

NH SBDC Launches Inclusivity Project to Support All Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses

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INDONESIAN COMMUNITY CONNECT PARTNERS WITH NH SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER TO SUPPORT BUSINESSES, INCLUDING RAUDE RAYCHEL, PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER

OF ICC (LEFT), AND ICC TEAM MEMBERS.

COURTESY PHOTO

DURHAM, N.H.— In response to the state’s changing demographics, the NH Small Business Development Center (NH SBDC) has created a comprehensive plan to reach more people of color interested in starting a business or solidifying one they already own.

According to 2020 U.S. Census data, people of color who previously made up 10% of the state now represent 14% of the Granite State’s population.

“SBDC’s Inclusivity Project is in the early stages,” said Liz Gray, NH SBDC state director. “Our approach is intentional and purposely collaborative because we know working together is the way we can all be more successful in reaching entrepreneurs of color.”

Highlights of the [Inclusivity Project](#) include:

1. More direct support for small business owners of color through individualized business advising, education and resources to help them start or grow their businesses.
2. Creation of authentic partnerships with community leaders, groups and organizations to enhance communication and amplify SBDC’s outreach efforts.
3. Diversity, equity and inclusion training for the NH SBDC team to help them understand cultural sensitivities, needs and specific challenges of people of color businesses.

To develop the plan NH SBDC worked with James McKim, president of the Manchester unit of the NAACP and managing partner of Organizational Ignition, LLC, to analyze NH SBDC’s current state and help create a path to a more inclusive future. After a series of focus groups and additional research, McKim made a series of recommendations detailed in the plan.

“The recommendations in this report center around marketing and knowledge acquisition,” said McKim. “A focus on those will increase the reputation of the NH SBDC among people of color, help the organization assist more diverse businesses, and make the state a better place to live for all people.”

NH SBDC received funding from the CARES Act and the NH Community Navigator program to put many of the Inclusivity Project recommendations into action.

The [Community Navigator Pilot Program](#) is designed to reduce barriers to accessing critical resources for small businesses, specifically for underserved businesses and communities. As a community-based partner in the Community Navigator program, NH SBDC will focus on more effectively offering services to business owners of color. Its work will focus on the southern N.H. region where there is a higher percentage of diverse communities.

The Indonesian Community Connect, originally an NH SBDC client, has transitioned into one of its key Inclusivity Project partners. The ICC is a nonprofit organization based

in Somersworth that facilitates access to information resources for the Indonesian community, including their Business Partnership Program. They also help facilitate a mutual understanding among different cultures and values and promote the richness of the Indonesian cultural diversity.

“NH SBDC has assisted ICC in many ways,” said Raude Raychel, president of ICC. “With regular meetings, NH SBDC has provided advising services towards every ICC project by evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of products, services and events. The ICC also connects Indonesian aspiring business owners to the NH SBDC for guidance and resources. It’s a win-win for both of us.”

In addition, SBDC is translating some of its materials into multiple languages, including Spanish, Portuguese and Indonesian.

The [NH Small Business Development Center](#) (NH SBDC) is the state’s leading resource for business advising and education for small businesses. NH SBDC supported 4,483 businesses in 2021 through direct advising and training. SBDC’s team of certified business advisors provides highly individualized, confidential advising at no charge to NH enterprises. NH SBDC is funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and through assistance provided by the State of NH. NH SBDC is an outreach program of the UNH Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics in conjunction with SBA, the State of NH (BEA), UNH and the private sector.

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PHOTO FOR DOWNLOAD:

https://www.unh.edu/unhtoday/sites/default/files/media/icc_2.jpg

Caption: Indonesian Community Connect partners with NH Small Business Development Center to support businesses, including Raude Raychel, president and founder of ICC (left), and ICC team members.

Courtesy photo

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