CELEBRATING ENTREPRENEURSHIP
our mission

The mission of the BOC Network - to improve the economic prospects of traditionally disadvantaged groups and communities - has at its heart a belief that whatever their differences, people and communities share a common goal; economic stability and growth. Genuine collaboration - that is, working together with culturally diverse individuals and organizations in service to a shared goal - is a hallmark of BOC.

Our partnership of centers has grown to serve eight diverse minority and immigrant neighborhoods and industrial business zones across New York City and Newark, New Jersey.

what’s your next step?
our services

BOC Network helps with all aspects of business including business plan development, training, financial management assistance, pricing strategies, business regulations and access to financing whether it is from micro-lenders or mainstream sources of capital. Local BOC’s help low-income entrepreneurs build credit and coordinate entrepreneurial networking groups in areas such as industrial, e-commerce and fashion.

special projects

- Microenterprise Development Services
- SBA-sponsored Women’s Business Center
- SBA-sponsored Program for Investment in Microenterprise
- ORR Refugee Microenterprise Development Project
- CWE Jobs to Build On
- HHS Assets for Independence Program
- OCS Community Economic Development Program
- Child Care Business Development Project
- Financial Education
- Green Business Development
- NYS Entrepreneurial Assistance Program
- NYC Industrial Business Solutions
- Business American-Style Workshops
- Internet Networking Group
- NYC EDC Capital Access Revolving Loan Guarantee Program
- ESDC Small Business Revolving Loan Fund
- SBA Microloan Program
- Community Development Financial Institution

a message from our board chair

Dear Friends of BOC:

BOC continues to be in a strong period of growth even during the recent economic downturn. Nancy and her staff add substantial value to our neighborhoods in terms of business activity, new & growing businesses, jobs, and economic growth. In fact, this is the moment when community organizations such as BOC are most needed, and require your renewed support. The Network’s collaborative approach among its NYC member community-based organizations stimulates higher productivity, access to successful ideas, development of new and creative approaches, and a national template for interaction among economic development organizations everywhere.

Cities in general and New York City, in particular, are less about attracting new business and business retention than about business development, enhanced business activity, and job creation. Cities provide the raw materials, creative inspiration, motivation and opportunity to become an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurs employ people! The BOC Network provides the micro-loans, business linkages and services to make a coordinated and collaborative approach to help entrepreneurs be successful and small businesses grow. Our target communities include: the economically disadvantaged, minorities, women, and immigrant groups as well as urban industrial business zones. We add energy and direction by providing insight, information, business-to-business links, mentoring, and access to public economic development and other public and private business assistance resources.

We work closely with the public sector and strongly support all forms of public/private partnership, addressing local neighborhood business issues. The Network also provides linkages among its target communities and professional private service providers. Without us, fewer new businesses would start and even fewer would be successful. Finally, we provide educational training to would-be entrepreneurs and small neighborhood businesses. It is from this community of entrepreneurs that New York City generates new jobs, offers the American dream, and stimulates new ideas.

Sincerely,

Leslie Winter
Board Chair
John Rafael Peralta, a personable storyteller, actor and proud New Yorker, found a creative outlet for his skills within the sightseeing industry. As a sought after tour guide, Mr. Peralta possessed the rare ability to keep a group of 50 tired tourists on the same page for two hours—while stuck in traffic. With an intuitive sense of branding, Mr. Peralta took cues from his customers and combined his talent and interest in New York's enduring vitality to develop a new concept for experiential tourism.

Mr. Peralta ventured out with an innovative concept for a tour business that would reveal the city's more intimate character through the eye of an insider. However, his initial efforts to finance the venture met with rejection from mainstream lenders. Fortunately the Washington Heights and Inwood Development Corp./Upper Manhattan BOC was there with advice, guidance and capital. WHIDC came through with a $15,000 loan for the purchase of a passenger van and commercial insurance to launch Dynamic NYC Tours, LLC.

Dynamic NYC Tours transforms sightseeing into a genuine experience. The tours encourage customers to explore local neighborhoods, take a walk in the Bronx, stop to touch a graphic mural and learn its history. Mr. Peralta offers tours in English and Spanish, and reaches places off the beaten track in Upper Manhattan, Queens and the Bronx. His unique tours have names like the Uptown and Downtown Tour, Harlem Gospel Tour and the New York Contrast Tour.

Over time, Mr. Peralta sees his business changing the industry, opening up the Bronx for increased tourism, and creating jobs. He is the model of a dynamic young entrepreneur, using the skills and experience he gained in the entertainment and tourism industries to create a strong brand identity for his business.
Born and raised in Staten Island, Carol DiMarco built her business following industry best practices—from customer service to government procurement. Whether working closely with a customer, creating a merchants society, or helping kids with their resumes at a local school, Ms. DiMarco works hard to make those around her successful.

Starting out in the restaurant world, her “other love,” she opened a small luncheonette in the early 1980s. While raising a family, Ms. DiMarco helped a number of small businesses with their back office operations. In this role, she learned the printing business from the inside out. After years of running the business in everything but name—and with the encouragement of vendors and customers—she decided to strike out on her own.

Ms. DiMarco opened CLR Printing Plus in January 2008, and that same year began her relationship with the Staten Island BOC Women’s Business Center at the West Brighton Community LDC. With WBC help, CLR was certified as a Women’s Business Enterprise and gained connections with new opportunities for growth. CLR Printing Plus has since done work for a number of city and state agencies, CUNY schools, the Board of Elections and NYC Council.

Ms. DiMarco’s strength lies in her dedication to her customers, a strategy that has made her business a leader in the market. Doing much more than selling her own printing services, she uses her skills to help develop other companies. She works closely with new entrepreneurs in Staten Island to create marketing plans and explore the best, easiest, and most cost-efficient ways to get started in business.

Ms. DiMarco credits the Women’s Business Center with helping her make valuable connections and positioning her business for growth. She has become a true champion of their work and gives back in time and effort, helping to make the annual Staten Island Women’s Business Conference a major success.

---

Whether contributing his knowledge and resources to prepare Chinese immigrants for high paying jobs or through active engagement with industry groups and local associations, Kent Zhou is an inspired young entrepreneur dedicated to benefiting his community in concrete ways.

Mr. Zhou established Kenvic Professional Training in Flushing, Queens transitioning from his professional career in international trade to entrepreneurship. He recognized that his expertise could offer tangible benefits to the Chinese immigrant community in New York City. Community members needed quality training to build careers in international trade and better manage their import/export businesses. Mr. Zhou founded a business dedicated to fulfill that need—and he is particularly proud of the career success of his students.

Originally from China, Mr. Zhou envisioned himself as a business owner since childhood. The entrepreneurial spirit was deeply embedded in the culture of his hometown of Wenzhou. Before opening, Mr. Zhou carefully planned the new enterprise, working closely with Chinatown Business Outreach Center at Chinatown Manpower Project, where he completed entrepreneurial training, gained technical assistance and made valuable business connections.

Kenvic Professional Training is an important resource for many in the Chinese immigrant community—from students ready to start careers, to career changers and import/export companies. The company specializes in trainings related to U.S. Customs, logistics and international trade. In fact, Kenvic’s systematic training helps company owners understand how U.S. Customs operates, how to correctly classify cargo, lower duty rates and avoid costly mistakes in international trade transactions. Through increased compliance, these companies are able to build their reputations and save money by doing the right thing. Mr. Zhou is a dynamic young entrepreneur, using his industry skills and the latest technologies to build a business that, in turn, builds careers for others.
Brent Baker is a pioneer of the biodiesel movement. His vision for alternative fuels bridges the gap between environmental education and the entrepreneurial spirit. He has grown Tri-State Biodiesel in the South Bronx at a time when capital for small businesses was disappearing, and created jobs while improving the environment. Through vision and strategic collaboration with economic development partners, his company added new capacity and created over 20 new green jobs in the past year alone.

Tri-State Biodiesel now employs more than 40 workers, collects waste cooking oil from over 3500 restaurants in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut and supplies the City’s first biodiesel fuel pump at a commercial filling station in the Bronx. His is the largest business of its kind in the region, and Mr. Baker continues to expand his client base in new and innovative ways, partnering with both for-profit and non-profit businesses in his industry.

Mr. Baker has made his mark. As a tireless advocate both locally and nationally on the issue of biofuel and its potential to reduce harmful emissions, he recently helped make the case for legislation that will improve New York City’s air quality, signed into law on August 17, 2010. His groundbreaking work in the field of alternative fuels is widely recognized by press, peers and government leaders alike. Mr. Baker received the Social Venture Network’s 2009 Innovation Award for his work maintaining “triple bottom line” principles.

Tri-State Biodiesel’s relationship with BOC Network has fueled the company’s growth, combining a timely social investment with ongoing workforce development support. BOC also facilitated financing through the BOC Capital Corp. microloan fund and to the Seedco Financial GOLS Initiative which provides strategic assistance to select high-growth businesses.

The company’s unique product and Mr. Baker’s entrepreneurial grit has helped build a model of urban sustainability.

When Vincent Cuccia and Alex Bartlett founded Planet Pepper, Inc., artistic inspiration met entrepreneurship in playful and powerful ways. Vincent Cuccia is a writer turned entrepreneur. Despite his love of writing and the many awards and publications to his name, he was confident that he had more to offer to the creative, cultural and social communities he identified with. He was eager to test his skills in business. Mr. Cuccia set his dreams into motion, inspired by the talented Alex Bartlett whose designs had gained recognition in the theater world.

Awakened to these possibilities, Mr. Cuccia and Mr. Bartlett joined forces to start a unique fashion business. Their designs call norms into question with an outrageous openness. Planet Pepper, Inc. opened a professional studio space in the center of the fashion district in 2010. A niche business that is breaking new ground and taking advantage of an untapped market, Planet Pepper, Inc. helps stage pleasure and fun for a community that is often beleaguered by the harsher tones of discrimination.

As a new entrepreneur, Mr. Cuccia met each challenge with enormous energy, from accounting to branding, dresses to make-up. Through a series of connections and referrals, he ended up at the doors of BOC’s Women Business Center in 2009 where he met Liliana Blanco and began his mentoring relationship with the Business Outreach Center Network. With BOC’s support, Mr. Cuccia embarked on developing a business and marketing plan, implementing an accounting system, and pursuing a $15,000 grant from Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped. Mr. Cuccia won the $15,000 start-up grant as well as a customized website through BOC’s marketing plan competition. The new website was developed by CMIT Solutions of Manhattan whose President, Elise Gordon, generously contributed their services.

Planet Pepper combines creativity and community service, and like every independent small business, constant problem solving. Seeking out information, and resources, they have welcomed every challenge while building a national brand that transforms clothing into comedic and dramatic art. With all of this drive, talent, and collaboration at work, Mr. Cuccia and Mr. Bartlett characterize the best qualities of an entrepreneurial partnership.
Stephen Jones realized his dream and opened websignia in 2003 in Plainfield, NJ. When business demands grew and talent became more competitive, websignia moved to Newark to take advantage of the growing small business community and access and proximity to major universities and artistic talent.

Websignia is a self-described boutique digital media agency, specializing in discovering creative and technical solutions. Keeping his eye on success, Mr. Jones has grown the business, leading a dynamic team while remaining true to his artistic vision. His small business drives innovation while taking on challenging projects. With eight employees, Mr. Jones argues, "we are the little agency that could. On a daily basis we make the impossible possible."

The move represented a transformation - from a design shop to full service digital agency - and has given them a place to call home. Websignia is an active member in the Greater Newark community focusing on youth education and youth technology training, working closely with non-profits and school programs in many of the urban areas of Northern New Jersey and New York City. They provide services for local Faith-based organizations as well as serve on many advisory and oversight boards for projects coming to Newark. As websignia grows in revenue, capacity, and reputation they look to continue to engage with the community, helping inspire and cultivate education and youth development.

Websignia is a client of Greater Newark Enterprises Corporation (GNEC)/Greater Newark BOC, benefiting from working capital financing that enabled the business to successfully take on larger contracts and expand its workforce. GNEC continues to help the business increase visibility and gain new connections with potential partners and clients, supporting websignia’s growth in the region and in the digital media industry.

And growing they are. In the next year, they plan to introduce full scale programs for clients, including software development. Websignia is a rising star in the Greater Newark business environment seeking to enhance services that help people transform their lives.

Arelis Lovera’s child care program is enriched by her ability to create a community around the children and families she serves. Ms. Lovera works hard to involve parents as a team to support the development of their children. The passion and warmth that she brings to her work gives her daycare a strong and committed family feeling. This, together with her professionalism, has spurred her success.

Although Ms. Lovera came to the United States with both a degree in Business Administration from the Universidad de Santo Domingo and related work experience, she found little opportunity to build a career in New York City. To support her family she worked as a sales clerk seven days a week, twelve hours a day, only to lose that job to the recession.

When friends and family encouraged Ms. Lovera to join the BOC Child Care Means Business training at the Washington Heights and Inwood Development Corp. (WHIDC), she took the first step towards her future as an entrepreneur. She developed Lovera’s Group Family Daycare with the goal to make a real difference in the lives of children and families in her community. Her program offers art, science, music, math, and language learning with the mission to ensure that children are well prepared when they go to school.

Ms. Lovera’s dedication to consistency and quality has positioned her business to stand out. Lovera’s Group Family Daycare looks like a small school with vibrant posters, preschool activities and a variety of books. She carefully branded her business and developed referral relationships and is dedicated continually improving her teaching and educational skills. Her success extends to her own family, where her daughter, Nisel, who holds a Bachelors degree in English as well as Child Development Associate certification, works full-time in the business. Ms. Lovera’s achievements have won the admiration of many, and she maintains the ambition to be among the best child care service providers in the City.
When Diana Berrios opened the doors of Rainbow Delight Family Daycare she transformed her life and the lives of her three daughters. Ms. Berrios is now successfully self-employed, nurturing children in her Bronx community as an empowered entrepreneur. Her transformation began during a challenging time. She had taken the initiative to further her education, gaining a GED while working part-time in retail with hopes of going to college. Despite these efforts, her career prospects worsened during the economic downturn. Seeking new options, Ms. Berrios joined a special course offered by the Human Resources Administration BEGIN Program and the BOC Child Care Business Development Project.

She began the intensive child care business training with the modest expectation to qualify for work as a teacher’s assistant in a daycare center or home-based daycare program. But she soon began to imagine a larger role for herself in the industry. As the training progressed Ms. Berrios developed a business plan for a licensed home-based child care program, and forged a new identity as an entrepreneur accountable for her own success. She recognized a need for better options for quality child care in her community, and resolved to incorporate educational activities and early child care best practices into her program.

With the help of a micro-equity grant from BOC, Ms. Berrios reorganized her home to become a warm, colorful, child-centered environment with separate activity centers. Her program focuses on school readiness and learning through bilingual play activities. She recently expanded her capacity, and now employs a part-time assistant. Ms. Berrios is proud of the fact that she runs a successful business. As a guest speaker at BOC trainings, she inspires other women to follow the same path. Ms. Berrios was recently selected for a special feature by the New York Women’s Foundation as an example of an individual who overcame adversity to achieve economic independence while delivering an important service to families in her community.

Maria Feliciano has come a long way since starting Precious Kiddies Daycare. She is modest about her successes, crediting those around her with changing her life. But it is clear that, every day, she elevates the lives of others. In the early stages of the business, Ms. Feliciano met with unexpected challenges. Seeking guidance, she and her husband applied for BOC’s Child Care Business training. They devoted a great deal of energy and enthusiasm to the class and to the business. They stimulated their classmates to commit to every opportunity and helped create a close-knit and mutually supportive network.

Ms. Feliciano joined fellow graduates to pursue Child Development Associate certification, gaining knowledge of early childhood development and quality principles. The results were impressive. She rearranged her daycare, creating a stimulating environment in a cozy home setting and organized educational activities and field trips for the children.

As Precious Kiddies Daycare grew in popularity, Ms. Feliciano added transportation services, hiring her husband as driver. In 2010, Ms. Feliciano established a second daycare in the neighborhood. She was inspired to create new opportunities for local parents and for her own adult children. Her son and daughter-in-law, who recently immigrated from the Dominican Republic, registered in Child Care Business training and have since joined the family business.

Ms. Feliciano is attuned to the possibilities around her - and builds opportunities for the people in her life. She is very proud of the good relationships she has developed with parents. She received public recognition from a local women’s association for her character and the quality services she provides the families of Bellerose, Queens. It is through dedication to excellence and self-improvement that Maria Feliciano has yielded impressive results for her community and family.

Reliable child care is fundamental to the prosperity of a community. It is fundamental to the emotional and educational development of the children themselves, and provides sustainable self-employment and job opportunities for local residents.
Adino Shamuelova immigrated to the United States from Uzbekistan in 2005, with refugee status. She arrived with her three young children and a special goal to find medical treatment for her oldest son who was born with a disability. With great determination, Ms. Shamuelova grew Adino’s Five Start Group Family Day Care, a home-based business that allowed her to properly care for her son while supporting her family.

The microenterprise is a product of Ms. Shamuelova’s values, talent and ingenuity. Her business provides an educationally and culturally rich experience for young children in her community. Ms. Shamuelova takes great pride in her ability to provide a safe and nurturing space for young children to grow and learn, with art, educational games and a strong infusion of culture.

Ms. Shamuelova benefited from BOC’s Child Care Means Business training where she learned how to manage a successful business and take it to the next level. There she formed meaningful relationships with other child care providers and together they established a referral network. Through BOC, Ms. Shamuelova also accessed microequity grants for materials and supplies to launch and expand.

Ms. Shamuelova developed and fulfilled a dynamic plan for her business that enabled her to reach her financial goals. The business currently cares for 12 children full-time and is growing. As part of the planned expansion, classmate and mother Milyam Masheyeva joined Ms. Shamuelova as her full time assistant.

Ms. Shamuelova credits much of her success to her maturing children, for their supportive role and constant reassurance. Together they have proven that all things are possible.
BUSINESS OUTREACH CENTERS:

CHINATOWN, MANHATTAN  BOC/Chinatown Manpower Project
70 Mulberry Street 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10013
Tel. 212.571.1690  email: chinatown@bocnet.org

GREATER NEWARK  BOC/Greater Newark Enterprises Corporation
744 Broad Street, 26th Fl. Newark, NJ 07101
Tel.: (973)242-4132  email: info@GNECorp.org

NORTH BROOKLYN  BOC/Business Outreach Center Network, Inc.
85 South Oxford Street, 2nd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11217
Tel. 718.624.9115  email: northbrooklyn@bocnet.org

QUEENS  BOC/Business Outreach Center Network, Inc.
96-11 40th Road, Ground Floor, Corona, NY 11368
Tel. 718.205.3773  email: queens@bocnet.org

SOUTH BROOKLYN  BOC/Council of Jewish Organizations of Flatbush
1546 Coney Island Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11230
Tel. 718.253.5262  email: southbrooklyn@bocnet.org

STATEN ISLAND  BOC/West Brighton Community Local Development Corp.
705 Forest Avenue, 2nd Floor, Staten Island, NY 10310
Tel. 718.816.4775  email: statenisland@bocnet.org

UPPER MANHATTAN  BOC/Washington Heights & Inwood Development Corp.
57 Wadsworth Avenue, New York, NY 10033
Tel. 212.795.1600  email: uppermanhattan@bocnet.org

BOC SATELLITE LOCATIONS

BRIGHTON BEACH  operated by:
BOROUGH PARK  South Brooklyn BOC
HUNTS POINT / TRISTATE BIO-DIESEL  North Brooklyn BOC
MASPETH INDUSTRIAL BUSINESS ZONE  Queens BOC
REGO PARK JEWISH CENTER  Queens BOC
STEINWAY INDUSTRIAL BUSINESS ZONE  North Brooklyn BOC
WESTCHESTER

CHILD CARE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TRAINING SITES

BEDFORD STUYVESANT  operated by:
BUSHWICK  North Brooklyn BOC
CORONA  Queens BOC
FAR ROCKAWAY  Queens BOC
FLATBUSH  North Brooklyn BOC
REGO PARK  Queens BOC
SOUTH BRONX  Queens BOC
WASHINGTON HEIGHTS  Upper Manhattan BOC
board of directors

Board Chair
D. Leslie Winter

Secretary
Daniel Delehanty
Capital One Bank

Treasurer
Gregory J. Libertiny
NBT Associates LLC

Cruz C. Russell
The Port Authority of NY & NJ

Letisha Wadsworth

Seth Edwards
JPMorgan Chase

Eileen V. Thornton
Citibank, NA, Commercial Banking

Michael Mueller
Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP

Miguel Centeno
Aetna, Inc.

Nancy Carin
Business Outreach Center Network

Member Directors
Rabbi Yechezkel Pikus
Council of Jewish Organizations of Flatbush

Dennis Reeder
Washington Heights and Inwood Development Corp.