



# *Fiscal Year 2023* ANNUAL REPORT

 **Delaware**  
DIVISION OF SMALL BUSINESS

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# OUR MISSION

The Division of Small Business is focused on making Delaware the number one state in the nation to start and grow a small business.

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*We provide support to businesses of fewer than 100 employees to help them maximize their potential.*

Small businesses account for 98 percent of businesses in Delaware and employ 56 percent of Delaware's workforce. To help them succeed, the Division offers customized services and support, ranging from assistance navigating governmental regulations to connecting them to an extensive network of resource partners.

*We focus on traditionally under-served populations to create a more diverse and vibrant business community.*

The Division puts a specific emphasis on providing support to minority-owned, woman-owned and veteran-owned small businesses, as well as businesses owned by individuals with disabilities. The Division also assists businesses in under-served geographic areas.

*We champion the state's tourism industry by promoting Delaware's endless discoveries to out-of-state visitors.*

The Division, through the Delaware Tourism Office, markets the state as a top vacation destination, which benefits the many small businesses that are part of the state's \$4 billion tourism industry.

*We collaborate with state and local governments to create a better environment for economic growth.*

The Division works with all levels of government to streamline the regulatory process to make it easier to open new businesses and expand existing ones.

*We are responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars.*

The Division, by vetting businesses seeking grants or loans from the Delaware Strategic Fund and other programs, ensures that taxpayer dollars are invested wisely and in a way that maximizes the positive impact on economic development.



THE DIVISION OF SMALL BUSINESS IS AN AGENCY OF THE  
DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF STATE.





## SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

*As Delaware's Secretary of State, it is a privilege to again highlight the outstanding achievements of Delaware's small business community* and the pivotal role played by our Division of Small Business (DSB) in fostering growth, innovation, and economic resilience throughout Fiscal Year 2023.

Throughout this fiscal year, our small business owners have once again showcased incredible resilience and adaptability.

Starting in the Fall of 2022, while we began to settle into a "new normal" from the pandemic, our small business owners continued to face ongoing challenges and lingering impacts.

A key challenge was how to balance the desire by many employees for remote work, with return-to-the-office policies. Additionally, owners found it more challenging to get enough applicants or quality applicants for open positions. On the upside, many small business owners adapted by expanding their online presence or offering home delivery or take-out products and have increased their revenue in unexpected ways.

Throughout, they have continued to drive economic vitality, proving that Delaware's entrepreneurial spirit is unwavering.



DSB, through its various programs and initiatives, remains a vital pillar of support for these businesses. Whether through its Regional Business Managers, or financial support efforts, small business owners have a huge ally in DSB.

The Encouraging Development, Growth, and Expansion (EDGE) competition continues to be a beacon for our early-stage businesses, and is the Division's flagship funding program. The 6th (fall 2022) and 7th (spring 2023) rounds of EDGE awarded grant funding of \$50,000 each to a total of 5 businesses in the Entrepreneur Category, and funding of \$100,000 to 5 businesses in the STEM category for each round. Since the program launched in 2019, nearly \$5M in grant funding has been awarded to 80 small businesses. The EDGE program, with its ongoing success, remains a testament to our commitment to providing entrepreneurs with the financial backing they need to reach their full potential.

In addition to EDGE, DSB continues to promote and support a variety of financial incentive programs. Having entered its second year during FY23, the Site Readiness Fund provides municipalities and developers a way to attract potential businesses by having ready-to-go manufacturing space. The Workforce Development Grants provide businesses additional funding to support workforce training needs when it comes

to new technologies and processes. The Delaware Technical Innovation Program (DTIP) offers transition grants for companies that have completed Phase I and applied for Phase II of the federal Small Business Innovation Research or Small Business Technology Transfer programs as they work to bring new products to market. I encourage you to learn more about these and other DSB incentive programs at [business.delaware.gov/incentives](https://business.delaware.gov/incentives).

In spring 2023, DSB was fortunate to be awarded \$60M in federal funding through the U.S. Department of the Treasury for the State Small Business Credit Initiative Program (SSBCI). The goal of SSBCI-funded initiatives is to support both small and early-stage businesses, particularly those in underserved areas, to access capital. Delaware is receiving \$60.9M in funding in three allotments. The state has received its first allocation and will distribute the funding through four different programs: a capital access program, a loan participation program, and two equity/venture capital programs. Information on how the program is progressing will be included in the FY 2024 Annual Report.

Yet, DSB's commitment extends beyond financial assistance; the Division is dedicated to fostering an environment that encourages innovation, collaboration, and sustainable growth.

The Division also oversees the Delaware Tourism Office (DTO) and the Office of Supplier Diversity (OSD). For DTO, it was a year of firsts and incredible news.



During FY23, DTO saw a leadership change with Jessica Welch becoming director of the office. Additionally, our state welcomed its first PGA Tour event, the BMW Championship, in August 2022. From this, the state's economy saw a boost of more than \$30 million during the four-day event.

Delaware's crucial tourism industry once again proved its resilience and vitality, by rebounding from the global pandemic to post a record economic performance in 2021. Total visitor volume rose by more than 17% to set a new Delaware record of 9.8 million overnight visitors in 2021, the most recent year studied by the annual report commissioned by DTO. In 2021, total tourism-initiated tax receipts reached \$1 billion for the first time, contributing \$620 million in state and local taxes. The study also found that without tourism's revenue, each of Delaware's 381,000-plus households would have to pay an additional \$1,608 annually in taxes to maintain current tax revenue totals.

Despite the lingering effects of the pandemic, DTO, in collaboration with group travel planners and industry partners, successfully brought over \$1.9 million in group tour sales to our state, an increase of over \$200,000 over last fiscal year.

The Office of Supplier Diversity also saw major milestones in FY23. For starters, the creation of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Pilot Program by the Office of Management and Budget includes participation goals for the use of minority contractors. Certification is key to this program as minority contractors who wish to participate must be certified as a DBE with either the Office of Supplier Diversity or through the Delaware Department of



Transportation's (DeIDOT) DBE Program. OSD certification workshops were held to provide step-by-step instruction on how to complete the certification application and training was provided to potential vendors on how to navigate the state's procurement process.

Additionally, FY23 saw a 5.4% increase in state agency spending with diverse suppliers. \$8.46 billion was spent by state agencies; of that total, \$759.6 million was spent with the Supplier Diversity and Small Business community (inclusive of OSD certification, SBF certified and W-9 self-reporting vendors).

In conclusion, the FY23 has been a year of triumphs, partnerships, and unwavering commitment to the growth of Delaware's small businesses. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the entrepreneurs, our partners, and the dedicated team at the Division of Small Business for their collective efforts in shaping a thriving and dynamic economic landscape for the First State.



*Here's to the continued success and resilience of Delaware's small business community.*

*Jeff Bullock*

DELAWARE SECRETARY OF STATE





## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

**As we close the chapter on Fiscal Year '23, I am delighted to share with you highlights from the Delaware Division of Small Business.** This annual report not only encapsulates our collective achievements but also underscores the pivotal role that small businesses play in the heartbeat of our local economy.

### IMPORTANCE OF SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES:

Small businesses are the lifeblood of our communities, and their significance extends far beyond economic metrics. They embody the spirit of entrepreneurship, driving innovation, fostering creativity, and serving as the backbone of our local economies. When we support small businesses, we are investing in the resilience and vitality of our communities, creating a ripple effect that reaches every corner of our state.

In the face of challenges, small businesses have demonstrated remarkable adaptability and tenacity. It is important that they have the resources, guidance, and support necessary to not only survive but to thrive. As the Director of the Delaware Division of Small Business (DSB), I am proud to lead a team that is dedicated to championing the cause of small businesses and fostering an environment where they can flourish.

## *Highlights from FY '23:*

### ***1. Establishing our Identity***

DSB is still a relatively young state agency. DSB was established in 2018 to focus specifically on boosting small business success in the state. During the pandemic we turned to providing unprecedented fiscal support through federal loans and grants to struggling small business owners. Now that we have come out of the pandemic, we've worked hard through a combination of advertising and networking to establish DSB as an agency that provides more than financial support; we primarily provide one-on-one in person support through our Regional Business Managers who can help small business owners access a variety of resources and navigate government processes. We've also worked to increase awareness that DSB includes both the state's Office of Supplier Diversity and the Delaware Tourism Office. Together, our agency is uniquely positioned to support Delaware's small business ecosystem.



## ***2. Financial Support***

Through a combination of grants, loans, and targeted assistance programs, we injected vital capital into the hands of entrepreneurs, helping them navigate the economic landscape with resilience. Our EDGE grant competition returned for its 6th and 7th rounds supporting the dreams of early-stage businesses. Additionally, in the spring of 2023, DSB was awarded \$60.9M from the U.S. Department of the Treasury to begin implementing the Small State Credit Initiative (SSBCI) program. More information on that implementation will be available in the FY '24 Annual Report.

## ***3. Collaborative Ecosystem***

Collaboration has been at the forefront of our efforts. Strengthening partnerships with local chambers of commerce, industry associations, and educational institutions has resulted in a more robust support system for small businesses. Through networking opportunities, shared resources, and a sense of community, we aim to create an environment where businesses can thrive. In particular, we'd like to call out our partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration Delaware District Office, the Small Business Development Center housed at the University of Delaware, and the Delaware Prosperity Partnership for their support throughout the year.



## ***4. Diversity and Inclusion***

Inclusivity is a cornerstone of our approach. Through our Office of Supplier Diversity (OSD), we implemented targeted programs to support minority-owned and women-owned businesses, recognizing the importance of diversity in driving economic growth. OSD offers both diverse supplier certification for minority, women, veteran, service-disabled veteran, and individuals with disabilities owned businesses, and a Small Business Focus (SBF) program vendor certification. These certifications increase a small business' visibility among state contracts. By fostering an inclusive ecosystem, we aim to create opportunities for all entrepreneurs to succeed.





## *5. Tourism Success Story*

Delaware's critical tourism industry once again proved its resilience by posting a record economic performance in 2021. Total visitor volume rose by more than 17% to set a new Delaware record of 9.8 million overnight visitors in 2021, the most recent year studied by the annual report commissioned by DTO. The tourism industry also saw significant job growth in 2021 reaching 47,760 jobs. Much of tourism's employment rebound centered on the hotel, restaurant, and entertainment sectors, the very industries that suffered most during the pandemic.

As we reflect on the accomplishments of the past year, I want to express my gratitude to the dedicated team at the Delaware Division of Small Business, our partners, and stakeholders who have contributed to the success of our initiatives. Together, we have achieved significant milestones, and I am confident that the seeds we have planted will continue to bear fruit in the years to come.



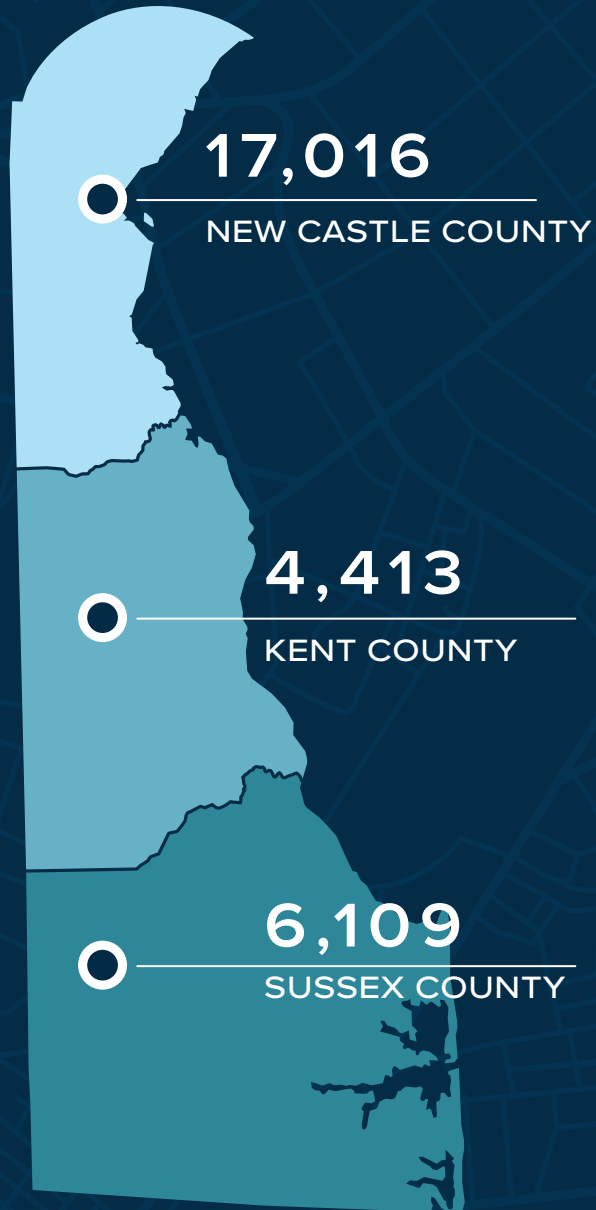
Thank you for your ongoing support, and I look forward to another year of collaborative efforts to empower and uplift the small businesses that make Delaware truly exceptional.

*Regina Mitchell*  
**DIRECTOR**

DELAWARE DIVISION OF SMALL BUSINESS



## DELAWARE FY '23 SMALL BUSINESS LANDSCAPE



SMALL BUSINESSES ACCOUNT FOR:

**227,129 jobs**  
**(56% OF WORKFORCE)**

**\$12.8 billion in wages**  
**(48% OF ALL WAGES)**

**98% OF ALL BUSINESSES IN DELAWARE**

**THERE ARE 27,940 SMALL  
BUSINESSES IN DELAWARE.**

\*Primary Source of Data: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cbp.html>

From the Census Bureau: When comparing totals at the state level and the sum at county levels, it is important to remember the statewide designation. Statewide is a county-equivalent geography assigned to employers without a fixed location within a state (or of unknown county location). Employers who report data for multiple locations under one common location are also given a statewide classification. Statewide is included in the state level totals, and represents the difference between the state level totals and sum of county level data.

# Delaware

*Endless Discoveries*





TRE SORELLE DOLCE - WYOMING

*Kicking off FY '23 for the Delaware Tourism Office (DTO), our state welcomed its first PGA Tour event, the BMW Championship, in August 2022.* More than 126,000 fans attended the event at the Wilmington Country Club, and the state's economy saw a boost of more than \$30 million during the four-day event.

The BMW Championship showed off our state in the best light and proved that Delaware can successfully host large-scale sports tourism events in the future.

Other sports tourism events held in Delaware this fiscal year include the Senior League Softball World Series (held each

August in Roxana), Slam Dunk to the Beach (held each December in Lewes), the Atlantic 10 Women's Basketball Championship (held in March 2023), and the Zap Pro/Am World Championship of Skimboarding (held each August in Dewey Beach).

The sports tourism sector continues to grow each year in Delaware, and dozens of other successful events were held in FY '23 up and down the state, including events for baseball, softball, lacrosse, soccer, and golf. Delaware continues to be a top destination for Mid-Atlantic sporting events and is gaining a larger spotlight for higher level national sporting events thanks to events like the BMW Championship.



STITCH HOUSE BREWERY, WILMINGTON

In the group tour market segment, sales began bouncing back in FY '23, and DTO was able to capture booked business of 128 visits, 1,422 room nights and 7,270 visitors. DTO is hopeful that the group tour market will further its rebound from the pandemic in the next fiscal year. The office will continue to support our group tour industry partners with programs like the Delaware Group Tour Coalition and the Delaware Motorcoach Rewards Program.

The economic impact of tourism in Delaware is driven by DTO's commitment to effectively and creatively marketing our state as an exciting, interesting, and unique place to visit. DTO continued its efforts throughout the year to encourage out-of-state visitation with targeted regional and national marketing campaigns, including a new video campaign. The video campaign highlights the unique attractions and things to do in our state. Several small businesses are spotlighted in the video including Tre Sorelle Dolce in Wyoming, Quest Kayak in Lewes, and Stitch House Brewery, Wilma's, and Bardea Steak, all located in Wilmington.

This fiscal year, DTO also saw a leadership change with Jessica Welch becoming director of the office. Jessica previously held the role of Communications Director in the Division.

During National Travel and Tourism Week in early May, DTO held a press conference to announce the most recent economic impact and visitation numbers for Delaware. The figures are from calendar year

## DELAWARE TOURISM OFFICE

2021, the most recent year for which data is available. Calendar year 2022 data is expected to be available in December 2023.

In 2021, Delaware welcomed 28.3 million visitors, 9.8 million of which were overnight visitors. Total visitor volume rose by more than 17% from 2020 numbers to set a new Delaware record for overnight visitation. The tourism industry contributed \$4 billion to the state's gross domestic product in 2021 and regained its place as the 4th largest private sector employer in the state, comprising 9% of all private sector jobs.

The tourism industry also saw significant job growth in 2021 reaching 47,760 jobs. Much of tourism's employment rebound centered on the hotel, restaurant, and entertainment sectors, the very industries that suffered most during the pandemic. In 2021, 10,900 tourism jobs were created, making up more than 64% of all new jobs in Delaware that year, according to the study by Rockport Analytics and Longwoods International.

Visitor spending in 2021 topped \$5.9 billion, a 30% increase from 2020 and a new record. Per-person daily spending was 165% higher than the national average. The jump in visitor spending was due largely to higher visitor volume, longer stays, more spending per trip, and inflation. Delaware's economy was able to keep 66 cents of each tourism dollar spent in the state during 2021.



BARDEA STEAK, WILMINGTON



WILMA'S, WILMINGTON



Tourism remains a larger contributor to the state's gross domestic product than all private sectors except Health Care, Finance, and Retail. In 2021, total tourism-initiated tax receipts reached \$1 billion for the first time, contributing \$620 million in state and local taxes. The study also found that without tourism's revenue, each of Delaware's 381,000-plus households would have to pay an additional \$1,608 annually in taxes to maintain current tax revenue totals.

As evidenced by these latest numbers, tourism rebounded significantly after a tough year in 2020, and we know this rebound would not have been possible without the work of our partners in the industry. Their collaborative efforts are paying off and will be instrumental in the continued growth of the travel and tourism industry in our state.

FY '23 proved to be a great year for DTO and for tourism in Delaware. We hope to continue our momentum into the next fiscal year and will work closely with our partners in the industry to support and assist them in helping to grow tourism throughout the state.



OFFICE OF SUPPLIER DIVERSITY



DELAWARE  
OFFICE OF  
SUPPLIER  
DIVERSITY





*The Office of Supplier Diversity (OSD) is proud to support our entrepreneurs* in offering advocacy, business connections, and certification to help enhance economic opportunities for our diverse business and small business communities. OSD recognizes that championing for better policies, providing equitable resources, and being intentional about serving the diverse business community will strengthen our overall economy and we are proud to be part of an ecosystem where underserved entrepreneurs have an opportunity to thrive.

*Fiscal Year 23 OSD Highlights*

**OSD CERTIFICATION**

The Office of Supplier Diversity was proud to certify 270 vendors in FY23, an 5% increase from FY 22.

*Total 1,415 OSD Certified Vendors*

*934 Diverse Business (OSD)*

*481 Small Business Focus (SBF)*

**CLASSIFICATIONS**

**MBE**

Minority Business  
Enterprise

**VOBE**

Veteran Owned  
Business Enterprise

**WBE**

Woman Business  
Enterprise

**SDVOBE**

Service Disabled Veteran  
Owned Business Enterprise

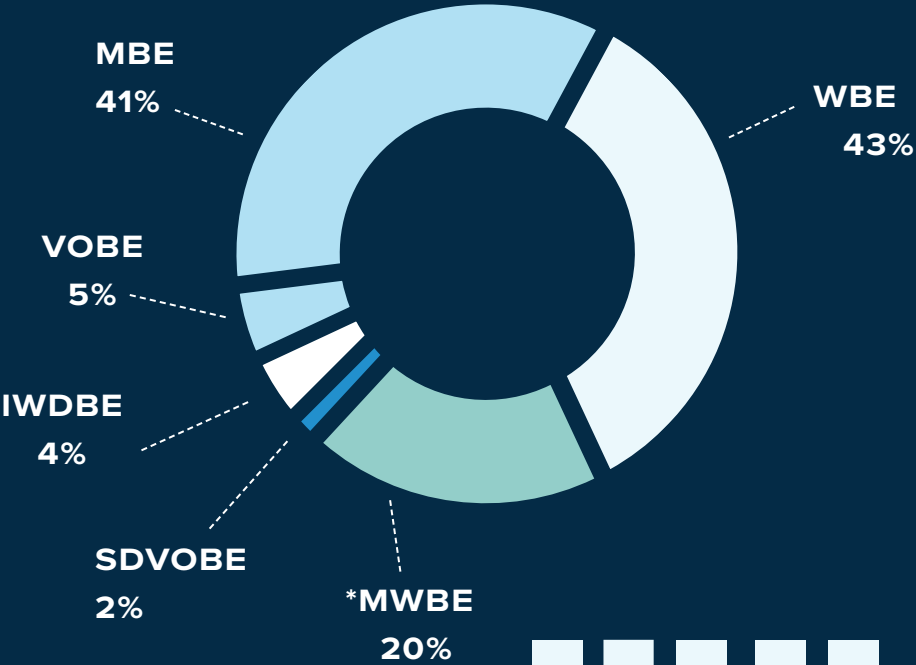
**MWBE**

Minority Woman  
Business Enterprise

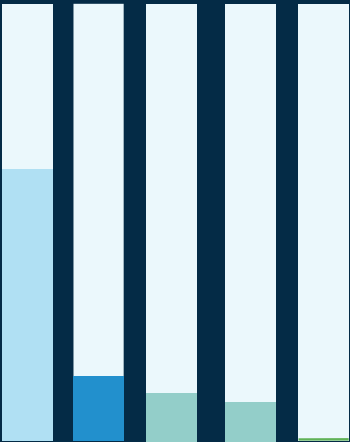
**IWDBE**

Individuals with Disabilities  
Owned Business Enterprise

*OSD Certified Vendor Breakdown*



African American	63%
Asian American	10%
Hispanic American	12%
Sub-Cont. Asian Amer.	14%
Native American	1%





## *Diverse Status Questionnaire*

Business owners can now identify their diversity status when using the One Stop Portal. Upon completing business registration and/or business license process, a voluntary questionnaire will appear asking the business owner to identify their status as a minority, women, veteran, or an individual with a disability business owner. This gives the state another mechanism for counting the number of diverse businesses within the state. This data will not only allow us to get a more accurate count of how many diverse businesses there are in Delaware but will also be helpful to state agencies and local resource partners in providing specific services for these groups and allow for more direct marketing of these services. This effort was spearheaded by the Delaware Black Chamber of Commerce with support from Governor John Carney, Secretary Jeff Bullock, Secretary Rick Geisenberger, the Office of Supplier Diversity, and the Government Information Center.

## *DBE Pilot Program*

In response to the recommendations outlined in the 2022 State of Delaware Disparity Study, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) created the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Pilot Program, a project that includes participation goals for the use of minority contractors. The construction of the new Hodgson Vocational Technical School has been chosen as the pilot project. OMB engaged MGT Consulting Group to make recommendations as to the appropriate DBE goals. Certification is key to this program as minority contractors who wish to participate must be certified as a DBE with either the Office of Supplier Diversity or through the Delaware Department of Transportation's (DelDOT) DBE Program. OSD certification workshops were held to provide step-by-step instruction on how to complete the certification application and training was provided to potential vendors on how to navigate the state's procurement process. The Office of Supplier Diversity is proud to work with our vendors for this historic program. It is our hope that the DBE Pilot Program will be a success leading to legislative changes with the goal of increasing spend with minority contractors by increasing their participation on state contracts.

### *Governors Supplier Diversity Council*

The Governor's Supplier Diversity Council (GSDC) formed by Executive Order 49 meets to discuss various supplier diversity issues and initiatives among our state agencies. GSDC Chair Sandy Johnson formed the Demonstration Subcommittee with the specific goal of identifying how the state can increase spend/utilization with the diverse business community and remove barriers that hinder their contracting efforts. The Demonstration Subcommittee (consisting of GSDC members Ayana Khan, Peter Korolyk, Marcella Saborio, Nick Callazzo, and OSD director, Shavonne White) is working on recommendations for OMB's procurement process to include having a three-quote requirement rule for under-threshold professional services, developing a notification system for under-threshold spend levels, creating summary pages for RFPs, and solutions to Tier II reporting issues.



### *Community Navigator Program*

The Delaware Small Business Development Center (SBDC) was selected as a grantee for the U.S. Small Business Administration's Community Navigator Program, designed to serve historically underrepresented communities by providing business resources and expertise to entrepreneurs. The Office of Supplier Diversity was chosen as a spoke, working with SBDC to support entrepreneurs as they start and grow their small businesses. Learn more about the Community Navigator Program at <https://navigatede.org/>.



## Event Highlights

The Office of Supplier Diversity holds workshops, training sessions, and participates in events, working with our local and regional resource partners to provide valuable information and resources to the diverse business and small business communities.

- *Vendor Day Training – How to do Business with the State*
- *The University of Delaware Supplier Diversity Summit*
- *Apex Accelerators Procurement Road Show*
- *Community Navigator Program's Univ. Pittsburgh Medical Center Event*
- *True Access Capital Procurement Fair*
- *Corteva Agriscience Supplier Diversity Summit*
- *OSD/SBA Introduction to State and Federal Certification Programs Workshops*
- *DE Black Chamber of Commerce Certification and Procurement Training*
- *LEEP Contractor Education Program*
- *Small Business Week visits w/ Governor's Office*

### WEBINAR:

Introduction to State of Delaware and Federal Government Contracting Certification Programs

The U.S. government is the *largest* single purchaser of goods and services in the world.



Hosted by  
The Delaware Office of  
Supplier Diversity  
and  
SBA Delaware District Office  
Wednesday, November 9  
10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

REGISTER HERE



Delaware Office of Supplier Diversity and Delaware Black Chamber of Commerce Present:

## INTRODUCTION TO STATE OF DELAWARE PROCUREMENT

Join the Office of Supplier Diversity and the Delaware Black Chamber of Commerce in an introductory webinar providing an overview of how the State of Delaware does business.

JOIN US

TUESDAY, JUNE 13 | 11 A.M.

FEE: NO COST

REGISTER HERE:

<https://business.debcc.org/calendar>



## *FY2023 State of Delaware Supplier Diversity & Small Business Community Spend Snapshot*

Each year Government Support Services (GSS) releases the 'Diversity Initiatives and Agency Scorecards' which reports supplier diversity and small business community spend for each state agency. The next few pages showcase highlights from the FY '23 report. The full report can be found by:

In FY2023 spend for the entire State of Delaware totaled \$14.84 billion dollars of which \$8.46 billion was spent by state agencies; of that total, \$759.6 million was spent with the Supplier Diversity and Small Business community (inclusive of OSD certified, SBF certified and W9 self-reporting vendors), a 5.4% increase over FY2022.

**SCANNING THE QR CODE HERE**



**OR VISITING THIS LINK**

<https://tinyurl.com/23ScoreCard>



### AGENCY SPEND TOTALS

• Direct spend w/ Certified Diverse (OSD)	<b>\$149,709,716</b>	<b>1.7%</b>
• Direct spend w/ W9 Self-report Diverse	<b>\$186,105,547</b>	<b>2%</b>
• Total Diverse Business Spend	<b>\$335,815,263</b>	<b>4%</b>
• Direct spend w/ Certified Small (SBF)	<b>\$25,981,989</b>	<b>0.3%</b>
• Direct spend w/ W9 Self-Report Small	<b>\$376,582,534</b>	<b>5%</b>
• Total Small Business Spend	<b>\$402,564,523</b>	<b>4.8%</b>
• Indirect spend w/ Tier II Subcontractors	<b>\$21,243,283</b>	<b>0.25%</b>
• Totals Supplier Diversity Spend	<b>\$759,623,069</b>	<b>9%</b>

### DIVERSE BUSINESS SPEND - FOUR AGENCIES MADE UP ALMOST 70% OF THE TOTAL SPEND:

1.	Dept. of Education	<b>40.8%</b>
2.	Dept. of Health & Social Services	<b>17.4%</b>
3.	Dept. of Transportation	<b>6.0%</b>
4.	Dept. of Technology & Information	<b>4.7%</b>

### SMALL BUSINESS SPEND - FOUR AGENCIES ACCOUNTED FOR 72.2% OF THE TOTAL SPEND:

1.	Dept. of Education	<b>45.2%</b>
2.	Dept. of Health & Social Services	<b>13.8%</b>
3.	Dept. of Finance	<b>6.9%</b>
4.	Dept. of Transportation	<b>6.3%</b>





## DOE & SCHOOL DISTRICTS SCORECARD

School Districts spent \$39 million, and Charter Schools spent 4.6 million with the certified Supplier Diversity community in FY2023. The school districts and charter schools with the highest spend totals are:

School Districts	Charter Schools
• Christina 26.3%	Newark Charter 24.5%
• Red Clay 12.1%	Freire Charter 11.4%
• Brandywine 10.3%	MOT Charter 10.4%

## COMPARING SPEND TOTALS FROM FY2023 & FY2022:

The following categories showed significant spend increases:

• Charter School Districts w/ OSD certified	56%
• School Districts w/ OSD certified	20%
• Direct spend w/ OSD certified	13.6%

Decreases were shown in the following categories:

• Indirect Tier II Subcontractor	-14.7%
• Direct spend w/ SBF certified	-13%



# COMMUNICATIONS

## *Department*

# Providing Big Support For Delaware's Small Businesses



*During FY'23, the Communications Team continued their efforts to promote the excellent work that the Division of Small Business does each day to help small businesses start and grow in Delaware.*

The Communications Team consists of a Director and a Communications Manager. A new Communications Director, Andrea Wojcik, started at the beginning of March, after the previous Director became the Delaware Tourism Office Director.

The Comms Team is responsible for responding to media inquiries, the Division's social media accounts, creating and distributing the weekly newsletter, marketing for the Division and the Office of Supplier Diversity and responding to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. The Tourism Office has its own marketing team.



## COMMUNICATIONS

### DSB NEWSLETTER

Our weekly newsletter, which entered its second year in July 2022, continued to be well received. We have gained nearly 500 more subscribers since it launched for a total of 14,914. The newsletter is distributed to our network of small business owners, partner organizations, and others. In FY '23 we distributed 52 e-newsletters with an average open rate of approximately 50%.



The newsletter includes free to low-cost resources for small businesses in Delaware, including information on: grants and funding opportunities; online and in-person trainings; upcoming business-related events; and tools available from our partner organizations like SCORE Delaware, the U.S. Small Business Administration, and the various chambers of commerce in our state.

Each e-newsletter also includes a section called: Small Business Spotlight. In this section, we feature a locally owned small business by highlighting their story, their services or products, and the contact information of the business. This year, we introduced a new online form to make it easier for small businesses to submit information to be featured.



## COMMUNICATIONS



## SOCIAL MEDIA

Through thoughtful, consistent use of multiple channels and creative content, Communications grew the number of followers for its social media pages throughout FY '23. The Comms Team worked to add more video and reels, more photos from events Division staff attend, and more photos showing the fun side of working at DSB to its social profiles.

By doing so we expanded the reach of the Division's message to more small business owners and other stakeholders. As of the end of FY '23, the Division's Instagram account had over 1,600 followers (an increase of more than 200 since FY '22). The Division's Facebook account currently has 6,658 followers (an increase of more than 600 since FY '22).

Additionally, the Division's Twitter account has just over 1,500 followers. Lastly, as of the end of FY '23 our LinkedIn account had 319 followers, gaining more than 160 during that time frame. The Comms Team will continue to focus on increasing its LinkedIn presence as well as focusing on messaging for Facebook and Instagram.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### MEDIA

The Communications team responded to 26 requests from local, regional and national media for interviews or information about the Division of Small Business, and its programs during FY '23. Additionally, DTO responded to 34 inquiries.

### FOIA

The team responded to 18 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests from media and others seeking documents on various topics during FY '23.

## *Samples of Advertisements From FY'23*



WE PROVIDE  
**BIG**  
SUPPORT  
FOR  
**SMALL**  
BUSINESSES.

  
business.delaware.gov



APPLICATION PERIOD  
RE-OPENS SEPT. 1, 2023!

**EDGE**  
COMPETITION

Compete for grant funding through our bi-annual EDGE (Encouraging Development, Growth & Expansion) initiative. Compete for up to \$100K in the STEM category or up to \$50K in the Entrepreneur group.



**STEM**



**ENTREPRENEUR**



LEARN MORE AT:  
**DE.GOV/EDGE**



Developers and Municipalities, learn more about our

**Site Readiness Fund**

Helping you create industrial and commercial sites for prospective businesses.

Level 1	Level 2
UP TO \$100,000	UP TO \$1,000,000
Preliminary site work	Actual site work

\*Qualifying applicants receive reimbursement in a 1 to 1 match.

  
e: business@delaware.gov  
p: (302) 739-4271  
de.gov/sitereadiness

  
e: bharrington@choosedelaware.com  
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## COMMUNICATIONS

*Programs and initiatives supported by the Communications Team in FY '23 include:*

### NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK/MONTH

During National Small Business Week (April 30 – May 6, 2023) the Communications team hosted a webinar featuring Delaware marketing professional, and Instagram success, Alexis Harris. The webinar was called: The Marketing Mindset: Social Media for Small Businesses. It was well attended with 86 individuals tuning in. For Small Business Month as a whole, DSB created a webpage, a social media kit with flyers for display for small business owners and other partners, and issued a press release. Communications was also pleased to coordinate tours of small businesses for Governor John Carney. He visited United Cocoa Processers in Newark, and former EDGE winner, Volunteer Brewing in Middletown. Our partners with the Delaware District SBA office, Small Business Development Center and county economic development partners also participated.



## COMMUNICATIONS



**ARE YOU LOOKING  
TO START OR GROW  
A SMALL BUSINESS  
IN KENT OR SUSSEX  
COUNTY?**

*Contact one of our Regional  
Business managers today!*



**Anastasia Jackson**  
Kent County  
Regional Business Manager



(302) 672-6828



(302) 922-3299



Anastasia.Jackson@delaware.gov



**Lauren Swain**  
Sussex County  
Regional Business Manager



(302) 672-6824



(302) 535-2060



Lauren.Swain@delaware.gov

## EDGE - ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT, GROWTH & EXPANSION

EDGE Grant Competition: The Comms Team helped support this twice-a-year funding competition through press releases, advertising and informational webinars. See more details in the EDGE section.

## INCREASING AWARENESS OF DSB PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Communications began to focus on increasing awareness of some of its services as the Division works to increase awareness of what it does. Still a new state agency formed in 2018, the Division became more widely known for distributing relief grants during the pandemic. Post-pandemic, the Comms Team wanted to highlight the primary services it provides.

Through advertising and social media, the Team began to increase awareness of the role of DSB's Regional Business Managers, and the fact the agency oversees the Office of Supplier Diversity and the work that it does. Communications also continued to support partner initiatives through sponsorships as a way to raise brand awareness. In FY 23 we sponsored the Delaware Prosperity Partnership's StartUP 302 pitch competition, the Delaware Restaurant Association's Delaware ProStart competition and their first annual Hospitality Ambassador conference.

## DELAWARE BUSINESS MARKETING PROGRAM

There were no non-state cash contributions to the Business Marketing Program during FY '22. Total expenditures were \$239,104.09 and encumbrances were \$46,844.39.



# REGIONAL BUSINESS *Managers*



JOE



*What is your advice to those looking to start or grow their small business in Delaware?*

Go into an industry that you have worked in before and write a business plan before you get started.

*Region*



*What Is Your Role In The Delaware Division Of Small Business & How Long Have You Been Here?*

I am the Regional Business Manager for Wilmington and Northern New Castle County. I have been with the state for 16 years and have been in this role since it was created.

*Do you serve, or are members of, any boards, groups, or organizations outside of Division of Small Business? If so please explain your role. How many businesses have you worked with this year?*

- Board Member on the Commercial Industrial Realty Council of Delaware
- Board Member on the Delaware Motion Picture and Television Development Commission
- Member of the PDFF E3 NCC Regional Council (Pete Dupont Freedom Foundation, Equitable Entrepreneurial Ecosystem, New Castle County Regional Council)

# JOE

*How many events have you attended in the past FY? 40*

*What events were they?*

- Pete Dupont Freedom Foundation, Reinventing Delaware Winner announcement
- CIRC Annual Meeting
- CIRC Members Meeting and Luncheon 5
- Delaware State Chamber of Commerce Small Business Day
- StartUp 302 finals
- New Castle County is Open for Business 4
- NCCCC Cutting Edge: Fin Tech Investor Ready Showcase
- EDGE Webinar 2
- 2023 Economic Forecast sponsored by Lyons Insurance
- NCCCC Economic Development Council featuring Riverfront Development Corp.
- NCCCC Policy Maker's Event
- 8th Annual Reinventing Delaware Dinner
- PDFF E3 CEO Series
- DPP Trends in Economic Development
- Delaware Entrepreneurial Summit
- Pete Dupont Freedom Foundation Freedom Award Ceremony
- EDGE Winners Announcement 2
- Equitable, Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Lunch and Learn
- Delaware House Small Business Caucus (5)
- Delaware House Art and Culture Caucus (2)
- Wilmington Kitchen Collective Showcase
- Nine Innings of Networking
- SBA Small Business Award Presentation
- New Markets Opportunities Procurement Fair
- Rep. Blunt Rochester Constituent Resource Fair



# DAVID



*What is your advice to those looking to start or grow their small business in Delaware?*

Connect with Delaware Small Business Development Center.

## Region



*What Is Your Role In The Delaware Division Of Small Business & How Long Have You Been Here?*

Regional Business Manager – Southern New Castle County. I've been here 30 years.

*Do you serve, or are members of, any boards, groups, or organizations outside of Division of Small Business? If so please explain your role. How many businesses have you worked with this year?*

- 175 companies assisted
- 35 site visits
- Assisted one Delaware company with successful award of \$50,000 DTIP grant
- World Trade Center Delaware Board Member

# DAVID

- Attend events organized by: New Castle County Chamber, Delaware BIO, Emerging Enterprise Center, SBDC, World Trade Center Delaware, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce, Delaware Small Business Chamber, Committee of 100, Commercial Industrial Realty Council (CIRC)
- Attend Delaware Legislature's Small Business Caucus meetings

**ARE YOU LOOKING TO START OR GROW  
A SMALL BUSINESS IN NEW CASTLE COUNTY?**  
*Contact one of our Regional Business Managers today!*



**Joe Zilcosky**  
Northern New Castle County  
*Regional Business Manager*  
(302) 577-8708  
Joe.Zilcoskv@delaware.gov



**David Mathe**  
Southern New Castle County  
*Regional Business Manager*  
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David.Mathe@delaware.gov

 **Delaware**  
DIVISION OF SMALL BUSINESS

[business.delaware.gov](https://business.delaware.gov)



# LAUREN

*What is your advice to those looking to start or grow their small business in Delaware?*

Contact your Regional Business Manager and discuss what your business needs are as we are equipped to help business owners thrive regardless of what stage they are in. If there is a business need outside the scope of what our office offers, then we have a vast network of resource partners that we can connect you with. Business owners are in great hands when they seek assistance with the Division of Small Business.

*Region*





# LAUREN

## ***What Is Your Role In The Delaware Division Of Small Business & How Long Have You Been Here?***

I am the Sussex County Regional Business Manager and my job is assist businesses to start, grow, and succeed. In addition, I assist business owners navigate government processes, connect them with resource organizations, and access capital.

## ***Do you serve, or are members of, any boards, groups, or organizations outside of Division of Small Business? If so please explain your role. How many businesses have you worked with this year?***

- I worked with roughly 150 businesses in FY23.
- I serve as an ex-officio member on SEDAC, member of the Milford Chamber Task Force for Affordable Housing, and attend various forums/groups involving economic development within Sussex County.

## ***How many events have you attended in the past FY? 35***

### ***What events were they?***

- SEDAC, Milford Task Force for Affordable Housing
- Western Sussex Economic Development Meetings
- Georgetown Chamber Economic Development Meetings
- Bethany Fenwick Chamber Economic Development Meetings
- Milford Chamber Workforce/Economic Development Meetings
- business ribbon cuttings, business mixers, etc.



# ANASTASIA

*What is your advice to those looking to start or grow their small business in Delaware?*

If you're considering launching a business in Delaware, I strongly recommend embracing the thriving small business ecosystem this state offers. By establishing connections with resource partners who can support you in various aspects of your venture, from conceptualization to grand opening, count on me to be with you every step of the journey. Similar to how it requires a united village to nurture a child, it is through the collaborative efforts of all the partners within the small business ecosystem that your enterprise can lay a solid foundation for success.

## Region



# ANASTASIA

## *What Is Your Role In The Delaware Division Of Small Business & How Long Have You Been Here?*

As the Business Manager for Kent County, I serve as a bridge between business owners and the State of Delaware and assist them in navigating the complex small business landscape. I connect them with partnering agencies such as the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), SCORE, LAUNCHER, and others and provide guidance to business owners on grant and loan application processes offered by DSB.

To promote our office and the support we offer, I actively participate in local business conferences organized by various chambers, and other partners by attending these conferences as a vendor, I am able to share valuable information about our services.

## *Do you serve, or are members of, any boards, groups, or organizations outside of Division of Small Business? If so please explain your role. How many businesses have you worked with this year?*

I have worked with 70 plus business owners this fiscal year.

### **COMMITTEES:**

- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) member for the Kent Metropolitan Planning Organization.
- DDP (Downtown Dover Partnership) DRLF (Dover revolving loan fund) committee member.
- Kent County E3 Review Board member, established by the Pete duPont Foundation, involved in assessing applications from entrepreneurs across various industries.
- Employee Recognition Committee member within the Delaware Department of State



# ANASTASIA

## **ATTENDED EVENTS** (*at least 30*):

- Developing Delaware Conversation innovation and collaboration
- World Trade Center Delaware Gala, Hotel Dupont
- Delaware's ProStart International Competition (DRA)
- Women of Hospitality (DRA)
- Hospitality Ambassador (DRA)
- Launcher Event at DSU
- Start up 302 Pitch competition served as a judge
- Central Delaware Chamber Kent Open for Business (multiple)
- KENT MPO Transportation Equity Roundtable
- DE Small Business Chamber meeting
- Delaware Economic Development Partners meeting
- Kent MPO meeting (2)
- DNREC EEIF meeting
- DE EARNs meeting
- SCORE DE meeting
- Black Business Excellence in First State meeting
- Main Street meetings (2)
- Boston main street statewide coordinator training and conference
- Planning your community presentation DNREC
- Presentation to Dept of Labor Div. of Visually Impaired
- John Mollura Photography Grand Opening
- Baybird Orthodontics Smyrna Grand Opening
- Believe it its Vegan Smyrna Grand Opening
- Loft Realty Grand Opening
- NKS Distributors 75 years grand opening new facility

Delaware  
on  
Main



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*The Division of Small Business  
oversees Delaware on Main,*  
which serves as the statewide  
coordinator for the National  
Main Street Center's efforts  
to revitalize and preserve  
the nations downtowns and  
commercial corridors.

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### *A word from the State Wide Main Street coordinator, Anastasia Jackson:*

In my role as the Statewide Coordinator for Delaware on Main Street, I am responsible for overseeing the contractual agreement between the state of Delaware and Main Street America. The Main Street program, originally established by the National Trust for Historic Preservation over 25 years ago, is now administered by the non-profit National Main Street Center, which underwent a rebranding in 2015 and is now known as Main Street America.

For FY '23, Delaware on Main Street can proudly boast 4 Accredited Main Street programs. These communities have earned a mark of distinction that represents their unwavering commitment to comprehensive revitalization, community engagement, and the diligent measurement of outcomes embodying a dedication to revitalization efforts that extend beyond mere physical improvements.

Moreover, Delaware on Main Street also works closely with 6 affiliate community organizations. These organizations have demonstrated a strong commitment to comprehensive revitalization and are actively progressing towards achieving significant economic, social, physical, and organizational enhancements within their downtown or commercial districts.

At the core of these main street programs lies the 4-point approach: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring. These principles drive the initiatives and strategies implemented by Delaware on Main Street, ensuring a holistic and comprehensive approach to revitalization efforts.

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# *Delaware Main Streets*



## DELAWARE MAIN STREETS

### FY '23 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

---

- Created 277 new full-time jobs (net)
- Created 49 new businesses (net)
- Completed 27 rehabilitation projects
- Contributed 10,931 volunteer hours
- Attracted \$1.1 million in private investment

### ACCREDITED MAIN STREETS

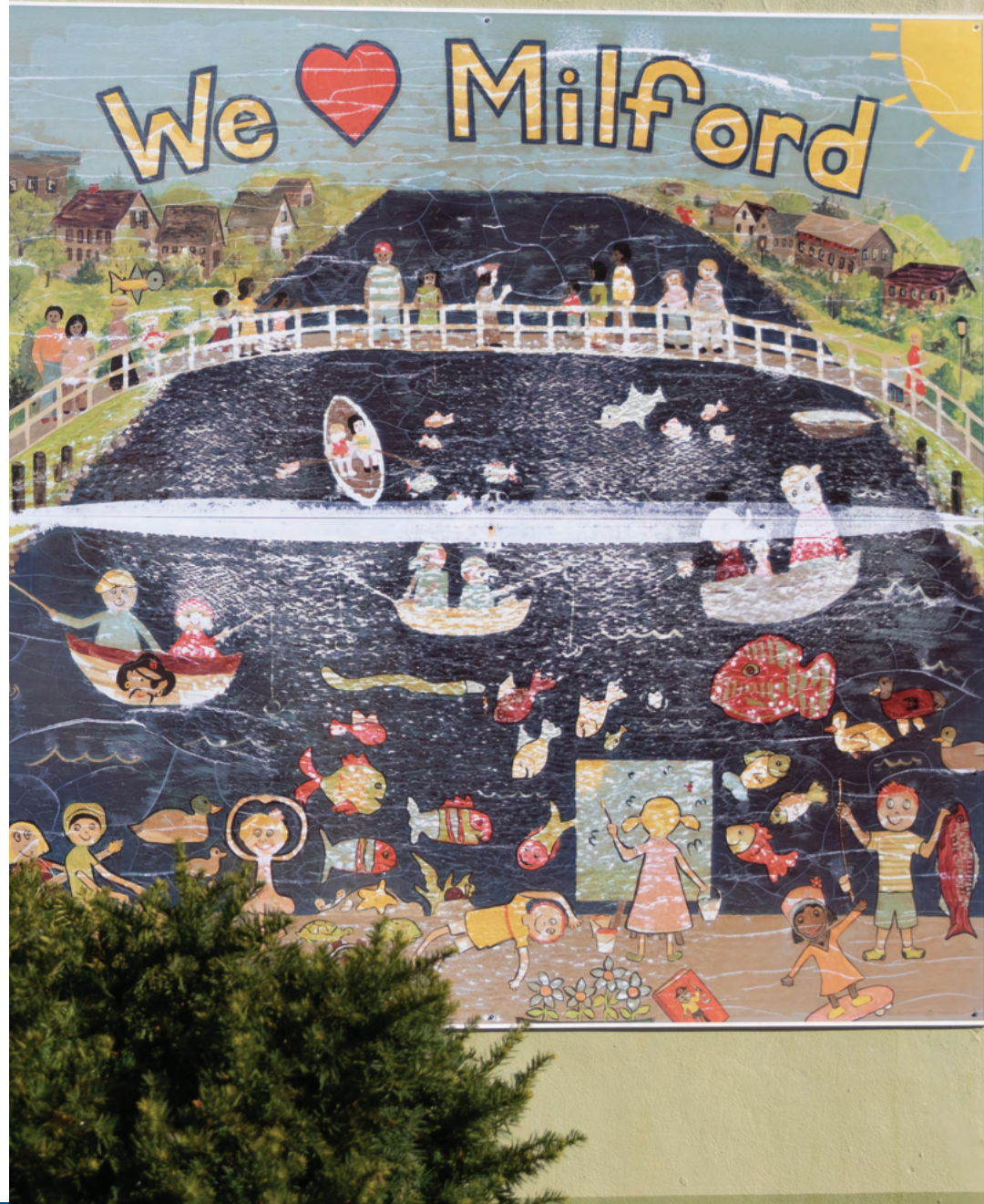
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- Downtown Dover Partnership
- Rehoboth Beach on Main Street
- Downtown Milford Inc
- Downtown Wilmington Visions

### AFFILIATE MAIN STREET ORGANIZATIONS

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- Downtown Newark Partnership
- Delaware City Main Street
- Cornerstone West CDC
- Middletown Main Street
- Smyrna Downtown
- Seaford Tomorrow



# FINANCIAL *Programs*



# EDGE *Grants*

The EDGE Grant program gives qualified small businesses in Delaware an edge by offering access to significant capital like never before.



## *Helping Small Businesses Gain an EDGE*

The EDGE Grant competition is an innovative program aimed at helping promising, early-stage Delaware companies get the funding they need to level the playing field with larger, more established competitors and grow the state's economy.

EDGE (Encouraging Development, Growth and Expansion) is open to businesses that are at least 51 percent based in Delaware, have been in business for less than seven years and employ no more than the equivalent of 10 full-time employees.

Science-based businesses (STEM Class) are eligible for up to \$100,000. All other businesses (Entrepreneur Class) can receive as much as \$50,000. Funds are awarded as a 3-to-1 match on qualified expenses.

Governor Carney and the Division of Small Business launched the program in late FY'19. Since EDGE launched, more than \$5 million has been awarded to 80 promising Delaware small businesses in industries ranging from wearable technology to agribusiness to craft brewing.

Applications are reviewed through several rounds of screening until a pool of finalists are selected to present their projects. The finalists present their projects before a panel of expert judges that review the project proposals, ask questions, and evaluate and score each project. The top 5 scores in each category are awarded the grant.

The Comms Team assisted DSB staff in coordinating the judging portion of the competition and events announcing the winners. The Fall 2022 event was held at Sweets & Treats Studio in Dover (Fall 2022) and the spring 2023 event was held at the Chase Field Center in Wilmington. The team also supports this initiative through press releases, advertising, informational webinars, social media and coordinating media coverage.

## FINANCIAL PROGRAMS | **EDGE GRANTS**

CLASS	SPRING '19 ROUND 1	FALL '19 ROUND 2	SPRING '21 ROUND 3	FALL '21 ROUND 4	SPRING '22 ROUND 5	FALL '22 ROUND 6	SPRING '23 ROUND 7	TOTALS
STEM	46	36	77	26	30	26	28	269
ENTREPRENEUR	92	63	205	84	86	98	101	729
TOTAL	138	99	282	110	116	124	129	998

### A DEEPER DIVE INTO EDGE GRANT AWARDEES'S

	SPRING 2019	FALL 2019	SPRING 2021	FALL 2021	SPRING 2022	FALL 2022	SPRING 2023	TOTALS
Awards per round	10	10	15	15	10	10	10	80
Woman owned:	6	1	4	7	6	7	4	35
Minority owned:	2	3	4	9	2	2	6	28
Veteran owned:	1		1		2	3	0	7
New Castle County:	7	8	11	10	6	6	7	55
Kent County:	2	1	1	3	2	4	3	16
Sussex County:	1	1	3	2	2	0	0	9
Amount awarded per round:	\$ 748,000	\$ 710,526	\$ 724,033	\$ 721,225	\$ 695,948	\$ 717,741	\$ 739,987	\$ 5,057,459

# EDGE

Our bi-annual EDGE (Encouraging Development, Growth & Expansion) Grant competition is an ideal way to help a Delaware small business level the playing field.



## EDGE DATA *Highlights*

35

OUT OF 80 ARE  
WOMAN-OWNED

28

OUT OF 80 ARE  
MINORITY-OWNED

7

OUT OF 80 ARE  
VETERAN-OWNED



# Fall 2022 Grantees

## S.T.E.M.



### A. I. WHOO (NEWARK)

A.I. Whoo is working to develop a mobile application for clinicians to conduct gait assessments using a smartphone. A gait assessment is the evaluation of the way someone walks and is used to diagnose disorders in walking patterns. Current gait assessment technologies require patients to go into an office to be evaluated. The A.I. Whoo app will enable gait assessments to be conducted remotely. EDGE grant funds will be used to develop the mobile application software and market it to clinicians.

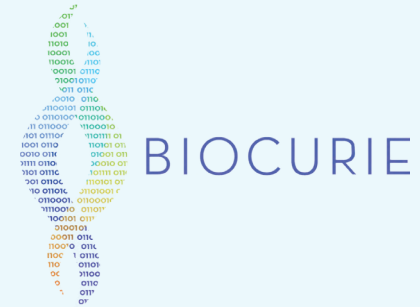
### ALL AZIMUTH SOLUTIONS (MAGNOLIA)

All Azimuth Solutions (AAS) is developing and commercializing proprietary technology, including the electronic Community Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) Toolkit, known as eCAT. The eCAT platform will house a repository of information to include educational and outreach materials, AAM demonstration playbooks, and community leaders' decision support tools to integrate AAM into communities. The EDGE grant will be used for eCAT software development and deployment, association fees, a demonstration booth, marketing materials, advertising, and website improvements.



### ROTULU (CAMDEN)

Rotulu is developing an application that provides real-time busing information for parents and schools with the benefits of instant messaging and alerts, two-way communication, and an easy-to-use interface. Rotulu is currently beta testing features and receiving valuable, real-world feedback from charter schools, which is ensuring the solution being built is accurate and effective. EDGE grant funds will be used to build out the desired functionality in the parent communication app, integrate the app with Android and Apple devices, enhance existing cloud infrastructure, and create additional features in the app.



### BIOCURIE (WILMINGTON)

BioCurie is a startup in Wilmington that is developing the world's first AI-based software to transform the current state of cell and gene therapy (CGT) production from today's brute-force "hit-or-miss" approach to a new data-driven paradigm. This innovative software will enable biopharma to swiftly and efficiently develop and manufacture CGTs that are safe, effective, and affordable. The EDGE grant will fund the commercialization of BioCurie's first product for gene therapy manufacturing.

### V4 VOICE 4 IMPACT™

#### VOICE 4 IMPACT (WILMINGTON)

Voice 4 Impact (V4I) delivers sustainable technology solutions to create safer and healthier communities. With their patented technology, V4I is at the forefront of observing and understanding human behavior. V4I's solution connects people, communities, and data to increase awareness, create greener traffic solutions and build equitable funding goals. As a result, agencies make a 1:1 connection with the public at a fraction of the cost and time of traditional methods. EDGE grant funds will be used to staff, develop, and scale V4I's platform to serve more utilities, tolling and transportation facilities in order to expand the company's reach.

*ENTREPRENEUR*



**BLACKDOG BEHAVIOR AND TRAINING LLC (WILMINGTON)**

BlackDog provides accessible behavioral support to Delaware dog owners with private in-home training and post-adoption support for animals adopted through local shelters. Even more central to the mission, however, is to support its surrounding community through advocacy, education, and access to resources. Initial grant funding through EDGE will foster BlackDog's expansion into a more sustainable operating model utilizing a standalone space for training activities.

**NOURISH MARKETS (WILMINGTON)**

Nourish Markets provides 24-hour access to healthy, affordable, and sustainable foods, snacks, beverages, and ready-to-eat meal options. Nourish Markets is forging a pioneering path in the health and wellness convenience food industry by establishing Delaware's first 100% autonomous marketplace. The mission of Nourish Markets is uncomplicated – to make healthy food, snack, and beverage options accessible, convenient, and affordable to all consumers while employing industry-leading technologies. The EDGE grant will be used to purchase frictionless hardware equipment so the company can expand and open a second location in Wilmington.



**SASSY BEE HONEY LLC (BELLEFONTE)**

Sassy Bee Honey is a Certified Naturally Grown (CNG) apiary founded with a passion for curating handmade products while having a positive impact on the environment and increasing accessibility to locally-sourced products throughout Delaware. Sassy Bee's current business model utilizes Micro Apiaries, utilizing small clusters of bee colonies in several locations. In 2021, 700 pounds of honey was extracted and processed from 10 colonies. The EDGE funding will be used to renovate a 400 square foot space and purchase more efficient equipment in order to increase production capacity.



# RAIL HAUS

**RAIL HAUS (DOVER)**

Rail Haus' mission is to be a great beer garden, all the time, for everyone and aims to be the first year-round beer garden in the state. With a focused investment in both the inside and outside space, Rail Haus will be the destination spot Dover deserves and have a large, positive impact on the surrounding community. This family-friendly, dog-friendly project will be smartly operated, inclusive, and fun. The EDGE grant will be used to purchase outdoor heaters, firepits, trees, sod, and a sprinkler system.



DRIVEN BY INTEGRITY, QUALITY & RELIABILITY

**PINK ELECTRICAL SERVICES (CLAYTON)**

Pink Electrical Services (PES) provides expert electrical services to Delaware businesses and homeowners. PES offers free estimates and reliable, high-quality service. Their electricians maintain a professional demeanor and great customer service while performing at the highest level. The EDGE grant will be used to purchase up to two work trucks which would enable the company to hire a crew comprised of electricians and journeymen.

## *Fall 2023 Grantees*

### *S.T.E.M.*



#### **DOUBLY, LLC (MIDDLETOWN)**

Doubly is a minority and women-owned startup founded in 2023. Doubly is an innovative application that integrates seamlessly with enterprise messaging platforms like Teams and Slack to help boost productivity, and connectedness as a result of remote work conditions. EDGE funding will be used to finalize the application's development and conduct extensive user testing as well as hire software engineers and designers to expedite the application's development.



#### **CONNECT2CO, INC. (WILMINGTON)**

Connect2Co is a cutting-edge business to business startup software tool that will revolutionize the digital workspace for businesses and organizations of all sizes. Its all-in-one platform seamlessly integrates external solutions, eliminating the need for toggling between various applications (ex. Send an email with Gmail, download or share a document from Google Drive/Microsoft OneDrive, close an opportunity with Salesforce). The grant money enables Connect2Co to ramp up its initial operations by funding co-working space at the Mill in Wilmington, along with marketing and speeding the platform's development timeline.



#### **HX INNOVATIONS (WILMINGTON)**

Hx Innovations is a biomechanics testing and technology company with a patented assessment technique related to the stability and joint movement of the knee, ankle, and foot. This led them to develop a neuromuscular predictive model for sports teams to help them create safe training regimens and recovery strategies for athletes. Hx Innovations is currently located in the Chase Field House and is using its technology with athletic teams there. The EDGE funding will be used to expand the company's presence at the Fieldhouse, build a more robust database for its platform, and make the software for real-time injury monitoring, mobile.



#### **LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE ACADEMY FOR NON-PROFITS (LEAN) (WILMINGTON)**

Leadership Excellence Academy for Nonprofits, or LEAN, aims to make a transformational impact in the nonprofit sector. Instead of focusing on short-term gains, LEAN adopts a long-term approach to prioritize creating sustainable solutions. LEAN's expertise helps nonprofits identify and address gaps in their operations, thereby making them more effective in achieving their goals. EDGE funding will be used to develop innovative app technology to provide a vehicle for encouraging next-gen donors to support nonprofits through giving.



#### **TX ELECTROMAGNETIC MATERIALS, LLC (WILMINGTON)**

TX ElectroMagnetic Materials LLC is a science-driven company committed to advancing the development of cutting-edge electro and magnetic materials for the solar cell and semiconductor industries. The company is developing a new metallization silver paste specifically designed for future silicon solar cells. The EDGE grant will be used to accelerate product development efforts, expand sales and marketing initiatives, develop product samples, and successfully bring the product to market.



## **DRONEVERSITY**

### **DRONEVERSITY, LLC (WILMINGTON)**

Droneversity hopes to revolutionize the aviation and STEM industries through comprehensive drone-related workforce development programs. A diverse range of offerings includes drone pilot ground and flight school for federal certification, STEMulation programs for hands-on education, international eSport drone soccer programs, professional development for educators, and consulting services. EDGE funding will help them secure a permanent indoor facility as opposed to temporary site hosts where internet connectivity and weather conditions can be challenging. The company's planned location is in a downtown development zone.



### **THE NEST PLAY CAFE (MIDDLETOWN)**

The Nest Play Cafe is an innovative establishment for parents to take their young children, to explore a fun, exciting play area, while they relax or interact with other parents in an upscale café lounge and seating area. With a holistic, eco-friendly and Montessori-inspired approach the Nest Play Café offers programming including baby sign language, Spanish, Mandarin, sensory play, arts & crafts, and milestone development classes taught by a pediatric occupational therapist. EDGE funding will enable to owners to do phase 2 of their construction plan for an additional restroom and add plumbing and buy equipment for an organic coffee and smoothie bar area.



### **G & R INDUSTRIES, LLC (SMYRNA)**

G & R Industries is a start-up manufacturing company, located in Smyrna, that is bringing an innovative construction hanger to the market. The GRO Hanger provides a safer, faster, stronger, and more cost-effective solution for installing piping and fixtures in steel joist construction. EDGE funding will support startup costs including the purchase of assembly equipment, trade show marketing, testing and certifications, and the initial production run of GRO Hangers.

### **PARAKLETE PROPERTIES & DESIGN, LLC (VIOLA)**

Paraklete Properties is a woman-owned and family operated business that seeks to provide locally grown baled pine straw. Established in 2019, Paraklete Properties is committed to Delaware's growth while preserving its natural beauty. EDGE funding will be used to purchase a proprietary pine straw baler as well as to construct a storage location for the straw. The funds will assist in providing an increased volume of densely packed pine bales, with minimally handled straw as well as provide a protected area for storage before the sale.



### **STUDIO B. (HARRINGTON)**

Studio B seeks to establish a unique fusion of commerce and art by serving as an ultra-fast turnaround print-on-demand hub and a supportive community workspace. The company will offer convenient access to top-notch print work such as restaurant menus, business cards, flyers, banners, and more. Additionally, Studio B will extend its services to artists and individuals, providing access to professional assistance, a supportive creative environment, and high-end tools and equipment that are typically out of reach for independent creators. EDGE funding will help the company acquire equipment and professional website assistance for effective outreach, marketing, and online sales potential.

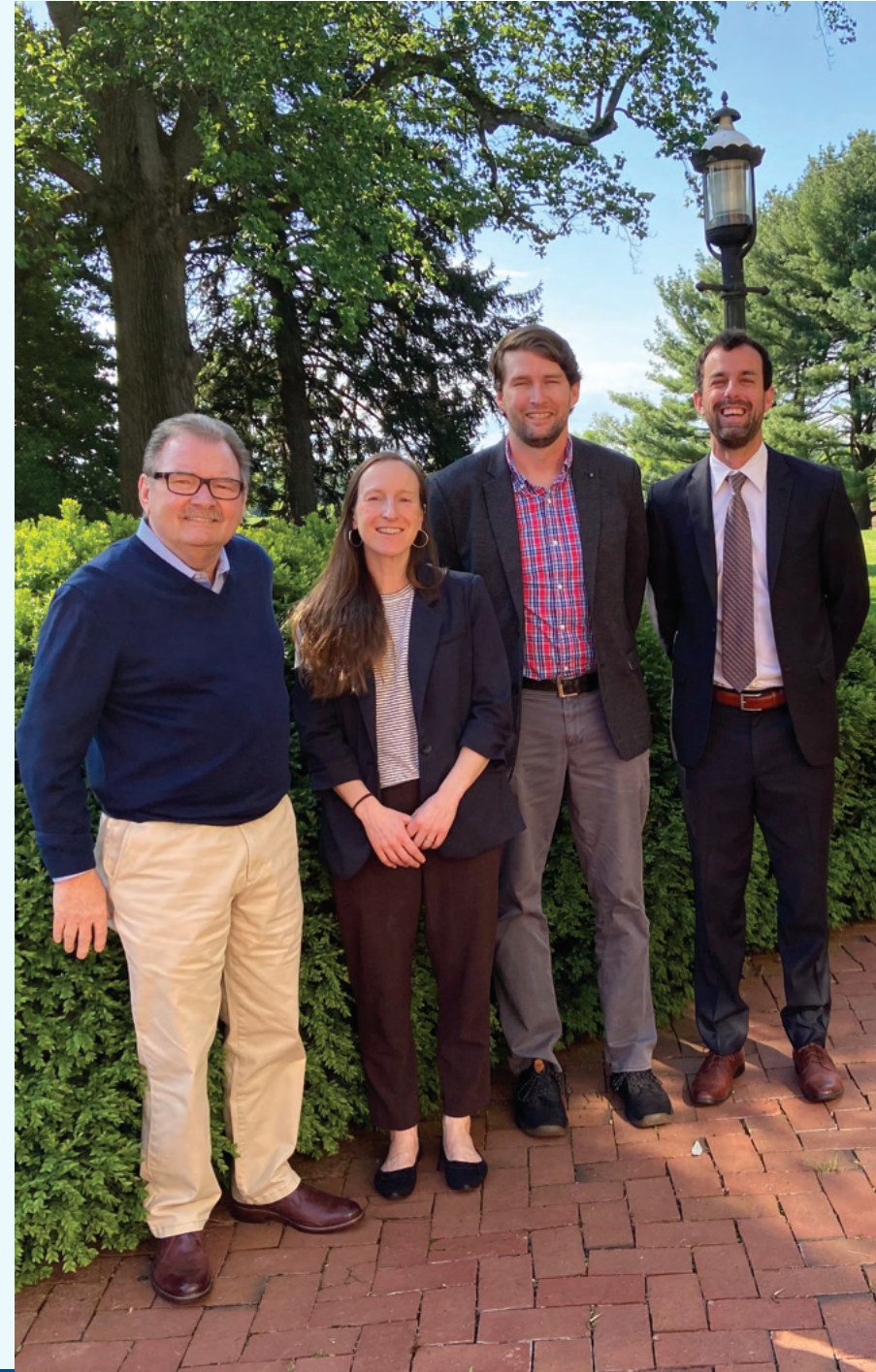


## *Council on Development Finance & Delaware Strategic Fund*

*The Council on Development Finance (CDF) is a panel of nine members*, appointed by the Governor, Senate President Pro Tempore and Speaker of the House, to advise the director of the Delaware Division of Small Business (DSB), who serves as chair of the Delaware Economic Development Authority (DEDA).

The Council hears, evaluates, and recommends approval or disapproval of projects brought to it by the Division, the Delaware Prosperity Partnership, and other economic development entities. These projects range from companies wanting to establish new facilities in the state, to existing businesses looking to expand, new companies wishing to grow and the revision of contracts already held with the state. After reviewing the project, the Council makes a recommendation to the Director.

*Featured: Sussex County Economic Development Director William Pfaff; Delaware Prosperity Partnership Senior Manager, Business Development, Megan Kopistecki; Fisher's Popcorn of Delaware Vice President Russell Hall; and DPP Business Development Manager Bryan Mack collaborated on the Fisher's Popcorn project.*



## *Delaware Strategic Fund*

*The Delaware Strategic Fund (DSF) provides customized financial assistance to businesses* considering locating or expanding in the State of Delaware. Financial assistance may be provided in the form of grants or low-interest loans to support the attraction and expansion of businesses.

Through the Strategic Fund, DSB supports initiatives such as the Brownfield Assistance Program, Delaware Technical Innovation Program and Delaware Capital Access Program. The Strategic Fund also provides funds not affiliated with these specific programs.

In FY '23, the council approved funding of 8 projects through the Delaware Strategic Fund. Since the beginning of FY '23, every one million Strategic Fund dollars spent on grants is matched by more than \$10 million in private funding. The projects are contributing more than \$408 million to Delaware's GDP.

Descriptions of FY '23 projects are on the following page. During FY '23, no requests for loans were presented to CDF.



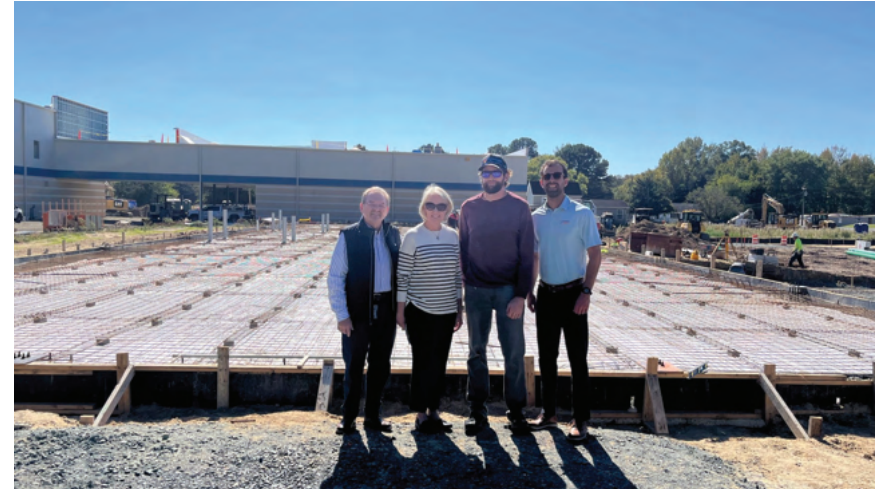
## *Strategic Fund Grants*

### **ALLY FINANCIAL INC.**

The financial services company was approved for a Delaware Strategic Fund capital expenditure grant of \$20,424 and a performance grant of \$2,638,200 for the creation of 148 new jobs in Wilmington.

### **FISHER'S POPCORN OF DELAWARE, INC.**

The popcorn maker was approved for a Delaware Strategic Fund capital expenditure grant of \$145,500 and a performance grant of \$60,000 for the creation of 20 new jobs in Sussex County.



### **ROHM & HAAS ELECTRONIC MATERIALS CMP, LLC (RHEM)**

The DuPont subsidiary is a leading producer of specialty chemicals used in the production of semiconductors, and was approved for a Delaware Strategic Fund capital expenditure grant of \$1,578,000 and a performance grant of \$65,550 for the creation of 11 new jobs in Newark.

### **ROYALE PIGMENTS AND CHEMICALS INC.**

The specialty chemical company was approved for a Delaware Strategic Fund capital expenditure grant of \$70,500 and a performance grant of \$177,930 for the creation of 29 new manufacturing jobs in Sussex County.



### **UVAX BIO LLC**

The early-stage biopharma company was approved for a Delaware Strategic Fund capital expenditure grant of \$240,000 and a performance grant of \$1,061,955 for the creation of 63 new jobs in Newark.



### **SOLENIS LLC**

The global leader in water technologies was approved for a Delaware Strategic fund performance grant for \$552,000 for the creation of 46 new jobs in New Castle County.

### **CP CASES INC.**

The company designs and manufactures high-performance, protective cases and racks, and was approved for a Delaware Strategic Fund capital expenditure grant of \$28,500, and a performance grant of \$190,110 for the relocation of 9 jobs and creation of 16 jobs in Sussex County.

### **BLINDSIGHT DELAWARE ENTERPRISES, INC.**

The non-profit regional healthcare call center provides employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, and was approved for a Delaware Strategic Fund performance grant of \$608,000 for the creation of 227 new jobs in Wilmington.

## FINANCIAL PROGRAMS | DELAWARE STRATEGIC FUND

COMPANY	COUNTY	TYPE OF GRANT	TOTAL AMOUNT AWARDED	# OF JOBS RETAINED	# OF JOBS CREATED	TOTAL # OF JOBS
Rohm & Haas Electronic Materials CMP, LLC (RHEM)	New Castle	SF Grant	\$1,643,550.00	29	11	40
Royale Pigments & Chemicals, Inc.	Sussex	SF Grant	\$248,430.00	17	29	46
Ally Financial Inc.	New Castle	SF Grant	\$2,658,624.00	75	148	223
Uvax Bio, LLC	New Castle	SF Grant	\$1,301,955.00	6	63	69
Solenis LLC	New Castle	SF Grant	\$552,000.00	326	46	372
CP Cases Inc.	Sussex	SF Grant	\$190,110.00	0	25	25
BlindSight Delaware, Inc.	New Castle	SF Grant	\$608,000.00	5	227	232
Fisher's Popcorn of Delaware, Inc.	Sussex	SF Grant	\$205,500.00	22	20	42
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$7,408,169.00</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>1,049</b>



## *Laboratory Space Development Fund*

*In FY '23, an appropriation of \$10 million was budgeted to the Department of State for the Laboratory Space Development Fund.* The purpose of the Fund is to provide grants and other financial assistance to directly support the acquisition and expansion of high-quality modern laboratory space for business use and research in Delaware. The Division of Small Business administers the Fund and distribution of any awards from the Fund. Any laboratory space proposal that is to be allocated funding from the Fund is reviewed and approved by the Council on Development Finance.

### *Companies that received funds from the Laboratory Space Development Fund in FY '23:*

- Agilent Technologies, Inc. – Awarded \$693,000
- Solenis LLC – Awarded \$3,500,000



## Tax-Exempt Bond Financing

*New or expanding businesses, governmental units and certain organizations exempt* from federal income taxation can be eligible for statewide financial assistance in the form of tax- exempt bonds. This financing, which does not utilize state funds nor impact the full faith and credit of the State of Delaware, may be cost- effective for projects involving the issuance of more than \$750,000. CDF reviews all applications for their impact on Delaware’s economy.

During FY ‘23, two issuances were approved.

### WILMINGTON FRIENDS SCHOOL

The school was approved for a bond to be issued by DEDA in an amount not to exceed \$46,300,000. The proceeds of the bond will be used finance the construction of a new lower school building on the school’s existing middle and upper school campus.

### WILMINGTON UNIVERSITY

The school was approved for a bond to be issued by DEDA in an amount not to exceed \$45,000,000. The proceeds of the bond will be used to finance the construction of two new buildings on the school’s existing Brandywine campus.

COMPANY	COUNTY	TYPE OF GRANT	TOTAL BOND ISSUANCE AMOUNT
Wilmington Friends School	New Castle	SF Bond	\$46,300,000.00
Wilmington University	New Castle	SF Bond	\$45,000,000.00
TOTAL			\$91,300,000.00

### ***Brownfield Assistance Program***

The Brownfield Assistance Program provides matching grants to developers and owners to encourage redevelopment of environmentally distressed sites.

No Brownfield projects were approved during FY '23.

### ***Delaware Rural Irrigation Program***

The Delaware Rural Irrigation Program (DRIP) is a revolving loan fund administered jointly through the Dept. of Agriculture and Division of Small Business.

The program provides no- interest loans to allow farmers to irrigate more cropland. The public-private investments help these farmers survive droughts.

No DRIP projects were approved during FY '23.

### ***State Small Business Credit Initiative***

The federally-funded State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) enables the Division of Small Business to create a loan participation program.

This program is a partnership between the Division and the participating lending institutions designed to increase the access businesses have to capital at lower interest rates.

There were no SSBCI loans approved during FY '23



## Site Readiness Fund

*The Site Readiness Fund was established through Senate Bill 127 and launched in January 2022.* The Fund provides grants, loans or other economic assistance to qualified businesses or local governments that invest in creating readily available sites for new or established businesses in Delaware.

In FY '23, an appropriation of \$10 million was budgeted to the Department of State for the Site Readiness Fund. The Fund provides grants to qualified businesses or local governments that invest in creating readily available sites for new or established businesses in Delaware.

In FY '23, 6 Site Readiness Fund applications totaling \$4,680,000 were approved for funding.

COMPANY	COUNTY	AMOUNT
Secure Storage LLC	Kent	\$495,000.00
City of Milford	Kent	\$1,000,000.00
Governor Lea Road, LLC	New Castle	\$1,000,000.00
LPC First State Holding Company, LP	New Castle	\$1,000,000.00
Stoltzfus LLC	Kent	\$1,000,000.00
Williamsville Industrial Park	Sussex	\$185,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$4,680,000.00</b>



## Delaware Capital Access Program

*The Delaware Capital Access Program (DCAP) gives banks a flexible, transparent tool to expand small business lending.*

By using a small amount of public resources to generate a large amount of private bank financing, the program provides more access to capital, which in turn stimulates economic growth.

During FY '23 there were 7 DCAP projects approved (see chart), and every dollar spent through DCAP generated \$13.8 in private funding.

APPLICANT	AMOUNT	COUNTY
The Cafe Joint, LLC	\$6,250.00	New Castle
The Cafe Joint, LLC	\$5,000.00	New Castle
Ultimate Fire Protection LLC	\$25,000.00	New Castle
Troisieme Group LLC	\$10,000.00	New Castle
Cupcake Kouture Bakery LLC	\$2,500.00	New Castle
Ark Holdings DE, LLC	\$30,000.00	New Castle
Jumping Jack's Learning Center LLC	\$8,750.00	New Castle
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$87,500.00</b>	

## *Delaware Technical Innovation Program*

*The Delaware Technical Innovation Program (DTIP) offers transitional grants for research initiatives.* Using the Delaware Strategic Fund, the program focuses on applicants for highly competitive federal grant programs known as Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR). Eligible companies conduct high-risk, early-stage research with a high potential for business growth.

SBIR/STTR research has three phases. During Phases I and II, entrepreneurs work to prove their ideas have technical and economic merit, seeking funding from the federal government and other public and private sources to help them develop their innovation. In Phase III, commercialization, less federal funding is available. Entrepreneurs must transition to selling their product on the open market to generate revenue and must rely more heavily on private investors for capital needs.

A dozen federal agencies provide SBIR/STTR funding for enterprises in Phase I (up to \$295,924) and Phase II (up to \$1,972,828). However, despite earning a Phase I federal award, the costs associated with completing a Phase II concept may be beyond some entrepreneurs' means.

DTIP grants serve as gap financing for entities that have received Phase I grants and have applied for a Phase II. DSB can award a matching grant of up to \$50,000 per application (limit five awards per company within a 10-year rolling period).





*One company received a DTIP grant in FY '23:*

- **BallyDel Technologies Inc.** in Wilmington focuses on providing material and technology for space exploration, defense, public health and society.

Of the 38 DTIP awards made to Delaware entities from FY '13 to FY '23, 37% successfully were awarded federal Phase II funding. Without that transitional funding, the research and development necessary for these companies to achieve Phase II status would have been compromised.

FEDERAL AWARDS FY '13 - FY '23	DE AWARDS	TOTAL AWARDED	AVERAGE AWARD
Phase I Grants	255	\$41,403,604.00	\$162,367.07
Phase II Grants	127	\$142,385,002.00	\$1,121,141.75
TOTAL	382	\$183,788,606.00	\$1,283,508.82

**DTIP AWARDS FY '13 - FY '23**

AWARDS	ENTITIES	TOTAL AWARDED	AVERAGE AWARD PER ENTITY
38	23	\$1,890,000.00	\$82,173.91

# Workforce Development

*The Division of Small Business provides Blue Collar Training funds to Delaware businesses for customized training initiatives.* Throughout the year, applications are received and contracts are awarded, and completed training contracts are closed out according to auditing standards. A follow up is conducted six months after the contract closes to determine if the business met its training goals. Below is an overview of this fiscal year.

## New FY '23 Contracts

### OVERALL

- 5 new contracts were awarded totaling \$88,678.56
- 69 participants will receive training

### 4 COMPANIES WERE FIRST-TIME APPLICANTS AND SMALL BUSINESSES

*(Companies that have not received funding within the last 5 years are considered new and those employing less than 100 are considered small business)*

- \$73,228.56 was awarded to those businesses with a match of \$73,228.56
- 39 participants are to receive training

No onsite training observations were conducted

### COUNTY BREAKDOWN

- New Castle County – 2
- Kent County – 0
- Sussex County – 3

## Completed FY '23 Contracts

### STATISTICS ON CONTRACTS COMPLETED IN FY 23:

- 4 contracts were completed totaling \$20,089.10
- 23 participants were trained
- 4 companies were first-time applicants
- 4 companies were small businesses

### COUNTY BREAKDOWN

- New Castle County    2
- Kent County            1
- Sussex County        1

## *Analysis of Participants*

Demographic information on the next page is from voluntary surveys. Some participants chose not to complete the survey. Some do not complete the entire questionnaire.

### *Program Participant Profile*

SEX		VETERAN		RACE/ETHNIC GROUP	
Male	70%	Yes	3%	White	55%
Female	27%	No	94%	African American	23%
No Response	3%	No Response	3%	Hispanic	10%
				Asian/Pacific Islander	3%
				American Indian	0%
				No Response	9%
AGE		DISABILITY		EDUCATION LEVEL	
16-20	0%	Yes	0%	Did Not Complete High School	0%
21-30	55%	No	77%	High School or Equivalent	39%
31-55	33%	No Response	23%	Post-High School/Training Program	0%
56-65+	3%			Some College	6%
No Response	9%			2-Year College Degree	0%
				4-Year College Degree	33%
				Additional Degrees	22%
				No Response	3%



*Program Participant Profile Continued*

RESIDENCE		LIMITED ENGLISH		RECIPIENT OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE	
DE	88%	Yes	94%	Yes	0%
MD	3%	No	3%	No	0%
PA	6%	No Response	3%	No Response	100%
NJ	0%				
Other	0%				
No Responses	3%				

MARITAL STATUS		EMPLOYMENT STATUS 90 DAYS PRIOR	
Married	30%	Unemployed	0%
Single	64%	Employed Part Time	0%
Single Parent	0%	Employed by This Employer	91%
Other	3%	Employed by Other Employer	6%
No Response	3%	No Response	3%

## FINANCIAL PROGRAMS I WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

### *State Employee Training Program*

The Department of Human Resources receives \$100,000 annually from the Workforce Development for the State Employee Training Program. Below is a breakdown of the courses that were awarded in FY23.

COURSE NAME	COST
Rapid Learning	\$ 7,589.55
HRD Press	\$ 14,800.00
Excel Basics Excel Level II	\$ 4,732.00
Basic Welding	\$ 10,500.00
75 hrs. Physical Plant Maintenance Course- BASIC	\$ 7,500.00
60 hrs. Physical Plant Maintenance Course- Advanced	\$ 6,000.00
Ellicott Dredge Operator Course	\$ 4,800.00
NASBLA Boat Crew Training	\$ 15,709.10
Basic MS Office Suite Training	\$ 2,000.00
Vocabulary, Writing and Grammar Training (Learning A-Z)	\$ 234.00
Vocabulary, Writing and Grammar Training (Merit Sol.)	\$ 1,992.00
Practical Advanced Spanish Communication	\$ 5,000.00
Conversational Survival Spanish	\$ 4,000.00
Southern Folger Locksmith Certification	\$ 14,556.00
<b>TOTAL FY2023 BLUE COLLAR FUNDING</b>	<b>\$ 99,412.65</b>

*Over 1,300 State employees participated in a combination of virtual & classroom training.*

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**RAPID LEARNING SESSION INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING COURSES:**

- o A 4-Point Model for Leading High-Performance Teams (15)
- o ABC Method: Handling a Bad Attitude (11)
- o ADA Accommodation: Supervisors and the 'Interactive Process' (166)
- o Change Management: How to Disarm Passive Resistance (3)
- o Complaint Investigations: Compliance Training for Managers & Supervisors (25)
- o Controlling Rumors: Filling the Vacuum (85)
- o Empowerment and Accountability How Much Rope Should You Give Your People (2)
- o Fact-Based Decision-Making: The Five Whys Technique (77)
- o FMLA (32)
- o Handling Employee Complaints: What Every Manager Needs to Know (45)
- o Handling Excruciatingly Difficult Conversations (81)
- o How to Turn Around a Struggling Team (31)
- o Leadership Credibility Part 1: The Confidence Base (20)
- o Managing Distractions: The "Got A Minute" Trap (292)
- o Managing Team Conflict (75)
- o Managing Workplace Stress: How To Stay Productive Under Pressure (169)
- o Overcoming Confirmation Bias in Hiring (262)
- o Performance Reviews: How to Deliver The Change Message (4)
- o Six Managerial Styles You Need to Lead Effectively (52)
- o The FACE Method: How to Ensure Crystal-Clear Communication (126)
- o The Feedback Conversation (AFIRM) (3)
- o Time Management: Why It's Not About Time (465)
- o When Your People Resist Change: Turning Objections into Objectives (17)
- o Working with Other Departments: How to Win Over "Porcupines" (30)



CONTACT US

# *Big Support* **FOR DELAWARE** *Small Businesses.*

*The Division of Small Business team is knowledgeable,  
experienced and ready to help. Contact us today!*

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