

SBA SPOTLIGHT

January, 2009

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VERMONT WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER OFFERS SERVICES FROM NEW OFFICE

BY MAUREEN DOUGHERTY, VWBC PROGRAM ASSISTANT

The Vermont Women's Business Center has a new location! Our main office is now in downtown Barre at 8 South Main Street. We are located on the second floor of the old firehouse building, across the street from the post office. Our new phone numbers are 802-479-9813 or toll free 877-524-1998.

VWBC offers resources, training, and networking opportunities for women

statewide to achieve business success. VWBC provides free access to one-to-one business counseling; statewide referrals; networking for entrepreneurial training; a lending library; and comprehensive business classes.

In addition, VWBC offers monthly Artist Learning Circles and Networking Luncheons in the Central Vermont area. The Artist Learning Circles take place on the first

Wednesday of the month. The learning circle is a fluid, self-directed group of artists, facilitated by VWBC, who share business ideas to meet the challenges unique to artists as business owners.

All types of artists are welcome, including those involved with visual, dimensional, performing, and expressive arts. The Networking Luncheons take place

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CHANGES TO THE SBA 504 LOAN PROGRAM

All Certified Development Corporations were recently notified by the Sacramento Loan Processing Center of increased loan limits for "Energy Efficiency Projects."

Two categories have been added to allow SBA's share of a project to go up to \$4,000,000 for:

1. each project that reduces the borrower's energy consumption by at least 10%, or for
2. each project that generates renewable energy or renewable fuels, such as biodiesel or ethanol production.

Projects eligible for up to \$4,000,000 under one of the above parameters

do not have to meet the job creation or retention requirement, so long as the CDC portfolio average is at least \$50,000.

This notification also added energy efficiency language to Public Policy Goals, which allows for waiving the job creation or retention requirements.

Helping small businesses **start, grow** and **succeed**.



Your Small Business Resource

VT WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER . . .

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“All types of artists are welcome, including those involved with visual, dimensional, performing, and expressive arts.”

on the first business Monday of each month and feature a guest speaker presenting a topic of business interest, and includes time to network with others in attendance.

In the Northeast Kingdom, VWBC is offering a special training program entitled “From Home-grown to Homemade to Off to Market”. This free business course is geared toward business owners who create products for farmers’ markets and craft shows. It will focus on business development, market-

ing, record keeping, networking, and product display. Classes begin Wednesday evening, February 18th and run for 6 weeks. For more information or to register, contact Amy Robinson of NEKCA at 748-6048 or amy@nekcavt.org.

VWBC is pleased to announce two new initiatives! We now offer an on-line Membership Program and Directory and an Ambassador Alliance program.

The Membership Program and Directory is a valuable service for Vermont’s women entrepre-

neurs. It will function as a marketing instrument for woman-owned businesses and as a tool for consumers looking for local products and services. There are numerous benefits to becoming a member. For more information and to sign up, please visit our website at www.vwbc.org.

The Ambassador Alliance has a mission to build a network of women who will serve as advocates and mentors. It will provide leadership development for women business owners. For more information or to participate, please contact VWBC.

SBA TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR LENDERS

New to SBA? Need a refresher? Can’t find what you need . . . when you need it?

SBA training sessions are starting on a regular basis in 2009. We’ll be covering:

- Introduction to SBA programs and services
- Loan guarantee programs and eligibility requirements
- SBA credit criteria, common loan terms, and conditions

- SBA website familiarity, how to find forms, contact information

There will be ample opportunity for Q & A.

The first training session will be Thursday, February 12, 9:00 a.m. to noon, Montpelier. The training will be held in person in the SBA conference room, which comfortably accommodates eight people.

Please ensure an effec-

tive session for all by calling in advance to reserve a seat. We will provide directions and parking ideas to help you avoid traffic congestion while the Legislature is in session.

Contact Susan Mazza, susan.mazza@sba.gov or 802-828-4422, ext. 209.

If the date doesn’t work for you or we reach seating capacity, let us know your interest so we can schedule you for an upcoming session.

“The first training session will be Thursday, February 12, 9:00 a.m. to noon, Montpelier.”

COME TO THE WINTER BUSINESS FAIR IN BURLINGTON, THURSDAY, JAN. 15TH

If you're interested in starting or strengthening a small business, come to the Burlington Winter Business Fair.

The U. S. Small Business Administration and Burlington's Community and Economic Development Office are presenting the Business Fair on Thursday, January 15, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Contois Auditorium, Burlington City Hall, Room 12.

Presenters will include business advisors from CEDO, the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Vt Small Business Development Center, the Vt Women's Business Center, SCORE, Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity and the Women's Small Business Program.

The first presentation, "Borrowing Money," will begin at 10 a.m., followed by "Starting Your

Own Business" at 11 a.m., with the last presentation, "Energy Efficiency," beginning at 1 p.m.

The event is open to the public and free of charge.

No appointment is necessary, and people are welcome to stop by anytime between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

SBA HELPS SMALL BUSINESS WITH ECONOMIC RECOVERY: LIVE WEB CHAT, JAN. 15TH

The U.S. Small Business Administration's Web Chat series starts the new year with a focus on small businesses and the credit crunch.

SBA Associate Administrator for Capital Access Eric Zarnikow will help small business owners and entrepreneurs get answers to their questions about credit and borrowing and other resources to help them access credit.

SBA offers a variety of resources and referrals to small businesses uncertain about what to do

in the current economy on its Web page on Economic Recovery at <http://www.sba.gov/helpingmainstreet/index.html>.

SBA also offers free online training courses on "Surviving in a Down Economy" and "Strategic Marketing: How to Win Customers in a Slowing Economy," and "Retool & Reposition your company - How to Prepare a Business Plan." These courses are available at <http://www.sba.gov/services/training/onlinecourses/index.html>

WHO

Eric Zarnikow, Associate Administrator for SBA's Office of Capital Access will host the January Web chat on the topic "How Small Businesses can Deal with the Credit Crunch." Participants can chat online and ask questions about real-world strategies to employ during economic downturns, and how they can sustain themselves through the credit crunch.

WHAT

SBA's Web chat series, providing small busi-

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"SBA Associate Administrator for Capital Access Eric Zarnikow will help small business owners and entrepreneurs get answers to their questions about credit and borrowing . . ."

Coming May 1st . . .

A matchmaker opportunity for small businesses to market their products and services to prime contractors and federal and state agencies . . . the event will take place at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center, Burlington, May 1, 2009.

For more information, contact Brenda Plastridge at 802-828-4422, ext. 206.

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Your Small Business Resource

SBA FY 2009 1st Quarter Vermont 7(a) Loan Volume by Bank Oct. 1, 2008—Dec. 31, 2008

Berkshire Bank	3	\$ 133,000
Borrego Springs Bank, N.A.	1	50,000
Chittenden Bank	13	2,984,200
Citizens Bank	5	149,500
Community National Bank	2	660,000
Lake Sunapee Bank	1	100,000
Ledyard National Bank	1	460,000
KeyBank National	2	430,100
National Bank of Middlebury	2	15,000
Passumpsic Saving Bank	4	242,000
Peoples Trust Co of St. Albans	1	15,100
Superior Financial Group	2	30,000
TD Bank	3	1,800,000
UPS Capital Business Credit	1	432,000
Union Bank	1	1,000,000
Woodsville Savings Bank	1	123,100
TOTAL	43	\$8,624,000

SBA HELPS SMALL BUSINESS WITH ECONOMIC RECOVERY: LIVE WEB CHAT . . .

(Continued from page 3)

ness owners with an opportunity to discuss relevant business issues online with experts, industry leaders and successful entrepreneurs.

Chat participants will have direct, real-time access to the Web chats via questions they submit online in ad-

vance and during the live session, with instant answers.

WHEN

Thursday, Jan. 15, 1:00 p.m. ET

Eric Zarnikow will answer questions for one hour.

HOW

Participants can join the live Web chat by going

online to www.sba.gov, and clicking "Online Business Chat." Web chat participants may post questions before the January 15th chat by visiting <http://app1.sba.gov/livemeeting/jan09/index.cfm>, and posting their questions online.