



**Entrepreneurship
Assistance Centers**

2019-2020

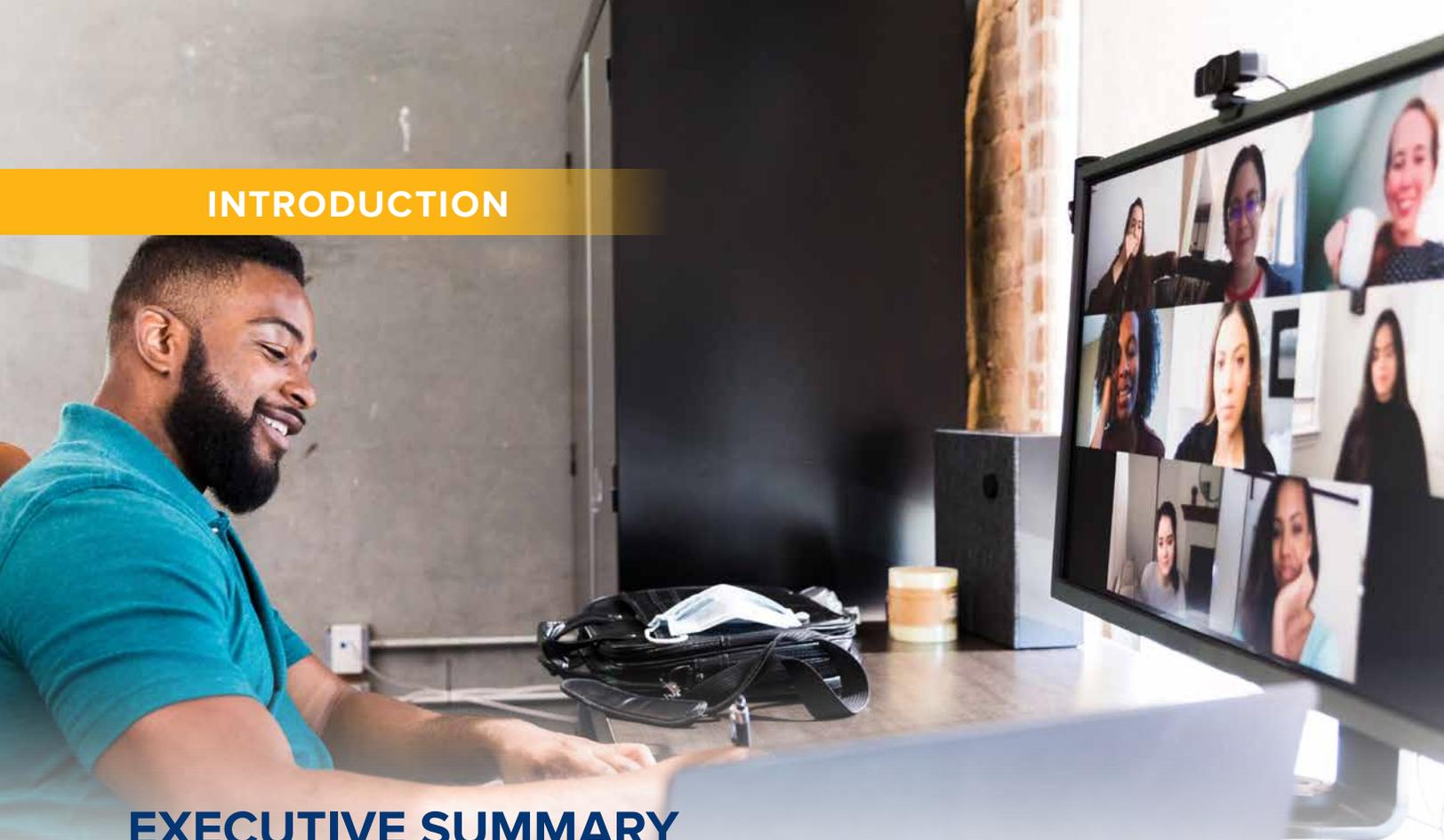
ANNUAL REPORT

to Governor Andrew Cuomo and
the New York State Legislature



Empire State Development

Eric Gertler, President & CEO, Empire State Development
Commissioner, NYS Department of Economic Development



INTRODUCTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Entrepreneurship Assistance Centers (“EAC” or “Centers”) is an enterprise development program with centers in local communities throughout New York State. The EAC provide instruction, training, technical assistance and support services to individuals who have recently started their own business or are interested in starting a business and also strengthen the operation of these firms during the early stages of development, generally within the first five years.

The FY 2019-2020 EAC contract year includes a one-month, no-cost extension to align the fiscal year with the calendar quarters. This fiscal year covers the period from June 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. State appropriations for FY 2019-2020 funded the program at \$1,764,000 for the 24 Centers to provide business training and skill development to New York State entrepreneurs. These grant funds were matched with cash and in-kind funding from other non-state sources.

The EAC program assists new and aspiring entrepreneurs in developing basic business management skills by providing business training, one-on-one counseling and technical assistance. For Centers to maintain continued EAC program status, they must meet specific performance objectives set at the beginning of their contract year. The goals of the program are to increase the formation of new businesses and strengthen the operations of existing businesses during the early stages of development with increased sales, job creation and business financing. ([Table 1, Page 18](#))

For more than three decades the EAC program has helped aspiring New York State small business owners turn their dreams into reality and established centers in local communities to provide instruction, training, technical assistance and support services.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Omnibus Economic Development Law of 1987 established the original Entrepreneurial Assistance Program (EAP). In January of 2019, the law was amended, and the program was renamed Entrepreneurship Assistance Centers. The law authorizes the Department of Economic Development d/b/a Empire State Development (“ESD”), through the Entrepreneurship Assistance Centers (“EAC” or the “Program”), to issue contracts to not-for-profit corporations, community colleges and boards of cooperative educational services for development of the Centers.

Encouraging the formation and growth of small businesses is an important strategic goal of New York State. EAC programs provide intensive, community-based training, technical assistance and other related services to small business owners or entrepreneurs, particularly minorities and women, to stimulate new business development and to strengthen businesses in the early stages of development—typically from one to five years. Such assistance is especially important in economically distressed areas where high levels of unemployment and declining infrastructure further limit the ability for these young businesses to develop. Effective programs are built on a working knowledge of the needs and resources of a community and its region.

There are 24 EAC ([see full listing, Page 21](#)) serving New York State. The Centers work with ESD regional offices and many local and state agencies. In addition, they collaborate with local businesses, chambers of commerce, nonprofit agencies, colleges and universities.

The Centers provide a 60-hour entrepreneurship training course, supplemented by intensive technical assistance, to help new entrepreneurs complete business plans and develop a viable business. Participants learn how to refine their business concept, conduct break-even analysis, develop marketing strategies and learn financial management skills.

In FY 2019-2020, the EAC program provided over 24,168 hours of one-on-one counseling and training to help clients create more than 284 business plans and conducted more than 167 additional workshops

The Centers also give technical assistance to existing businesses that are generally less than five years old. This technical assistance is designed to help these microbusinesses over time to ensure conditions that will support their sustainability and allow for expansion. Such support includes access to working capital and cash-flow management, general management skills, new market development, hiring and managing employees, managing growth, and sourcing available credit.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of EAC is to:

- Increase the number of new businesses in New York State, with a particular focus on expanding economic opportunity for minority group members, women, dislocated workers, veterans and individuals with special needs;
- Expand the sales and employment levels of small businesses during the critical first five years of operation;
- Decrease the business failure rates among small businesses in the state; and
- Assist in the revitalization of distressed communities through the encouragement of “home grown” businesses.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

The EAC program supports the following initiatives to increase the formation of new businesses owned and operated by minorities, women, Veterans, dislocated workers and individuals with special needs:

Business Mentor New York (BMNY)

Business Mentor New York is an online platform that connects volunteer mentors to small businesses and emerging entrepreneurs to help them address specific challenges and realize their full economic potential. Centers facilitate BMNY registrations for clients, assist with their mentee profile and help connect the entrepreneurs with mentors. The EAC program recognizes that all successful entrepreneurs need confidence and connections. To facilitate this, they encourage local community professionals and EAC workshop presenters to register as mentors. During FY 2019-2020, Centers reported the following BMNY results:

- 220 new mentees enrolled into BMNY;
- 40 new mentors; and
- 114 counseling matches.

Minority and Women Business Enterprise Support and Outcomes

The EAC program also works closely with NYS’s Division of Minority and Women’s Business Development. Centers provide direct assistance to individuals interested in becoming MWBE certified to do business with New York State. EAC staff are trained to provide guidance in the preparation of MWBE online certification applications. MWBEs receiving services from the Centers had the following outcomes: [\(Table 2, Page 19\)](#)

- 86 MWBE businesses increased sales by \$4.9 million;
- 51 MWBE businesses increased employment by 149.5 new hires;
- 74 MWBE businesses retained 304.5 employees; and
- 54 MWBE businesses secured over \$5.6 million in financing.

Veteran Entrepreneurship Services

Introduced in FY 2014-2015 as a pilot program, veteran entrepreneurship services are now a permanent part of the EAC program. Centers continued to meet veteran goals and provided entrepreneurship services to veterans interested in starting a business or expanding an existing business, which includes but is not limited to: (1) counseling on the feasibility of starting a business; (2) education in established management principles and practices; (3) access to veteran business support networks; and (4) ongoing and continued technical assistance.

Some EAC locations offer customized programs for veterans at free or reduced prices for services and have also formed partnerships with many different veteran organizations, support groups, hospitals and agencies across the state. During FY 2019-2020, 50 new veterans entered the program and started 14 new businesses. ([Table 3, Page 20](#))

FUNDING

The FY 2019-2020 NYS budget appropriation for the EAC was funded at \$1,764,000. In addition to this appropriation, an additional \$60,701 was made available from previous funding. The 24 Entrepreneurship Assistance Centers were each awarded a grant of \$76,029 for 12-month contracts amended with a no cost extension to 13 months to align our fiscal year with the calendar quarters. Centers are required to match these grants one-to-one (50% or more in cash and no more than 50% in-kind). The sources of matching funds include, but are not limited to:

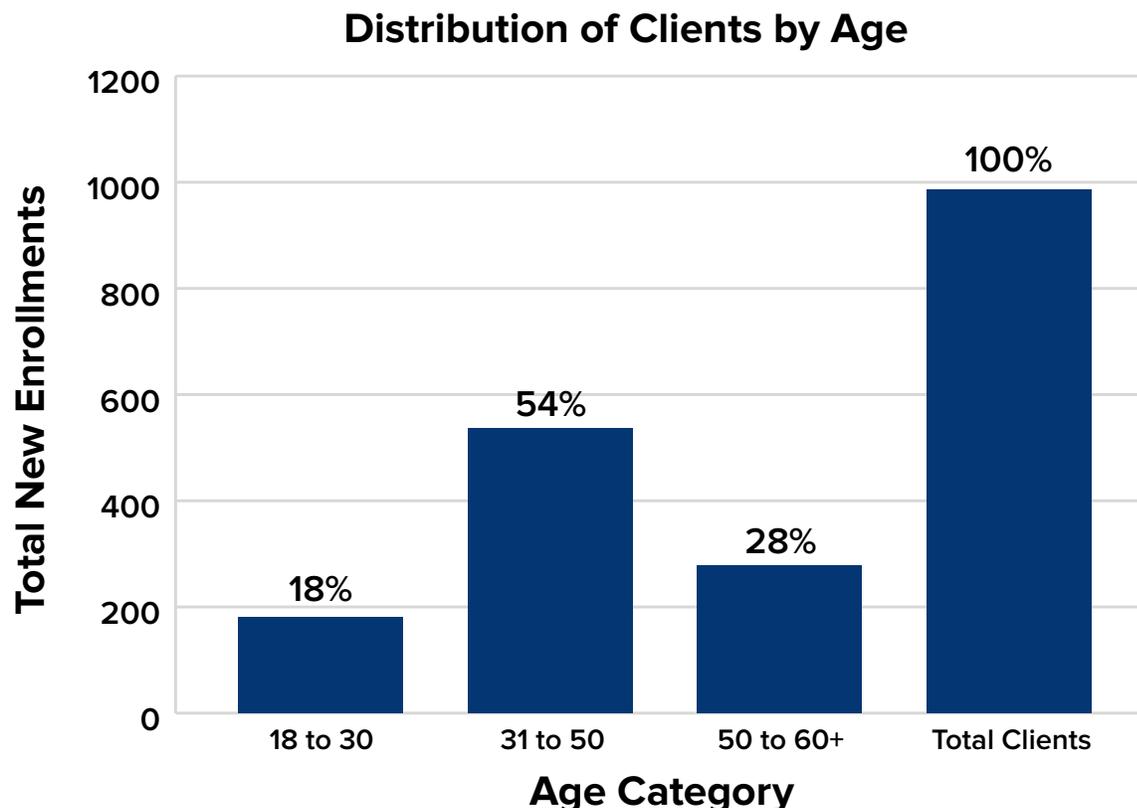
- Federal Government – U.S. Small Business Administration (PRIME);
- NYS Government – NY Business Development Corporation, Harlem Community Development Corporation and Genesee Valley Improvement Corporation;
- Banks and Credit Unions – Allegany County Land Bank, Apple Bank, Bank of America, Bank of Utica, Bridgehampton National Bank, Citibank, Deutsche Bank, Santander Bank, Savoy Bank, Signature Bank, Spring Bank, State Bank of India, and Sunmark Federal Credit Union;
- City - NYC EDC, NYC Dept. of Consumer Affairs, NYC Dept of Youth & Community Development, NYC Health & Human Service, NYC Human Resources Administration, and local municipalities;
- Universities/Community Colleges – Alfred University, Columbia University Law School, Dutchess Community College, Hofstra University, Houghton College, Medaille College/ Buffalo, Rockland Community College, Suffolk County Community College, SUNY Broome Community College, SUNY Orange, and Syracuse University;
- Chambers of Commerce – Allegany Chamber of Commerce, and Capital Chamber Foundation;
- Local and County – Avenue NYC, Broome Triad, Broome Employment Center for Broome Tioga Workforce Development, Broome County Urban League, and Think Dutchess;

- Not-for-profits – ACCORD Corporation, Adirondack Economic Development Corporation, Anna-Maria & Stephen Kellen Foundation, Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration, Binghamton Local Development Corporation/Broome Triad, BOC Network, Inc., Chinatown Manpower Project, Inc., Ewing Marion Kaufman Foundation, Farah Foundation, Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies, Hot Bread Kitchen, Ltd, IBERO American Action League, Jumpstart, Inc., Korean American Community Foundation, Queens Economic Development Corporation, Refugee Social Services Program, South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation, Urban League of Rochester, Women’s Enterprise Development Center, Inc., Washington Heights-Inwood Development Corporation, the Women’s Foundation; and
- Corporate Sponsors – Key Boost and Build, State Farm Insurance, and Whiteman, Osterman & Hanna, LLP.

In addition, part of the costs were covered by hundreds of business owners, accountants, lawyers, marketing consultants, professional associations and bank employees who donated time and expertise on a pro bono or reduced-fee basis to help EAC clients start or expand their businesses.

EAP CLIENT & BUSINESS CHARACTERISTICS (NEW ENROLLMENTS ONLY)

- EAC’s rigorous program attracts persons with potential for success in business ownership.



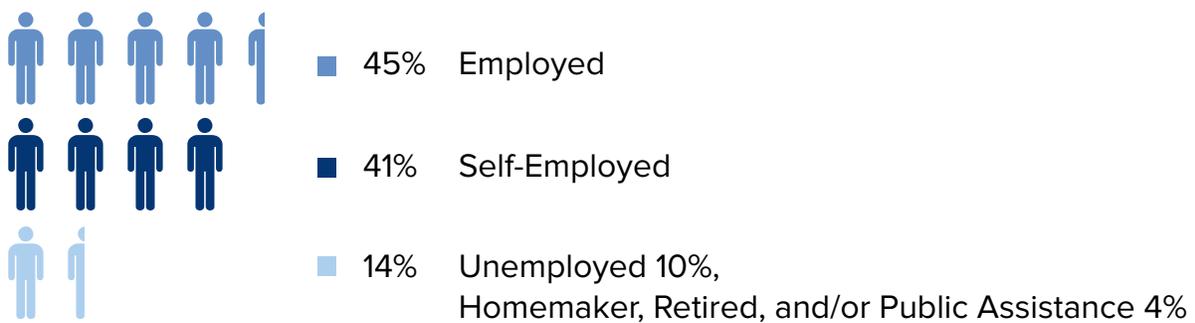
Of the total 987 new enrollments:

- 69% of clients enrolled were Minority & Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE);
- 68% represented all woman-owned firms; and
- 75% had no business plan and 15% came in with a partial plan.

Education Level	FY 2019-2020 Percentage
High School or GED	27%
Trade School or 2-year college	21%
4-year college	31%
Graduate Degree	18%
Grade School/Junior High	3%

Work Experience

Work experience captures the labor participation segment of this year’s new EAC enrollments. In FY 2019-2020, 86% of enrollees were either employed as a wage earner or self-employed. The other 14% are unemployed representing displaced homemakers, retired, or those on public assistance. The Centers work with displaced workers or unemployed persons in partnership with the Self-Employment Assistance Program (SEAP) of the NYS Department of Labor to assess their readiness for business ownership and provide one-on-one counseling to prepare them for starting a business.



Business Characteristics

At the point of intake, 37% of newly enrolled businesses were home-based, another 25% were operated out of a rented facility and 4% owned their facility. The remaining 34% were unknown at the time of intake.

The industry breakdown of the businesses categorized as either new or existing businesses is as follows:

Business Sector	Percentage
Service	53%
Retail	17%
Construction	4%
Manufacturing	5%
Wholesale/Distribution	2%
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	3%
Undecided	16%

The vast majority (86%) of EAC client firms were micro-enterprises. A micro-enterprise is a very small business operating from a home, storefront or office, which typically employs no more than five people. These businesses do not generally have access to commercial bank loans, yet it could benefit from loan financing under \$25,000. The income breakdown of EAC clients with existing businesses are as follows:

Gross Business Sales	Percentage
Less than \$5,000	29%
\$5,000 - \$10,000	6%
\$10,000 - \$25,000	11%
\$25,000 - \$50,000	16%
\$50,000 - \$100,000	9%
\$100,000 - \$500,000	21%
Over \$500,000	8%

OVERSIGHT AND EVALUATION

Empire State Development's EAC Director provides overall program management, assists the Centers and monitors each Center's performance. Performance monitoring consists of: site visits to the Centers, classroom audits, client file reviews, site visits to the clients and client telephone surveys. Other services provided to the EAC, include the definition of contract terms and program requirements, program orientation for new Center staff, monthly conference calls to review program direction and/or strategies, professional development webinars, and telephone/email support in planning program activities.

The Centers are evaluated annually based on specific performance objectives regarding business creation and expansion, increased sales, job creation, and business financing. A Center's eligibility for reimbursement of expenses and continued funding are contingent on the Center achieving quarterly and annual performance objectives, along with other contractual obligations.

The Centers are required to meet all of the minimum performance standards. Centers that do not meet the minimum of at least 75% of the 24 standards may not receive the final 10% of the grant amount. Centers not achieving a minimum 75% of goals for two consecutive years will be subject to review for continued participation in the EAC program.

The EAC Director also convenes an annual training conference after the completion of each fiscal year to review the program's effectiveness, compare best practices with national micro business programs as well to provide an opportunity for Centers to meet face to face and exchange best practices with each other. This is also a time to recognize and celebrate top Centers for best performance. Winners of the FY 2019-2020 Awards for Excellence went to the Adirondack Economic Development Corporation, Business Outreach Center Network, Hofstra University, and the Women's Enterprise Development Center - Mid Hudson Poughkeepsie.

2019-2020 ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AWARDEES



Nomination by Business Training Institute

COMMAND MASTER CHIEF MARK WILLIAMSON **TAPS Our Duty LLC**



Command Master Chief Mark Williamson is a 23-year veteran of the U.S. Navy. Born and raised in Utica, N.Y., Williamson returned to his hometown after retirement and continued his service as a member of the City of Utica Common Council and the leader of the local high school's ROTC program. During this time, the unique concept for TAPS Our Duty started taking shape as Williamson began attending calling hours at funeral homes to pay his respect to local veterans who had passed away. He realized that many funeral homes were not equipped with the supplies and training to organize proper military tributes, and this lack of expertise

often left family members and loved ones with much to be desired.

Williamson approached the Business Training Institute's (BTI) EAC for assistance with creating his TAPS Our Duty business plan, offering military memorial tribute training. After putting his ideas down on paper, he submitted his idea to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and was awarded a patent for being the first to file for such an exceptional military service model. BTI continues to collaborate with Williamson in all phases of business development, from implementation to expansion.

After turning TAPS Our Duty into a local success story, Williamson sought to expand his model in a way that would benefit veterans across the country. The COVID-19 pandemic brought business to a standstill, as large gatherings and funeral services were significantly restricted. Undaunted, Williamson used the time to work with a marketing company to expand the geographical reach of his model and met with an attorney to start the process of franchising. For Williamson, the ultimate goal is to assist funeral homes in paying respect to the millions of U.S. veterans. Providing veterans with employment and ownership of a TAPS Our Duty franchise is just another way to honor their service. TAPS Our Duty, LLC is a certified Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business. Upon reopening in September 2020, Williamson was immediately contacted to perform 11 services within the surrounding Oneida County area.

<https://tapsourduty.com/our-history/>

2019-2020 ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AWARDEES



Nomination by Local Development Corporation of East New York

MICHELLE CADORE **DA Spot NYC**



Michelle Cadore launched DA Spot NYC in 2017 to create a space for marginalized creatives of color to gain access to new audiences, widen their networks, and monetize their skills. To get help with some seed capital, Cadore sought out the Local Development Corp's EAC for a business plan to enter Brooklyn's 2018 PowerUp Competition.

DA Spot NYC started out with three independent brands including Cadore's own brand, YES I AM, Inc., the empowerment clothing brand she established in 2016 as its designer, CEO and visionary. Cadore has always been passionate about entrepreneurship and inspiring others.

As a graduate of the Zicklin School of Business at Baruch College with a concentration in Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management, Cadore built a career around helping others realize their goals. She spent three years in Public Administration as a Small Business Program Manager for the Department of Small Business Services, where she helped fund entrepreneurs looking to expand their workforce. She then served three years as an Assistant Director for Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corp., helping residents "Dream and Do."

In December 2019, Cadore transitioned to full-time entrepreneurship and she also launched her business consultancy firm Cadore Advisory Group to help other small businesses grow. Cadore is featured in Mastercard's Her Ideas are Priceless campaign for small women-led businesses and sits on Mastercard's Small Business Advisory Council. Her brands have also been featured at Create & Cultivate Conferences, and in Essence, Yahoo Finance, CNBC and other multiple news and social media outlets.

When the pandemic forced Cadore to physically close her business, DA Spot NYC operations shifted to e-commerce, with heavy online promotions including free shipping. Eventually, as regions and businesses reopened, curbside pickup was offered when NYC entered Phase 2. DA Spot NYC increased online advertisements with e-mail marketing, Facebook, Google, and Instagram ads. The company also developed partnerships with Essence (Shop Essence), Afterpay and Amazon to extend its product reach online.

DA Spot NYC has now grown to promote over 25 creative brands by people of color. DA Spot NYC is currently only open for production and shipping, but hosts creative workshops, business panels and monthly live, in-store events for the public.

<https://daspotnyc.com>

2019-2020 ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AWARDEES



Nomination by IBERO-Buffalo

SABINA RAMSEY ***Insight International USA***



Sabina Ramsey is the founder of Insight International USA, a Buffalo, N.Y.-based creative design firm that helps companies and organizations develop strategies to increase brand awareness and sales. With more than 13 years of experience in business development, digital marketing, and web development, Ramsey takes a holistic approach to understand the client’s organization inside out and to align with them to create a cohesive path forward. Since launching in 2008, Ramsey has steadily and persistently built up her business, and has seen more than a tenfold increase in revenue.

A key to Ramsey’s success is the way she leans on and gives back to her support network. Ramsey created a female-led firm of coders, researchers and designers with a deep commitment to helping “like-minded kind hearts create brands that build movements.” Through continuous collaboration with the IBERO-Buffalo’s EAC, Ramsey was able to obtain Women-Owned Business Enterprise certification (WBE) in New York State, introducing her to numerous additional professional development and networking opportunities. Ramsey continues to be an active member of the community. She led the Buffalo Niagara chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) to become the fastest growing chapter in the nation, increasing its membership by 80% in one year. Ramsey also sits on several executive boards such as the American Diabetes Association (ADA) of Western New York, and the Marketing Committee of the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County. Through her business, Ramsey has worked for local public and civic organizations, including the Buffalo Public Schools, the Western New York Women’s Foundation, and the Community Action Organization. For her service, Ramsey was awarded the “Above and Beyond” Leadership Award at the Women Making History Gala and several other awards in the Buffalo area.

<http://insightstrategies.co/>

2019-2020 ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AWARDEES



Nomination by Queens Economic Development Corporation & Business Outreach Center

SEGUN OLANIYI

Priority Cares Home Services, LLC



Segun Olaniyi is the co-founder of Long Island Citybased Priority Cares Home Services, a company specially created to help clients enroll in the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP). The CDPAP allows home care consumers to hire the caregiver of their choice, including family members and friends. Priority Cares Home Services helps the client navigate the CDPAP process by checking eligibility, choosing and registering their designated aide, and completing all the necessary paperwork to ensure that they can receive the care from the

people they trust the most.

A passionate individual who empathizes with a family member’s difficulties in receiving care and understands how much quality service matters in the lives of the elderly and sick, Olaniyi takes direct action to address these issues. By building up a local support network, including working with EAC Queens Economic Development Corporation and the Business Outreach Network-Olaniyi has made rapid advancements in managing cash flow, creating financial statements, planning short-term and long-term strategies, and obtaining Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) certification. With COVID-19, Olaniyi’s business has become even more important as an essential service in the pandemic.

A key to Olaniyi’s success is his focus on growth and innovation. Since starting the company three years ago, his team has expanded to 30 employees. The next step for Priority Cares Home Services is to develop another service initiative, the Nursing Home Diversion Program, which will work with nursing homes to facilitate the transfer of clients back into the community. In addition, Olaniyi has leveraged his expertise through the creation of Priority Cares to provide cleaning services and medical billing services for other clients. His dedication and the strength of his local network positions him well for whatever may come.

<http://prioritycareshs.com/>

OTHER 2019-2020 ENTREPRENEURSHIP ASSISTANCE CENTERS SUCCESS STORIES

EAC: Business Training Institute

John Bartholomeo, Service-Disabled Veteran **MOHAWK VALLEY WELLNESS, LLC**



After five tours of duty with the U.S. Marine Corps and a severe loss of hearing, John Bartholomeo qualified as a service-disabled vet. Undaunted, he pushed on and joined the CrossFit movement – a confederation of professional fitness practitioners promoting the ethic and aesthetic of the

garage gym as an alternative for more athletic programming not available at commercial gyms – and launched a CrossFit affiliate. In 2011, when he was ready to expand his business to a larger facility and needed a loan, Bartholomeo turned to Business Training Institute’s (BTI) EAC. At BTI, he obtained assistance in writing a new business plan and securing a loan for Mohawk Valley Wellness (MVW). By 2018, MVW was voted the Best of the Best Fitness Facilities in the Central New York area. Within seven years of its launch, MVW was offering 12 programs, employing 16 fitness coaches and generating revenues of \$750,000.

Then, in March 2020, Governor Cuomo ordered all non-essential businesses to shut down due to COVID-19. Bartholomeo immediately worked to convert his classes to virtual workouts and wondered how long he could keep his business operational. When BTI Director Dr. Patricia Laino informed Bartholomeo about U.S. Small Business Administration assistance, including the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL), he was skeptical and thought that he probably would not qualify. Bartholomeo now credits BTI as being crucial to MVW’s survival during this pandemic and is thankful for BTI’s counseling and guidance. With BTI’s help, he was able to secure \$51,000 in PPP, which allowed him to keep his trainers employed. MVW has also been able to gain some new clients due to the virtual classes. And when Bartholomeo’s clients complained about gaining weight from being homebound for so long, he immediately developed an “Eat Well” program and expanded his nutrition promotions. BTI also helped Bartholomeo with his safety plan so he could be ready when the state allowed businesses to reopen.

Since MVW’s reopening on Sept. 15, some clients have returned to the gym, while others have opted to stay virtual. Bartholomeo is also catering to a new market since the pandemic has heightened awareness that staying fit and eating healthy lessens the impact of sickness and disease. MVW’s “Eat Well” program continues to flourish and contributes to 10-15% of Bartholomeo’s revenues, bringing MVW to just shy of where it was pre-pandemic.

<https://mohawkvalleywellness.com/about-mohawk-valley-wellness-in-marcy/>

OTHER 2019-2020 ENTREPRENEURSHIP ASSISTANCE CENTERS SUCCESS STORIES

EAC: Chinatown Manpower Project

Flora Chung

KISSENA CHERRY DAYCARE INC.



Flora Chung, a graduate of Touro College with a master's degree in Early Childhood and Special Education, combined her love and care for children and understanding of the needs of working parents in founding

Kissena Cherry Daycare Inc. (Kissena Cherry), a community-based childcare provider, in 2010.

Kissena Cherry is a NYC MWBE-certified daycare center for children between the ages of 2 and 5 years old. As childcare professionals, they focus on the needs of the individual child and provide exceptional education and high-quality services. Their preschool programs comply with all U.S. Department of Education standards and offer a balanced and well-rounded educational program to support students with different abilities and talents. Chung believes that every child has individual needs, strengths and talents, and that, with an excellent education, every child can succeed. Over the past 10 years, her business has grown from one small childcare center to two separate locations with more than 20 full-time employees, and revenues of over \$1.2 million.

The sudden outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020 disrupted Chung's businesses and forced their temporary closure. Chung immediately contacted Chinatown Manpower Project's (CMP) EAC to obtain financial assistance, and CMP business counselors advised her about COVID-19 financial assistance programs, including federal, state and community grants and emergency loans. With CMP's help with applications and gathering of supporting documentation, Chung was able to secure \$385,000 in EIDL loans and \$239,000 in PPP funding to help her centers recover from the pandemic. She was able to use the funds to reopen both childcare centers in time for the new school year and reopened on Sept. 21. Chung has rehired eight staff to manage classes and care for the kids and has 15 children for in-person learning and 60 in remote learning. Chung is grateful for CMP's assistance and support and she is confident that her businesses will overcome this crisis and once again flourish to reach pre-pandemic levels.

<https://kissenadaycare.com>

OTHER 2019-2020 ENTREPRENEURSHIP ASSISTANCE CENTERS SUCCESS STORIES

EAC: Capital Region Chamber Foundation

Trent Griffin-Braaf

TECH VALLEY HOSPITALITY SHUTTLE/G-B-LOGISTICS



Trent Griffin-Braaf enrolled in the Capital Region Chamber Foundation's (CRCF) EAC Spring 2020 Entrepreneur Boot Camp training program to develop a strategic expansion plan for his already established young company, Tech Valley Hospitality Shuttle. Griffin-Braaf's business provides transportation services primarily to the hotels and hospitality industry as well as to a few key corporate clients. As Uber and Lyft came

online in the region, the ride sharing businesses had cut into his business. Griffin-Braaf came to the CRCF training to map out a plan and approach to secure new markets and expand and grow his operation. At that time, his business had 16 employees and was on pace to double its annual sales.

Griffin-Braaf's business was greatly impacted by COVID-19 when businesses were forced to close. His bookings fell by 90% because people were not traveling. In the middle of the pandemic, he urgently sought new ways to earn income and to keep his staff employed by making deliveries for free to food banks and other nonprofits. However, with the demand for shuttle services unlikely to bounce back quickly, he started laying off employees to keep the company alive and to pay bills.

The CRCF helped him with SBA loan applications and he was able to obtain \$12,000 in PPP, as well as \$25,000 in CRCF financing and \$50,000 from Pursuit. With these loan funds, Griffin-Braaf was able to rehire and retain 11 of his employees.

Then in late June, he got an unexpected surprise that was to change his business trajectory. Amazon contacted him to advise that his application to become a logistics provider had been accepted. To take advantage of this business opportunity, Griffin-Braaf had to quickly launch a new business. He launched G-B Logistics in July and has hired more than 30 employees, and planned to double that number by the end of October, with up to 25 vehicles (some leased, some rented) and 25 routes for the year-end holiday rush. Griffin-Braaf expects to continue to expand G-B Logistics with other logistics and freight contracts.

<https://www.techvalleyshuttle.com>

ENTREPRENEURSHIP ASSISTANCE CENTERS PROGRAM OUTCOMES FOR FY 2019-2020

The call for shelter-in-place due to the COVID-19 pandemic occurred during the last quarter of the EAC fiscal year ending June 30, 2020¹, resulting in a lower overall performance for the entire fiscal year compared to FY 2018-2019. While the total number of client enrollments seeking help were only down 1% from FY 2018-2019, overall business startups dropped 15% and retained businesses slid by 16%. The EAC program had a greater number of previous clients to total enrollment at 40% of the client base, compared to the 30-35% typically experienced.

The FY 2019-2020 saw a decline in MWBE participation. New MWBE enrollment decreased by 26% and existing MWBE clients fell by 63%. The number of new MWBE business startups dropped by 51% and retained MWBE businesses declined by 73%. MWBE representation has always been at least 90% and more of clients served. For Fiscal 2019-2020, MWBEs composed 55% of total EAC enrollment. There was a 12% increase in the number of NYS MWBE Certifications applications submitted.

Overall business performance showed a decline, with overall sales down by 13% compared to FY 2018-2019. However, the amount of MWBE sales of \$4.9 million against a total of \$53 million for all businesses, MWBE firms only had 9% of these total sales. This represents a decrease of 91% in MWBE sales from FY 2018-2019.

On the employment side, there was a decrease of 43% in total startup and existing micro businesses that were able to make new hires and retain employees. Employment numbers dropped by 31% from FY 2018-2019. For MWBEs, total new and retained employees represented 17% of the total employment numbers for the client base FY 2019-2020 to FY 2018-2019 at 93%.

The number of financial packages developed via the Centers' relationships with local lending entities increased by 21% along with an increase in the number of loans that closed, which was 12% above FY 2018-2019. Despite the increase in the number of loans approved, total loan dollars financed were 4% less than FY 2018-2019. Culminating at \$13.5 million in FY 2019-2020 versus \$14 million for FY 2018-2019. The number of MWBE loans were only 29% of all loans approved for a total of \$5.6 million, or 41% of total loans.

On April 1, 2020, ESD provided the EAC program with a COVID-19 grant to provide technical assistance to small businesses. The grant also gave the Centers the ability to provide services virtually and help businesses pivot in response to this pandemic and make strategic changes in their products, delivery, and infrastructure (direct COVID-19 assistance outcomes are noted separately in Table 1 alongside EAC outcomes for FY 2019-2020). The number of business plans completed this year also dropped 14%.

¹ The fiscal year for EAC was adjusted with a no cost extension to align the program to start on July 1 or with the third calendar quarter making this a 13-month year.

TABLE 1
ENTREPRENEURSHIP ASSISTANCE CENTERS
FY 2019-2020 GOALS AND OUTCOMES

Clients	Individual Center Goals	Program Goals ¹	EAC Program Outcomes ²	EAC COVID-19 Outcomes ^{4&5}
New Enrollments	10	240	987 ³	1,330
Prior Year Clients Served	10	220	645	
Businesses				
Businesses Started	6	144	156	
Businesses Saved/Retained	3	112	112	286
Existing Business Impacts				
Businesses with Increased Sales	5	120	273	11
Aggregate Amount of Increased Sales	\$150,000	\$3,600,000	\$50,992,599	
Businesses with Expanded Employment	3	72	119	14
New Employees	6	144	541	39
Businesses with Retained Employment	3	72	226	281
Retained Employees	6	144	1,357.6	1,585
Start-up Business Impacts				
Businesses with Increased Sales	2	48	130	
Aggregate Amount of Increased Sales	\$40,000	\$960,000	\$2,186,917	
Businesses with Expanded Employment	2	48	67	
New Employees	2	48	140.5	
Financing Impacts (Start-up and Existing)				
Financial Packages Developed	6	144	178	859
Financial Packages Secured	4	96	184	437
Amount of Financing Secured	\$150,000	\$3,600,000	\$13,538,333.67	\$19,770,191
Business Plans Developed				
New Enrollments/Prior Year Clients	8	192	284	167 Workshops
MWBE Goals				
MWBE Certification Applications Developed	8	192	125	
Veteran Program Goals				
New Clients Enrolled	3	72	50	
Businesses Started	1	24	14	
Business Mentor NY Goals				
New Mentees Enrolled	20	480	220	
New Mentors Enrolled	4	96	40	
Number of Counseling Matches	10	240	114	

¹ Program Goals are equal to the sum individual center goals for 24 Centers.

² Program Outcomes captured from EAC on-line database for FY2019-2020 through June 30, 2020 as of September 15, 2020.

³ New Enrollment program goals were not increased due to added program goals and new program initiatives.

⁴ Technical assistance provided from April 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020.

⁵ For the EAC COVID-19 Outcomes, items left blank are not applicable.

TABLE 2
ENTREPRENEURSHIP ASSISTANCE CENTERS
FY 2019-2020 MWBE OUTCOMES

MWBE Clients	MWBE Outcomes	% of Total Outcomes
New Enrollments	680	69%
Prior Year Client Served	215	33%
MWBE Businesses		
Businesses Started	79	51%
Retained Businesses	34	30%
MWBE Existing Businesses		
Businesses with Increased Sales	18	30%
Aggregate Increase in Sales	\$3,117,163	6%
Businesses with Expanded Employment	14	12%
New Employees	58.5	11%
Businesses with Retained Employment	52	23%
Retained Employees	206.5	15%
MWBE Startup Businesses		
Businesses with Increased Sales	68	52%
Aggregate Increase in Sales	\$1,778,304	81%
Businesses with Expanded Employment	37	55%
Expanded Employment	91	65%
Financing (MWBE Startups and Existing)		
Financial Packages Developed	57	32%
Financial Packages Approved	54	29%
Aggregate Financing Secured	\$5,612,280	41%
MWBE Goals (Startups and Existing)		
Number of MWBE Applications Developed	125	100%
Business Plans (MWBE Startups and Existing)		
New Enrollees & Prior Year Clients	203	71%

TABLE 3
ENTREPRENEURSHIP ASSISTANCE CENTERS
FY 2019-2020 VETERAN OUTCOMES

Veteran Clients	Veteran Outcomes	% of All Outcomes
New Enrollments	50	5%
Prior Year Client Served	31	5%
Veteran Businesses		
New Businesses Started	8	5%
Retained Businesses	3	3%
Existing Veteran Businesses		
Businesses with Increased Sales	2	1%
Aggregate Increase in Sales	\$40,230	0.08%
Businesses with Expanded Employment	4	3%
New Employees	8	1%
Businesses with Retained Employment	3	1%
Retained Employees	10	1%
Startup Veteran Businesses		
Businesses with Increased Sales	3	2%
Aggregate Increase in Sales	\$79,990	4%
Businesses with Expanded Employment	3	4%
New Employment	4	3%
Financing (Veteran Startups and Existing)		
Financial Packages Developed	9	5%
Financial Packages Approved	9	5%
Aggregate Financing Secured	\$1,000,603	7%
MWBE Goals (Veteran Startups and Existing)		
MWBE Applications Developed	3	2%
Business Plans (Veteran Start-ups and Existing)		
New Enrollees & Prior Year Clients	13	5%

ENTREPRENEURSHIP ASSISTANCE CENTERS LISTING

By Empire State Development Region

Organization	Service Area
Region 1: WESTERN NEW YORK	
ACCORD Corporation	Allegany, Cattaraugus and Steuben
IBERO and Greater South Buffalo Chamber of Commerce	Downtown Buffalo area, Erie and Niagara
Region 2: FINGER LAKES	
Urban League of Rochester, NY, Inc.	Erie, Genesee, Monroe, Ontario and Wayne Counties - Primary focus is Monroe
IBERO – American Action League, Inc.	Cayuga, Chemung, Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne and Yates
Region 3: SOUTHERN TIER	
Binghamton Local Development Corporation	Binghamton, Broome, Chenango, Delaware and Tioga
Region 4: CENTRAL NEW YORK	
South Side Innovation Center / Syracuse University	Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, Oswego and Syracuse
Region 5: NORTH COUNTRY	
Adirondack Economic Development Corporation (AEDC)	Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Montgomery, Oneida, Oswego, Otsego, Saratoga, St. Lawrence, Warren and Washington
Region 6: MOHAWK VALLEY	
Business Training Institute, Inc. (BTI)	Herkimer, Madison and Oneida Counties
Region 7: MID-HUDSON VALLEY	
Women's Enterprise Development Center, Inc.	Westchester
Women's Enterprise Development Center, Inc.	Poughkeepsie
Region 8: CAPITAL REGION	
Capital Chamber Foundation, Inc.	Albany, Town of Colonie
Region 9: NEW YORK CITY	
South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (SOBRO)	Bronx County
SOBRO Venture – A division of South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (SOBRO VC)	Bronx County (Spanish Centered)
CAMBA	Brooklyn - Kings County
Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation	Brooklyn - Kings County
Local Development Corporation of East New York (LDCENY)	Brooklyn - East New York and Brownsville sections
Hot Bread Kitchen, Ltd	Manhattan - New York County
Chinatown Manpower Project, Inc. /Business Outreach Center	Manhattan - Chinatown (Assistance in Chinese)
Renaissance Economic Development Corporation	Manhattan - Chinatown (Assistance in Chinese and Spanish)
Washington Heights Inwood Development Corporation	Manhattan - Washington Heights & Inwood section of NYC (Assistance in English and Spanish)
Business Outreach Center (BOC)	Queens County
Queens Economic Development Corporation	Queens County
Region 10: LONG ISLAND	
Hofstra University	Nassau and Suffolk Counties
Suffolk County Community College	Suffolk County



Entrepreneurship Assistance Centers

