community? How are you working towards your goal?

Our goal is to offer all of the communities in Massachusetts, including the Greater Lowell business community -- access and knowledge about all of the tools and resources that are available. Massachusetts is resource rich -- with a passionate small business support team comprised of state, federal and local resources that work together to support our local businesses. Many people do not know about the free support services available -- so our work is to do outreach in the community, partner with local resource providers and connect them with the right folks that can help. SBA also works hard to make sure there is equal access and opportunity for all -- by reaching out specifically to underserved markets, including: women, minority and veteran-owned small businesses.

Tell us about a New England business you have helped and most proud of.

There are so many businesses that we have helped here in New England over the years that it is hard to mention just one. Last year in MA alone -- over 2,800 small businesses received SBA loans and over 25,000 clients received technical assistance, attended an SBA event or partner workshop. Some of the recognizable national brands that have benefitted from SBA help include: Under Armour, Chobani Yogurt, and Yankee Candle. Locally, Sal's Pizza is a perfect example of a small business that we are proud to see is doing well. This year, we're excited to have Sal Lupoli, CEO of Lupoli Companies as our keynote speaker for the 2017 SBA Massachusetts National Small Business Week awards event on Tuesday, May 2 -- where we will

be recognizing 12 amazing small businesses and champions with honors for Massachusetts and New England. Sal was honored as our Entrepreneurial Success awardee in 2009 and he will be sharing his inspirational story with our audience from across the state at the event. I also want to mention our 2017 MA Small Business of the Year and Women-Owned Small Business of the Year, Victoria Bondoc CEO of Gemini Industries. Victoria has been leading Gemini for 30 years and received help from the SBA through our 8(a) business development program. She has successfully executed on over \$200 million in contracts and has operations in 12 locations across the US and overseas - resulting in thousands of jobs created over that time frame. Gemini is located in Burlington, MA.

What has been the impact in your district in the business community throughout the New England region?

During the government's fiscal year which ended on September 30th, 2016 -- we noted that SBA's direct impact on the Massachusetts's economy was over \$1 Billion through our capital programs alone including over \$255 million in investments through our Small Business Investment Company program. The MA SBA is known across the US as one of the most productive SBA offices in the US in terms of loan approvals and we ranked #2 nationally out of 68 total field offices. Last year, our 7A/504 lending increased by 19.3% -- the largest increase in dollar amount over the past 5 years.

What do you enjoy most about working at SBA?

I enjoy seeing the positive impact on our economy every day! It is a challenging job -- but I love being a public servant for SBA and working for all small businesses here in Massachusetts. Certainly in my travels across the state and meeting with owners, I often hear how the SBA helped them to achieve their personal dreams. At the SBA, we believe in the American Dream of owning and running a small business and that it is possible for ALL -- we have the staff, team and relationships that help turn that idea and dream into a reality. We want to be your small business resource here in the Commonwealth and help in any way that we can. Visit www.sba.gov/ma for more information on our programs and services. The best way to learn about our programs and services is to connect with us at our events and stay connected with us by subscribing to receive mail updates. Just click on 'Get Email Updates' at the bottom when you visit the SBA Massachusetts website.

Upcoming Events

Starts Monday, April 24th (4 part series)

[Business of Art Program Series - Sustainability Without Selling Out](#)

Tuesday, May 2nd

[Economic Development Office Business Hours at Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce](#)

Wednesday, May 3rd

[Economic Development Office Business Hours at Enterprise Bank](#)

Thursday, May 4th

[Small Business Law Basics Workshop](#)

Thursday, May 4th

[Economic Development Office Business Hours at Digital Federal Credit Union](#)

Wednesday, May 10th

[Massachusetts Workforce Training Fund Program](#)

May 15th-17th

Smart Growth America Workshop - more details to follow

More events will be added in the next few weeks and our [Economic Development Calendar](#) will be updated with information.

#LOWELL
THERE'S
A LOT TO *like.*

It's warming up in Lowell and a great time to see what the city has to offer. Check out [Like Lowell's calendar](#) for many fun activities throughout the city.

NEWS *and* ANNOUNCEMENTS

Do you have news, announcements, or need assistance regarding your business? Please [email](#) Lowell's Economic Development Office and we are happy to assist!



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