



Queens Groups Provide Help For Small Businesses

As small businesses – who make up the biggest share of the Queens Chamber of Commerce’s membership – continue to feel the effects of the difficult economy, many businesses are looking for help. In Queens, many groups provide services for small businesses, and a number of them have either increased their services or come up with new ones to help guide small businesses through these challenging times.

QUEENS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The Queens Economic Development Corporation (QEDC) is a not-for-profit organization that has been providing broader access to economic opportunity to businesses in Queens for the past 26 years.

QEDC is offering a number of FREE programs to small business owners to help during these difficult economic times, according to Jamila Payne, Director of Business Services at QEDC.

One program QEDC is offering is free tax preparation for small businesses owners in the borough. On Sunday, April 5, business owners can have their taxes – both personal and business – prepared free by professionals from the National Association of Black Accountants. All businesses are eligible provided they fill out the application at www.queensny.org/businessesevents

Two other free programs QEDC provides center around business opportunities for women. One of them is a bi-monthly breakfast for women entrepreneurs in Queens where they come and connect with other business women and learn from each other. The next breakfast is on Thursday, April 9.

Finally, in the spring QEDC is launching a community workspace for women-centered businesses. The workspace, which will be located inside Queens Borough Hall will have laptops, fax machines, printers and other office material that businesses who are QEDC members can utilize.

For more information, businesses can log onto www.queensny.org or call 718-263-0546.

ROCKAWAY DEVELOPMENT REVITALIZATION CORPORATION

The Rockaway Development Revitalization Corporation (RDRC) is a 30-year-old local development corporation that has been helping businesses in the Rockaway area with business and workforce development.

Typically, they work with entrepreneurs and small business owners concentrating on business planning, marketing and identifying resources for businesses to obtain micro-loans and access to capital, according to RDRC Executive Director Kevin Alexander.

In addition, the organization acts as a conduit between the



Queens small businesses can utilize many resources to help them get through these difficult economic times.

businesses and the city, helping businesses with problems or issues they may be having with a city agency like trash removal. RDRC will contact the Department of Sanitation (DOS) and try to help the business resolve the issue it may be having.

To contact the RDRC, businesses can log onto their website at www.rdrc.org , call 718-327-5300 or email info@rdrc.org

GREATER JAMAICA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

For more than 40 years, the Greater Jamaica Development Corporation (GJDC) – one of New York’s oldest not-for-profit local development corporations – has been working with businesses in southeast Queens to promote development and better the community.

One of the ways GJDC helps businesses is by coordinating and delivering valuable state and city programs, including Empire Zone tax credits, industrial business zone benefits and city business incentives to attract and retain businesses in the Jamaica area.

In addition, GJDC also helps eligible small businesses in the area with low interest loans that can range from \$10,000 to \$100,000 in its capital access express program and \$100,000 to \$300,000 in the capital access program. Most of the borrowers are not bankable or else GJDC would send them to a bank, but GJDC aims to be flexible and patient with the loans.

During the past few months, GJDC has helped with four low-interest loans totaling \$380,000. In addition to helping the individual businesses, the loans are advantageous to the community because they help the economic environment throughout the area.

For more information about these low-interest loans, businesses can visit <http://www.gjdc.org/biz/loanslp.html> or call John Scott at 718-291-0282 extension 139.

NYC BUSINESS SOLUTIONS CENTER

New York City Business Solutions Centers are part of the city Small Businesses Services (SBS) and is dedicated to helping small businesses and entrepreneurs will all aspects of their business, and it is committed to helping those businesses survive and thrive in the city.

Grant Associates operates The Queens NYC Business Solutions Center in Jamaica and they provide services to businesses in many areas.

Some of those areas include business course and business planning to help reach one’s business goals, legal review of contracts and leases with lawyers providing free services and financing assistance that identifies lenders and helps with the loan application process.

In addition, it also helps with hiring by providing pre-screened job applicants that could fit the business and work with organizations that are eligible for Minority/Women-owned Business Enterprise Certification, which gives access to government contracts.

Finally, the center also helps businesses understand some of the incentives it can be eligible for that could save money with relocation, expansion or capital improvements.

For more information, you can call the NYC Business Solutions Queens Center at 718-577-2148. Or, you can visit the location located at 168-25 91st Avenue on the 2nd floor on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. or utilize their evening classes and event hours on Mondays and Wednesdays from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.