

Fiscal Year 2024 ANNUAL REPORT





GET TO KNOW DSB

YOUR SMALL BUSINESS EXPERTS

SERVICES

- Advising
- *Idea* refinement
- Resource *connections*
- *Funding* opportunities
- Problem *solving*

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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.

We provide support to businesses of up to 100 employees to help them maximize their potential.

Small businesses account for 98 percent of businesses in Delaware and employ 57 percent of Delaware's workforce. To help them succeed, the Division offers customized services and support, ranging from providing guidance and advice, to assistance with navigating government regulations, to providing access to funding and our extensive network of resource partners.

We assist under-served populations and areas to create a more diverse and vibrant business community.

Through the Office of Supplier Diversity, 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.

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 manages the Delaware Strategic Fund and its associated programs. By vetting businesses seeking grants or loans through it, the Division ensures that taxpayer dollars are used wisely and in a way that maximizes the positive impact on economic development.



THE DIVISION OF SMALL BUSINESS IS A DIVISION OF THE DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

As Delaware's Secretary of State, I am pleased to highlight the pivotal role of our Division of Small Business in Delaware's small business ecosystem. Throughout Fiscal Year 2024, the Division has been instrumental in driving innovation, partnerships, and economic growth.

Through its various programs and initiatives, the Division remains a foundation of support for small businesses. Whether through the expert guidance of its regional business managers, or its financial support efforts, small business owners can count on the Division as a vital ally in their growth and success.

The Division's efforts have significantly contributed to small business growth over the past year. Census data fed by the Delaware Department of Labor, shows an increase of over 700 new small businesses in FY24, along with over 14 thousand more jobs created. Small businesses make up 98% of all businesses in Delaware, generating an additional \$1.4 billion in wages in FY24 which accounted for 50% of all wages in the state.

The Division provides access to funding opportunities through programs like the Encouraging Development, Growth, and Expansion (EDGE) grant competition which awards up to \$1.5M each fiscal year. The EDGE

program remains a testament to our commitment to providing entrepreneurs with the financial backing they need to reach their full potential.

Ensuring it remains an accountable steward of state funding for both small and larger companies in the state, the Division serves as the financial proposal preparation, post-award distribution, and monitoring arm of the state's Council on Development Finance. The Division works closely with its partners at the Delaware Prosperity Partnership (DPP) to bring proposals before the Council applying for grants through the state's Strategic Fund and several other unique programs. I encourage you to learn more about these incentive programs at business.delaware.gov/incentives.

Additionally, we cannot forget the role that Division leadership and the county-based regional business managers play in forging partnerships. With groups such as the Small Business Development Center and the chambers of commerce statewide, the regional business managers help small business owners navigate the complexities of state government permitting, as well as serve as a sounding board for small business owners who have questions or complaints.

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Moreover, small businesses that are looking to export their products or services to new markets can do so through the Export Delaware program. Export staff provides on-site guidance to businesses that are looking to explore new markets by providing counseling, access to foreign buyers and distributors, financial assistance to expand exporting operations, and so much more. To learn more about Export Delaware, visit export.delaware.gov. Likewise, small businesses can learn about the value of importing goods through the DSB-run Foreign Trade Zone #99 program. Foreign Trade Zones (FTZs) are secure areas located in or near U.S. Customs and Border Protection ports of entry, but legally considered to be outside the Customs territory for the purpose of tariff laws and CBP entry procedures. To learn more about the FTZ 99 program, visit de.gov/ftz99.

The Division oversees the Delaware Tourism Office (DTO) and the Office of Supplier Diversity (OSD), working together to strengthen economic development within the state.

In FY24, DTO continued to market Delaware as a premier destination for day trips, vacations, sports sites, and entertainment venues. DTO implemented new programs, attracted new events, and continued to brainstorm new ways to collaborate with our industry partners to ensure open lines of communication with hotels, attractions, small businesses, and restaurants. Tourism remains the fourth largest private employer in the state.

Delaware welcomed 28.6 million visitors in 2022. Visitor spending was \$6.5 billion, an 11% increase from 2021, and the tourism industry contributed \$4.5

billion to the state's gross domestic product. Without tourism, each Delaware household would pay an additional \$1,764 in taxes.

The Office of Supplier Diversity (OSD) continued its advocacy for the Diverse Business Community. OSD supported House Bill 387, legislation born out of the success of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Pilot Program created by the Office of Management & Budget in response to the 2022 Disparity Study. Passed in the most recent legislative session, this law will allow public works projects valued more than \$30 million and awarded on best value, to be scored using Disadvantage Business Enterprise (DBE) usage of at least 10% but no more than 30%. A Disadvantage Business Enterprise is defined as a business certified with the Office of Supplier Diversity or through the DeIDOT DBE Program.

*Additionally, FY24 saw an increase of an incredible 20% in state agency spending over FY23. The statewide spend total was \$15.49 billion, of which \$911.8 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, FY24 has been a year of firsts, partnerships, and unwavering commitment to the growth of Delaware's small businesses. I extend my gratitude to the dedicated team at the Division of Small Business for its collective efforts to support a

thriving economic landscape for the First State.

Jeff Bullock
Delaware Secretary of State



DIVISION DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The Delaware Division of Small Business (DSB) is focused on helping small businesses start and grow. As the Director, I am proud to share highlights of our team's work from FY 24. This annual report encapsulates DSB's achievements, including those of the Office of Supplier Diversity (OSD) and the Delaware Tourism Office (DTO). Additionally, the report underscores the pivotal role that we collectively play in Delaware's economic development ecosystem.

Small businesses are the backbone of our local economies. When we support small businesses, we help them generate jobs and dollars that stay right here in the community. It is important that small businesses have the resources, guidance, and support necessary to not only survive but to thrive.

Those services are exactly what our agency provides. We provide one-on-one support through our Regional Business Managers. They help small business owners with advice, guidance, idea refinement, navigating government processes, answering questions, accessing a variety of key resources, connecting with partners who can help them and identifying opportunities for funding, whether through our office or from private and public partners.

In FY '24, we continued to work on fostering our identity as an important stop on an owner's small

business journey and making them aware of the breadth of services we provide. The success of our EDGE grant competition hit a key milestone this fiscal year. Since its launch in 2019 to the award of the most recent grants in June of 2024, we are thrilled to say that we've been able to support 100 small businesses with over \$6.51M. This funding is intended to give them a leg up during a time when many small businesses fail (the early years) and even the playing field as they compete for customers with larger businesses that have greater budgets.

We are also pleased to have made progress in getting funds out the door under our State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI). One of our lending programs, the Delaware Capital Access Program, has seen seven projects approved, and the other lending program, the Delaware Loan Participation is already generating loans in FY '25. In April 2024, we also leveraged one of our key partnerships with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). We awarded them a technical assistance contract to provide additional support to business owners who need assistance to meet our lending partners' requirements. I'm particularly proud of our Business Finance Unit that took the lead implementing this significant federal initiative while continuing to distribute

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and monitor millions of state dollars approved by the state's Council on Development Finance, for economic development projects for both large and small businesses.

FY '24 was another big year for our Delaware Tourism Office (DTO), as it was tasked with implementing the newly established Sports Tourism Capital Investment Fund. Established through the FY '24 Bond and Capital Improvements Act, the fund provides financial support to new or existing sports facilities that hold events throughout the year to attract out-of-state visitors and contribute to the state and local economy. DTO awarded \$11.3 million to four projects across the State, after they received and reviewed 18 applications requesting more than \$54 million in funding. DTO also continued to creatively market Delaware as a year-round destination and find new ways to collaborate with our industry partners throughout the state including hotels, attractions, museums, small businesses, and restaurants.

The Office of Supplier Diversity, operated solely by Director Shavonne White, continued to work tirelessly for the state's diverse supplier and small business community in FY 24. OSD awarded a contract to create and manage a new portal that will streamline the certification application process. Once completed, it will significantly increase efficiency and ease for applicants. I'm also proud that OSD received the Outstanding Community Partnership Award from the University of Delaware. In addition to these achievements, OSD supported changes to the State

Contracting and Purchasing Advisory Council's new Professional Services' Three-Quote requirement to give diverse suppliers equal footing for state contracts.

I am incredibly grateful to the dedicated team at the Delaware Division of Small Business – along with our partners, and the stakeholders who have contributed to the success of our initiatives.

I hope you'll enjoy reading more about of our team's work, and if you get the chance, share with a small business owner what you've learned, and what we can do for them to make them a thriving part of Delaware's small business community.



Regina Mitchell
Director
Delaware Division of Small
Business

SMALL BUSINESSES ACCOUNT FOR:

241,614 JOBS OR
57%
OF THE WORKFORCE

98%
OF ALL BUSINESSES
IN DELAWARE

\$14.2 BILLION IN WAGES
50%
OF ALL WAGES

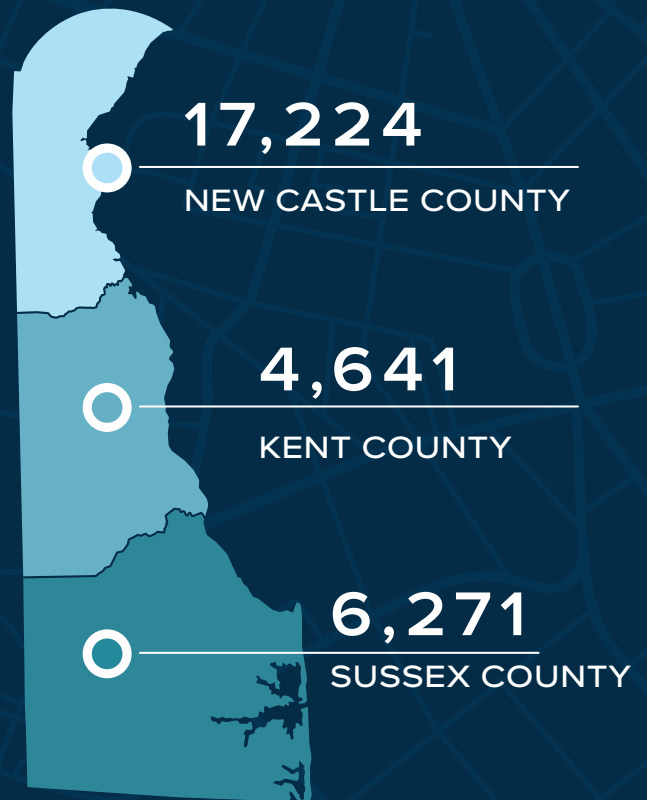
THERE ARE 28,657 SMALL BUSINESSES IN DELAWARE.

SMALL BUSINESS COUNTY BREAKDOWN

*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.



A man in a dark suit and a woman in a dark sleeveless top are seated at a round wooden table in a restaurant. They are both smiling and looking at each other. The table is set with plates of food, wine glasses, and water glasses. The background shows a modern restaurant interior with blue lighting and a bar area.

Delaware

Endless Discoveries

A man in a dark jacket and a yellow life vest is kayaking on a calm body of water. The water is still, and the man's reflection is clearly visible. The background is a soft, hazy landscape with trees and a bright sky.

FY'24 was another busy year for the Delaware Tourism Office (DTO)

The start of the year saw the creation of the Sports Tourism Capital Investment Fund. Established through the FY 2024 Bond and Capital Improvements Act, the fund provides financial support to new or existing sports facilities that hold events throughout the year to attract out-of-state visitors and contribute to the state and local economy. DTO worked with Division leadership to draft and finalize regulations for the program in December 2023.

DELAWARE TOURISM OFFICE

The office received 18 applications requesting more than \$54 million. Available funds totaled \$11.3 million. Applications were reviewed by a panel, including the co-chairs of the Joint Capital Improvement Committee, Sen. Jack Walsh and Rep. Debra Heffernan, and representatives of the Delaware Tourism Office, the Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitors Bureau, Kent County Tourism, and Southern Delaware Tourism. Four projects were awarded funding:

- **Wilmington Sports LLC (\$6 million)**, to construct a new indoor track facility, adjacent to the Chase Fieldhouse in Wilmington, that will serve as a multi-sport complex and host a variety of events and competitions.
- **DE Turf (\$3 million)**, to make improvements to the complex in Frederica in order to host larger regional and national tournaments. This will include tripling current stadium seating from 1,000 to 3,000 seats, constructing a new tournament facility, adding additional amenities, and more.
- **Midway Motion & Fitness (\$2 million)**, to construct a pickleball complex in Rehoboth Beach with 12 indoor courts and 4 outdoor courts, meeting the requirements for sanctioning of tournaments by the American Pickleball Association.
- **STATS Tournaments (\$300,000)**, to install stadium lights at two of its fields and build one additional baseball and softball field at their facility in Bear to accommodate the increasing team and tournament demands.

The FY 2025 Bond and Capital Improvements Act provided an additional \$10 million for the fund. DTO is currently in the process of accepting applications for the next round of funding.

Throughout the year, DTO continued its commitment to effectively and creatively market Delaware as a unique and affordable place to visit with targeted regional and national advertising campaigns. DTO staff also attended several in-person trade shows to promote the state as a leisure and group tour destination. Staff attended shows in Chicago, New York, Atlanta, Nashville, North Carolina, Louisiana, and Ontario.

The efforts of the office and industry partners throughout the state's continue to show success in our annual visitation numbers. In calendar year 2022, Delaware welcomed 28.6 million visitors, 9.8 million of whom were overnight visitors. Of those overnight visitors, 82% were repeat visitors to Delaware – meaning industry partners provided them an exceptional experience in the past, and they chose to visit again because of it.

Visitor spending in 2022 topped \$6.5 billion, an 11% increase from 2021, and the tourism industry contributed \$4.5 billion to the state gross domestic product. Without tourism, each Delaware household would pay an additional \$1,764 in taxes.

Tourism employment in Delaware rose to a record 52,415 full and part-time jobs in 2022, and 15% of all new jobs created in Delaware in 2022 came from tourism. Tourism remains the fourth largest private employer in the state.

DELAWARE TOURISM OFFICE

DTO continues to think of new ways to collaborate with industry partners and ensure open lines of communication with hotels, attractions, small businesses, and restaurants.

In December, DTO held a tourism summit with more than 150 industry partners from around the state attending. The summit included sessions on sports tourism, group tours, accessibility, and marketing.

To celebrate National Travel and Tourism Week in May, DTO invited industry partners to a lunch event at Wilmington Brew Works, where a partnership was unveiled with the brewery and Delaware State Parks on a Delaware-themed beer called “Adventure Awaits.” Each can of beer in the four-pack, features a different state park. DTO is currently working with Wilmington Brew Works on a new beer to celebrate the nation’s 250th anniversary in 2026.

DTO also sponsored a number of community events and organizations throughout the year, including the Freeman Arts Pavilion, Wilmington Grand Prix, the Developing Artist Collaboration’s Dewey Sip & Shop event, and the Delaware Restaurant Association’s Hospitality Ambassador Conference.

Throughout this fiscal year, the group tour market in Delaware continued to rebound from the effects of the pandemic with group visitation and overnight stays on the rise. Delaware is seeing an increase in visitation from groups out of Canada, and is exploring different ways to reach this target audience. DTO continues to market the state as a group tour-friendly destination

and encourages group travel through our efforts with the Delaware Motorcoach Rewards Program and the Delaware Group Tour Coalition.

DTO also relaunched the Delaware On Tap and Delaware History Trails this fiscal year. With new locations added and refreshed prizes, both trails are performing well with visitors and residents alike. There are also plans to launch a new arts and culture trail in the upcoming fiscal year in collaboration with the Delaware Division of the Arts.

FY ’24 proved to be a great year for DTO and for tourism in Delaware. DTO hopes momentum will continue into the next fiscal year and will work closely with partners in the industry to support and assist them in growing tourism throughout the state.





OSD

DELAWARE OFFICE OF SUPPLIER DIVERSITY

The Delaware Office of Supplier Diversity (OSD) is proud to be part of a community that recognizes the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion programs and initiatives that promote and support the state's diverse business and small business enterprises. Acknowledging that diverse vendors face unique challenges, the State of Delaware prioritized creating programs, drafting legislation, and effecting changes that promote the growth and competitiveness of the Supplier Diversity community in the State marketplace. OSD is proud to support and advocate for these programs and initiatives; and to continue to do the work that is necessary to create better economic opportunities for diverse business and small business enterprises.

Fiscal Year 24 OSD Highlights

OSD CERTIFICATION

The Office of Supplier Diversity was proud to certify 296 vendors in FY24, a 10% increase from FY 23.

Delaware has 1,536 OSD Certified Vendors

- *1,035 Diverse Business (OSD)*
- *501 Small Business Focus (SBF)*

CLASSIFICATIONS

MBE

Minority Business Enterprise

WBE

Woman Business Enterprise

MWBE

Minority Woman Business Enterprise

VOBE

Veteran Owned Business Enterprise

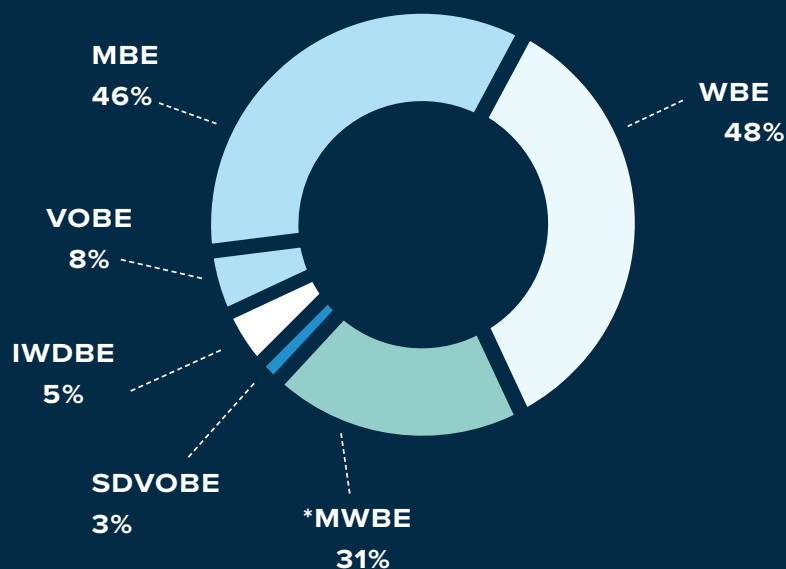
SDVOBE

Service Disabled Veteran Owned Business Enterprise

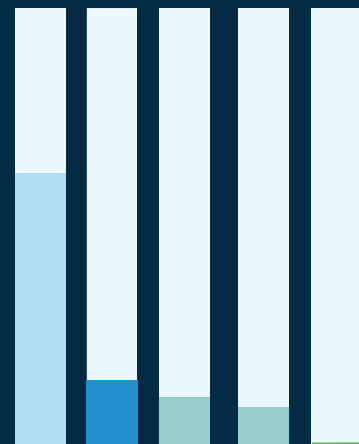
IWDDBE

Individuals with Disabilities Owned Business Enterprise

OSD CERTIFIED VENDOR BREAKDOWN



African American	62%
Asian American	10%
Hispanic American	14%
Sub-Cont. Asian Amer.	13%
Native American	1%



NEW CERTIFICATION PORTAL

The Office of Supplier Diversity is currently working towards the completion of implementing a new Certification Software management system which will streamline the OSD application process. After a competitive RFP process, Coolsoft LLC was awarded the contract to create and manage the electronic portal that will allow applicants to submit application materials and information more efficiently. In addition, the new system will capture more data to allow for more accurate reporting on our certified vendors.

Information on the Supplier Diversity Management System RFP can be found at: <https://mmp.delaware.gov/Contracts/Details/6651>

DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE LEGISLATION

House Bill 387, passed in both the Delaware House of Representatives and the Senate. This law allows public works projects (awarded on best value), valued at more than \$20 million dollars to be scored based on the usage of at least 10%, but no more than 30%, of a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE). A DBE is defined as a business certified with the Office of Supplier Diversity or through the DeIDOT DBE Program. This legislation was born out of the success of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Pilot Program created by the Office of Management & Budget in response to the 2022 Disparity Study.

CONTRACTING & PURCHASING COUNCIL

The Contracting and Purchasing Advisory Council voted to approve a new Professional Services' Three-Quote requirement. This change will greatly benefit OSD certified vendors. Beginning fiscal year 2025, professional services between \$100,000 and \$149,999.99 require obtaining at least three quotes, with at least one coming from a Certified Diverse Vendor. Most agencies have adopted the practice that at least one quote should come from an OSD certified vendor.

SOCIAL EQUITY PROGRAM

The Social Equity Program was formed with the enactment of The Delaware Marijuana Control Act, which allows for the sale and use of recreational marijuana. This program was designed to create a more inclusive and equitable marijuana industry by providing opportunities for those disproportionately impacted by past marijuana laws. The Division of Small Business and Office of Supplier Diversity assisted the Office of the Marijuana Commissioner in organizing information workshops for the Social Equity License applicants.

OSD will continue to work with the Office of the Marijuana Commissioner regarding the social equity program to include educating business owners about the Marijuana Social Equity Business Development Fund, a fund developed to assist Social Equity applicants with development and operational costs.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM

The Office of Supplier Diversity sponsored the Business Development Grant Program with the Delaware Black Chamber of Commerce. Funding for this program provided grant recipients with a one-year membership to the Delaware Black Chamber of Commerce. A total of 29 businesses were awarded a grant for the opportunity to take advantage of the networking events, trainings and workshops, the Enrich Delaware business development course, and other benefits offered by the Chamber.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

The Office of Supplier Diversity was recognized at the University of Delaware Supplier Diversity Conference receiving the Outstanding Community Partnership award and a certificate of appreciation for partnership, support, and commitment to the supplier diversity mission.

OFFICE OF SUPPLIER DIVERSITY

FY24 EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Connecting with business owners and showing support to our valuable resource partners is vital to the work of the Office of Supplier Diversity. Event highlights for FY 2024 include:

- *The University of Delaware Supplier Diversity Conference*
- *ABC Delaware 'Meet the Generals' Event*
- *Delaware Networking Station*
- *National Minority Supplier Development Council Annual Conference*
- *Community Navigator Fair*
- *Community Navigator Black Business Excellence Event*
- *Women in Hospitality*
- *Women's Leadership Conference*
- *Delaware on Main Street Walking Tour*
- *Whiting Turner Construction Fair*
- *Delaware Latino Forum*

TRAININGS & WORKSHOPS

An essential part of the work at the Office of Supplier Diversity is to assist vendors in competing for state contracts by providing training on how to navigate the State of Delaware's procurement process. Training sessions and workshops are offered throughout the year; as well as presentations at events hosted by our resource partners. OSD presented at the following events during FY24:

- *OSD/SBA Introduction to State and Federal Certification Programs Workshops*
- *Government Support Services Vendor Day Training*
- *True Access Capital Procurement Fair*
- *Launcher Program – Kent County*
- *New Castle County Government Procurement Summit & Workshop*
- *Delaware Business & Economic Development Summit*

FY2024 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. On the next two pages are highlights from the FY '24 report.

In FY '24 spend for the entire State of Delaware totaled \$15.49 billion dollars of which \$911.8 million was spent with the Supplier Diversity community (Diverse & SBF); a combined increase of 20% over FY 23. The full report can be found by:

**SCANNING THE
QR CODE HERE**



**OR VISITING
THIS LINK**

<https://tinyurl.com/24ScoreCard>

OFFICE OF SUPPLIER DIVERSITY

AGENCY SPEND TOTALS

• Direct spend w/ Certified Diverse (OSD)	\$174,652,193
• Direct spend w/ W9 Self-report Diverse	\$244,557,917
• Total Diverse Business Spend	\$419,210,110
• Direct spend w/ Certified Small (SBF)	\$23,503,032
• Direct spend w/ W9 Self-Report Small	\$434,172,983
• Total Small Business Spend	\$457,676,014
• Indirect spend w/ Tier II Subcontractors	\$34,904,682
• Totals Supplier Diversity Spend	\$911,790,807

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

1. Dept. of Education	40.1%
2. Dept. of Health & Social Services	16.6%
3. Executive Department	6.6%
4. Dept. of Transportation	6.2%

SMALL BUSINESS SPEND - FOUR AGENCIES ACCOUNTED FOR 66.2% OF THE TOTAL SPEND:

1. Dept. of Education	34.7%
2. Executive Department	13.2%
3. Dept. of Health & Social Services	11.7%
4. Dept. of Finance	6.6%

DOE & SCHOOL DISTRICTS SCORECARD

School Districts spent \$47.6 million, and Charter Schools spent 3.7 million with the certified Supplier Diversity community in FY2024. The school districts and charter schools with the highest spend totals are:

School Districts		Charter Schools	
• Christina	29%	Las Americas	13.9%
• Capital	10.9%	Kuumba Academy	10.3%
• Red Clay	9.9%	First State Montessori	9.4%

COMPARING SPEND TOTALS FROM FY2024 & FY2023:

The following categories showed significant spend increases:

• Indirect spend Tier II Subcontractors	64%
• Direct spend (OSD Certified/W9/DSHA)	25%
• School District spend	22%

Decreases were shown in the following categories:

• Charter School District spend	-18.6%
• Direct spend w/ SBF certified	-9.5%

The Executive Department showed significant increases in both spend categories with a 208% increase in Diverse spend and a 653% increase in Small Business spend.

COMMUNICATIONS

COMMUNICATIONS

Department

COMMUNICATIONS

During FY '24, the Communications Team continued their efforts to promote the Division of Small Business and the many programs and services it offers.

The Comms Team is responsible for all external communications, including marketing, and advertising for the Division (including the Office

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



COMMUNICATIONS

MEDIA

The Communications team responded to 41 requests from local, regional and national media for interviews or information about the Division of Small Business, and its programs during FY '24.

FOIA

The team responded to 15 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests from media and others seeking documents on various topics during FY '24.

Programs and initiatives supported by the Communications Team in FY '24 include:



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 about this program in the EDGE section.

INCREASING AWARENESS OF DSB PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Communications worked diligently in FY '24 to promote the programs and services of the Division in a post-pandemic world. Here are some of our activities:

- Development of a year-long advertising and social media plan to increase awareness of the Division's services, the role of its Regional Business Managers, and that the agency also includes the Office of Supplier Diversity and Delaware Tourism Office.
- Sponsorship of several business-related events hosted by our partners with the Chambers of Commerce, statewide.
- Launched a Get to Know DSB Initiative, that included a video about the agency, and social media posts with facts highlighting our success.
- Creation of a DSB Program Booklet so that information on all services and funding programs is contained in one place. The booklet has been well received.

COMMUNICATIONS

OTHER COMMUNICATIONS TEAM INITIATIVES

- Created toolkits with flyers and social media, email and newsletter images and content for use by partners and small business owners to promote our twice per year EDGE Grant Competition, Small Business Month in May, and Spread Small Business Magic holiday campaign. Also did widespread advertising around these events statewide.

- Promoted Small Business Month by taping videos for social, with small business owners talking about the importance of supporting their efforts.

- Partnered with the Delaware SBA District Office on a Walking Tour of Downtown Wilmington to promote Small Business Saturday in Nov. 2023.

- Hosted webinars for our fellow state agencies to talk to small business owners about required participation in the Delaware Earns Retirement Program, and the Delaware Paid Family Leave Act.

DELAWARE BUSINESS MARKETING PROGRAM

There were no non-state cash contributions to the Business Marketing Program during FY '24. Total expenditures were \$281,011.08, and encumbrances were \$11,692.01.

Samples of Advertisements From FY' 24

GET TO KNOW DSB
YOUR SMALL BUSINESS EXPERTS

SERVICES

- Advising
- Idea refinement
- Resource connections
- Funding opportunities
- Problem solving

Delaware
DIVISION OF SMALL BUSINESS
business.delaware.gov

DELAWARE TECHNICAL INNOVATION PROGRAM

Our 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 (SBIR) or Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs as they work to bring new products to market.

learn more at:
[DE.GOV/INCENTIVES](https://de.gov/incentives)

Delaware
DIVISION OF SMALL BUSINESS

When starting a small business,
you need a *guide*.

When growing a small business,
you need a *community*.

That's where we come in.

Delaware
DIVISION OF SMALL BUSINESS

SMALL BUSINESS MONTH
MAY 2024
BUSINESS.DELAWARE.GOV



COMMUNICATIONS

SOCIAL MEDIA

Once again, Communications grew the number of followers for the Division’s social media pages in FY ‘24. The Comms Team focused on increased storytelling opportunities through reels, and more photos from events Division staff attend.

Our Instagram audience saw the most growth – a 36% increase in FY ‘24 compared to an 18% increase in FY 23. Our focus on increasing our LinkedIn presence this year paid off as well. We more than doubled our followers from 319 to 712 in FY ‘24!

The Division’s Facebook account grew more slowly but still grew. It currently has just over 7,000 followers (an increase of more than 400 since FY ‘23).

Find Us On Social Here:



COMMUNICATIONS

DSB NEWSLETTER

The weekly newsletter, has gained just over 2,000 subscribers in the last year, bringing it up to 17, 094. The newsletter is distributed to our network of small business owners, partner organizations, and others. In FY '24 we distributed 52 e-newsletters with an average open rate of approximately 51%, which is 16% higher than the industry average according to Constant Contact. Bucking national trends for many industries, most of our users are viewing our newsletter on desktop, not mobile.

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 updates available from partner organizations.

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. The submission form can be found on our website at business.delaware.gov.

This feature is very popular. In FY 24 we had to pause accepting submissions for a few months because we had so many on the wait list to be featured.



Becca Mathias
PHOTOGRAPHER

Dr. Kim Furtado, N.D.
NATUROPATHIC DOCTOR

LOOKING FOR YOUR SMALL BUSINESS TO be featured in our Weekly Newsletter?

Fill out our new form!



News & Events
Wednesday, May 15, 2024

Happy Small Business Month!



One of our favorite times of the year is here! Small Business Month is an exciting time to lift up and support small businesses throughout Delaware. We have created resources for small business owners to use during the month in the form of fliers, social media graphics, a whole toolkit really! There are also recordings of our SizeUp Delaware webinar and our SSBCI Loan Program webinar held in partnership with the Delaware Small Business Development Center, who will be providing technical assistance for us in the program. All resources can be found at de.gov/smallbizmonth or click the buttons below!

[Learn More Here](#)



REGIONAL BUSINESS *Managers*



REGIONAL BUSINESS MANAGERS



**JOE
ZILCOSKY**

NORTHERN NEW
CASTLE COUNTY



What is your role in the Delaware Division of Small Business and 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 17 years and have been in this role since it was created.

How many businesses have you worked with this year?

Over 300

Do you serve, or are a member of, any boards, groups, or organizations outside of Division of Small Business?

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

How many events have you attended in FY 24?

48 - *Here are a few:*

- Delaware State Chamber of Commerce Small Business Day
- StartUp 302 finals
- Delaware Entrepreneurial Summit
- DE Arts Alliance CREATE Launch
- Kuumba Academy Career Day
- Lisa Blunt Rochester's Constituent Resource Fair
- Coalition For the Delaware River Watershed, Conference Speaker
- Delaware Business Times: Mitchell Awards
- The Mill Summit
- Pete Dupont Freedom Foundation Freedom Award Ceremony

What do you want small business owners to know about how you can help them?

I can help you grow your small business through guidance, gaining capital, or taking advantage of our many government programs that we have.



DAVID MÁTHÉ

SOUTHERN NEW
CASTLE COUNTY



What is your role in the Delaware Division of Small Business and how long have you been here?

Regional Business Manager. I have been with the State for almost 32 years.

How many businesses have you worked with this year?

More than 75.

Do you serve, or are a member of, any boards, groups, or organizations outside of Division of Small Business?

Board Member World Trade Center Delaware

How many events have you attended in FY 24?

- CIRC meetings
- World Trade Center Events
- State and County Chamber events
- Emerging Enterprise Center Open for Business Events

What do you want small business owners to know about how you can help them? I am here to help assist Delaware small businesses navigate the resources available to them.



**LAUREN
SWAIN**
SUSSEX COUNTY



What is your role in the Delaware Division of Small Business and how long have you been here?

I am the Sussex County Regional Business Manager and I have been in this role for almost 5 years.

How many businesses have you worked with this year?

175 businesses

Do you serve, or are a member of, any boards, groups, or organizations outside of Division of Small Business?

- Ex-officio member of Sussex Economic Development Action Committee
- Milford Task Force for Affordable Housing
- Frequently assisting business owners through chamber requests and legislative outreach

How many events have you attended in FY 24?

40 events - *Here are a few:*

- Sussex Economic Development Action Committee
- 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.

What do you want small business owners to know about how you can help them?

I can assist businesses to start, grow, and succeed through various programs the Division of Small Business offers or through partner resource organizations. I can also guide business owners through regulatory processes and act as a liaison with government agencies. Here at the Division of Small Business we strive to take the burden off of the business owner so they can focus on their business operations.



ANASTASIA JACKSON

KENT COUNTY



What is your role in the Delaware Division of Small Business and how long have you been here?

As the Kent County Regional Business Manager at the Delaware Division of Small Business. I have been with the agency for 3 years.

How many businesses have you worked with this year? 313

Do you serve, or are a member of, any boards, groups, or organizations outside of Division of Small Business?

- Delaware Art Alliance
- Dover Kent MPO
- Capital School District National Accounting Finance Advisory Board DOS Employee Recognition Committee

How many events have you attended in the past FY 24?

24 events - *Here are a few:*

- Food Bank of Delaware Grand Opening (Kent County)
- 2024 Economic Forecast Summit
- Delaware State Chamber Dinner Event
- United Way of Delaware Pitch or Ditch Competition
- Launcher – Road to Success Conference: Delaware State University

- Delaware Restaurant Association Hospitality Boot Camp
- Delaware Art Summit: Division of Arts
- Delaware State Chamber Evening Mixer
- New Castle County - Swimming with the Sharks Pitch
- Women of Hospitality: Delaware Restaurant Association
- Women in Leadership Conference: Delaware State Chamber
- Pitch or Ditch United Way of Delaware
- Delaware State Chamber Dinner

What do you want small business owners to know about how you can help them?

The Delaware Division of Small Business is dedicated to supporting small business owners at every stage of their entrepreneurial journey, from the initial idea to the final concept. We want to emphasize that our services are completely free of charge, and we are here to have a conversation with you, regardless of where you are in your business journey.

Delaware on main



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 nation's downtowns and commercial corridors.



DELAWARE MAIN STREETS

FY '24 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Created 175 new full-time jobs (net)
- Created 67 new businesses (net)
- Completed 50 rehabilitation projects
- Contributed 21,649.25 volunteer hours
- Attracted \$229,714,570 in private investment



ACCREDITED MAIN STREETS

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

AFFILIATE MAIN STREET ORGANIZATIONS

- Seaford Main Street
- Milton Main Street
- Georgetown Main Street
- Harrington Main Street
- Brandywine Village
- Middletown Main Street
- Newark Partnership
- Cornerstone Westend CDC
- Delaware City Main Street
- Smyrna Main Street



SPECIAL PROJECTS:

Our Special Projects Director serves on the Board of the National Association of Foreign-Trade Zones and serves as the Grantee Administrator for Delaware's Foreign-Trade Zone #99. The Foreign-Trade Zone program is a niche Federal program designed to level the playing field for US businesses that are competing with global competitors by allowing them to defer, and sometimes reduce or eliminate, tariffs on imported goods and materials. The State of Delaware was the 99th Foreign-Trade Zone to be approved and activated under the US Department of Commerce and US Customs and Border Protection. (Reference to the program may be found in Title 6 of Delaware Code, <https://delcode.delaware.gov/title6/c075/index.html>)

Delaware currently has six (6) businesses operating under US Customs & Border Protection and US Foreign-Trade Zones Board oversight as active Foreign-Trade Zones including Port of Wilmington, AstraZeneca, Delaware City Refinery, Bloom Energy, Citrosuco, and Delaware Freeport. Operating as a Foreign-Trade Zone does not eliminate any other federal, state, or local requirements related to importing or exporting. Businesses that operate as Foreign-Trade Zones must adhere to additional requirements to maintain the trusted partner relationship that allows them to participate in the deferral and potential reduction or elimination of tariffs.



FINANCIAL *Programs*

BUSINESS

Finance Unit

The Division's Business Finance Unit is responsible for managing millions of dollars in State funding that is provided not only through the Division's operating budget, but also funds that are authorized for disbursement in the Division's role serving as the Delaware Economic Development Authority (DEDA).

In FY '24, the Business Finance Unit implemented the State Small Business Credit Initiative, which is described in subsequent pages, getting money out the door and into the hands of small business owners. This \$60.9 million dollar award over a 10-year period requires significant involvement on their part.

In all, the Business Finance Unit responsible for managing over \$200 million dollars in programmatic funding.

EDGE

Grants

The Encouraging Development, Growth and Expansion (EDGE) Grant competition 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 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.

Two rounds are held each fiscal year. Five science/tech-based businesses are each eligible for up to \$100,000 per round. All other businesses (Entrepreneur Class - also five per round) can receive as much as \$50,000 each.

Governor Carney and the Division of Small Business launched the program in late FY’19. Since EDGE launched, more than \$6.51 million has been awarded to 100 Delaware small businesses in industries ranging from wearable technology to agribusiness to craft brewing.

In FY '24, the Division awarded \$1,449,295.00 in EDGE funding to small businesses.

Applications are reviewed through several rounds of screening until a pool of finalists are selected for the pitch round of the competition. The pool of up to 16 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 scoring companies in each category are awarded grant funding.

The Fall 2023 event was held at Delaware Dynamics in Harberson and the Spring 2024 event was held at the Kent County Administration Building in Dover.

DSB is proud of the diversity of businesses and business owners supported by the EDGE program. Of the 20 EDGE awardees in FY ’24, six of the businesses were women-owned, three were minority-owned, four businesses fell into both the woman and minority owned category, one was veteran owned, and one was both woman and veteran-owned.

NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS PER EDGE ROUND

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	FALL '23 ROUND 8	SPRING '24 ROUND 9	TOTALS
STEM	46	36	77	26	30	26	28	32	23	324
ENTREPRENEUR	92	63	205	84	86	98	101	83	97	909
TOTAL	138	99	282	110	116	124	129	115	120	1233

FINANCIAL PROGRAMS | EDGE GRANTS

A DEEPER DIVE INTO EDGE GRANT AWARDEES

**Please note that some awardees may fall into more than one category. Where totals do not equal 10, that means that one or more awardees did not select any of these categories on their application*

	SPRING 2019	FALL 2019	SPRING 2021	FALL 2021	SPRING 2022	FALL 2022	SPRING 2023	FALL 2023	SPRING 2024	TOTALS
Awards per round	10	10	15	15	10	10	10	10	10	80
*Woman owned:	6	1	4	7	6	7	4	4	5	35
*Minority owned:	2	3	4	9	2	2	6	2	3	28
*Veteran owned:	1	0	1	0	2	3	0	1	1	7
New Castle County:	7	8	11	10	6	6	7	6	6	67
Kent County:	2	1	1	3	2	4	3	2	2	20
Sussex County:	1	1	3	2	2	0	0	2	2	13
Amount awarded per round:	\$748,000	\$710,526	\$724,033	\$721,225	\$695,948	\$717,741	\$739,987	\$701,170	\$748,125	\$6,506,754



FALL 2023 EDGE AWARDEES



SPRING 2024 EDGE AWARDEES

Fall 2023 Grantees

S.T.E.M.

MARIN'S MED (GEORGETOWN)

Marin's Med is a pioneering prosthetics innovations company, distinguished by their woman-owned status and their Chief Technical Officer (CTO), an amputee and accomplished engineer. Marins Med's goal for EDGE funding was to move through the final stages of research and development prototyping through final design and manufacturing to ensure the innovative ProHensor reaches those with limb loss. The company was awarded funding to purchase manufacturing equipment and for marketing assistance.



OMNI POTENTIAL ENERGY PARTNERS (WILMINGTON)

OmniPotential Energy Partners will use funding to build a proof-of-concept pilot program of curbside residential electric vehicle (EV) chargers and install them on Delaware properties. The company was awarded funding to finalize their supply chain, identify final business partners, solicit seed customers and tool-up to build and deploy a pilot program of approximately 10 Curbstar devices in the state of Delaware over 12 months. Curbside, residential EV chargers are a potential solution to EV owners who live in multi-family units with street or lot parking only.

RUN DNA (WILMINGTON)

ACE Running LLC (doing business as, "RunDNA") brings running gait analysis to all levels of runner. Their service leverages innovative camera and software technologies at a competitive price point to provide real time analysis of running gait. This powerful tool is used by running professionals throughout the world to effectively modify a runner's form to prevent injury and optimize performance. RunDNA's flagship product is their Helix 3D running gait analysis device. RunDNA was awarded funding to allow them to expand their motion capture capabilities to a walking gait. Specifically, funding was approved to purchase equipment, software licenses, and cover research and staff development costs



SINDRI MATERIALS CORP. (WILMINGTON)

Sindri Materials is a manufacturer and product development company dedicated to delivering ultra-high quality (UHQ) graphene (carbon) materials and products to market. Sindri can produce graphene that is a completely continuous, large-area sheet that yields electrical performance. EDGE grant funding was awarded for Sindri to develop a high-capacity graphene manufacturing system. Its product can accelerate drug and vaccine development by optimizing the speed and resolution structural biologists image macromolecules using a ground-breaking new method called cryogenic electron microscopy (the "cryo-em" market). The graphene grids essentially hold the macromolecules in place for imaging.

STUDIO CHARTER (WILMINGTON)

Studio Charter has begun making virtual studios that eliminate the need for costly video productions. These studios can be installed in any 10x15 or larger room at a customer's home or office. They are permanent studio installations with true cinema cameras that can be run remotely, without a crew, for simple, repeatable genres like podcasts and testimonials. The studios allow recording of cinematic medium-closeups in any location, real or imagined. The goal of Studio Charter is to make video production accessible to anyone. Nonprofits, schools, and government agencies will all finally be able to produce video at a high level and volume. The company was awarded funding for staff, design, prototyping and materials costs.



ENTREPRENEUR



**BAYBIRD
ORTHODONTICS
(SMYRNA)**

Baybird Orthodontics is a minority women-owned business located in Smyrna run by Dr. Sita Patel. The clinic offers a range of orthodontic treatments, including orthodontic appliances, traditional braces, and clear

aligners. However, the one service they currently do not provide is 3D printed aligners in house. The EDGE grant funding was awarded for them to purchase a 3D printing systems so they can produce clear aligners onsite, as well as supplies, marketing and advertising.

DELAWARE DYNAMIX (HARBESON)

Delaware Dynamix LLC, provides gymnastics instruction and associated activities for children up to age 17, as well as similar opportunities for adults. A market analysis determined a lack of services like theirs within a convenient drive to the Milton, Lewes, and Rehoboth Beach area, thereby supporting the need for such a facility.

The owners boast more than 30 years of experience in gymnastics and youth sports instruction. They have used the EDGE grant funds for equipment and staffing at their 7000 square foot facility for a Little Ninja program aimed at young boys, and gymnastics and trampoline programming for special needs children.



FUTURES FIRST GAMING (WILMINGTON)

Futures First Gaming LLC (FFG), is a STEM.org™ Accredited Educational Technology, Media, and Esports Entertainment Company. FFG brings together gamers and esports enthusiasts to compete, build community, and engage in educational opportunities to explore career pathways in STEM and relevant esports disciplines. The company is known for its accreditation in educational technology, media, and esports entertainment. EDGE Grant funding has been used to acquire cutting-edge gaming and streaming computers, software, and furniture for their esports technology workforce training facility. Funding is also being used to organize more workforce development trainings, esports events, and esports camps.



**THE HIVE ON
LOOKERMAN (DOVER)**

The Hive is a minority-owned member-based business and event center that aims to support entrepreneurs and non-profit founders by providing them with the space, equipment, and resources necessary for their business growth and long-term success. The Hive primarily offers hourly



space rentals and a range of business-building services, including corporate event planning, marketing, basic brand

development, document printing, and secure shredding. EDGE grant funding has been used for facade improvements and construction to meet code requirements and for design, technology, and equipment upgrades to better serve customers.

**THE LEGRAND COMPANY
(HOCKESSIN)**

Bed Ledge is an adaptive mobility product designed to assist individuals with decreased strength, coordination, or balance, to safely lift their legs into bed. The inability to safely navigate in and out of bed leads to increased risk for injury and falls and can be the determinate as to whether someone can safely live in his/her home without assistance. Bed Ledge is the first leave-in-place device that allows the user to move from a sitting position to reclining through incremental movements, thereby decreasing risk of injury and promoting independence. EDGE funding was awarded to fund the creation of plastic injection molds and a first production run of 500 units, packaging, and third-party product testing.



Spring 2024 Grantees

S.T.E.M.



ANVIGEN (NEWARK)

Anvigen LLC, is a materials science start-up, founded in 2023. The company has developed a sustainable solution to efficiently degrade and dispose of corn stalks on farms. It developed a novel water-based spray that contains corn stalk degrading bacteria stored inside biodegradable microcapsules. When the microcapsules are sprayed on the corn stalk, the bacteria are slowly released and the stalks degraded, thereby not only returning the useful nutrients contained in corn stalk back into the soil, but also converting the corn stalk into organic matter supporting soil health for the next crop cycle. The technology eliminates the need for the current disposal method which is burning, preventing millions of tons of CO2 from being released into the atmosphere. EDGE grant funding was awarded to purchase equipment to manufacture the product on a larger scale.



CELLERGY PHARMA (WILMINGTON).

Cellergy Pharma is an early-stage Delaware biotechnology company dedicated to developing cures for severe allergic diseases and cancer. They are the first company to develop Chimeric Antigen Receptor engineered T cells (CAR T cells), or white blood cells, to treat severe allergic diseases. The company is also developing a novel CAR T cell product to treat Acute Myeloid Leukemia. The EDGE Grant funding is being used to equip a functional cell therapy development lab, enabling the company to accelerate its research and development efforts.



MAKE THE PLAY (WILMINGTON)

Make the Play is a mobile app designed to enhance and expand youth engagement with baseball, by making the complex game easier for youth to learn via a user-friendly, gamified experience. The goal is to simplify the learning process and enhance the youth baseball experience for children, coaches, and families. The EDGE grant funding was awarded to take this project which is already in development into three critical phases: a sales & marketing launch strategy, expansion of the app for advanced players, and adaptations to apply its use to the game of softball.



NESTER (WILMINGTON)

NESTER is the first tool to help homebuyers and homeowners predict and plan for the cost of future home repairs and maintenance. For a homebuyer, they can calculate that into their budget projections so they can buy a house they can afford long term. It's like CarFax, but for houses. The existing platform is built for an individual homeowner to understand the future expenses for their home but is not currently set up, either for an individual or a company, to enter data for multiple homes or to aggregate the data to forecast maintenance. EDGE grant funding was awarded to build an Enterprise Platform that will allow a user to do that. Having access to this platform will impact many public and private entities including: large single family rental operators, government housing (Housing Authorities), small investors with multiple properties, and real estate brokerages.



TOIVOA (NEWARK)

Toivoa, Inc.'s mission is to fill the gap in mental health care for persons with disabilities. EDGE grant funding was awarded for Toivoa to bring Rauha, a doctor-prescribed, digital cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) therapy plus mental health coaching solution designed to treat depression and/or anxiety, to market. Rauha is tailored to meet the specific needs of the disabled community by matching patients with certified mental health coaches who have similar lived experiences. This innovative care model is making delivery of mental healthcare scalable and accessible without restricting patient access due to location, mobility challenges, language differences (e.g., American Sign Language); all issues for people living with disabilities

ENTREPRENEUR



3&D SPORTS PERFORMANCE (WILMINGTON)

3&D Sports Performance is a Sports Performance Facility. 3&D are using EDGE funding to secure a second location, equipment purchases to outfit the location, and specialized courses/certifications so coaches can implement their injury prevention programming. The new equipment purchases will consist of turf, special rubber flooring that protects athletes' joints, force plates for data analysis and new stretching devices.



BEACHIN' BASH (REHOBOTH BEACH)

Beachin' Bash is an event management company specializing in unique events from luxury beach picnics and beach bonfires to bachelorette/ bachelor parties, corporate gatherings, large festivals, and in-house catering. Beachin' Bash has used EDGE funding to purchase an updated cargo van. The acquisition of a gently used, high-top van will enhance their operational capabilities, allowing for more efficient and reliable transport of equipment and supplies, thereby supporting their expansion and ability to manage multiple events simultaneously.



COASTAL KEY LIME PIE (SEAFORD)

Coastal Key Lime Pie is a family owned and operated small business in Sussex County. Husband-and-wife team Jessica and Lee Williamson officially launched the business in February 2023 in the Sussex County Incubator Kitchen, finally settling into their dedicated commercial kitchen in Seaford in January 2024. They sell their custom key lime pies at local farmers markets, pop-up events, and two retail partners in Lewes and Rehoboth Beach. The EDGE funding was awarded to buy a refrigerated vehicle to ensure large orders of key lime pies maintain their proper temperature during transportation, a pie crumb former to increase the daily production of pies, and advertising.



WILLOW COUNSELING SERVICES (DOVER)

Willow Counseling Services, has established itself as a reliable provider of mental health support, with a particular focus on the perinatal period. Recognizing the lack of essential support for mental health during motherhood, Willow Counseling's owner made it her mission to create a safe space where women could find solace and the support they need. With the growing demand for their services, Willow Counseling aims to open a second office location in Middletown, expanding the reach of their community care and creating job opportunities for therapists and interns. EDGE grant funding was awarded for construction of the second office space, office furniture, medically compliant office supplies and equipment, and marketing.

G & R CAMPGROUND (HOUSTON)

G&R Campground, is the oldest black-owned campground and RV park in the United States. The owners have self-funded the campground since its acquisition, making significant improvements to attract a younger demographic of campers and expand their business. G&R is using the EDGE grant funding to renovate the activity hall, aligning with its mission to enhance visitor experiences and promote eco-conscious celebrations that support local businesses. The renovation includes infrastructure improvements, structural repairs and upgrades, flooring and lighting enhancements, accessibility features, eco-friendly design, energy-efficient lighting, waste reduction initiatives, outdoor landscaping, and technology upgrades including Wi-Fi.



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, who serves as chair of the Delaware Economic Development Authority (DEDA) about proposed projects to promote economic development in the state..

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. The Division's Business Finance Unit is tasked with reviewing prospective projects prior to a CDF hearing, to analyze financials and determine whether the goals and outcomes of the projects align with the purposes set forth in Delaware law, including whether they contribute to the state's prosperity or general welfare. These projects range from companies wanting to establish new facilities in the state, to existing businesses looking to expand, to 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.

" Serving as Chair of the Council on Development Finance for the past 7 years, I have been privileged to work closely with the State's Division of Small Business (DSB) team and the other 8 members of the Council to recommend approval of awarding Strategic Fund dollars to attract new businesses to, and support the expansion of businesses already located in, Delaware. The result has been more dollars invested, and significant increases in new employment opportunities. I'm honored to play a small role in this process."

Fred Sears



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 is typically based on the projected number of employees and amount of capital investment.

The Division's Business Finance Unit manages the State's Strategic Fund. All Strategic Fund requests must go before the Council on Development Finance for approval. Before hearings, the Business Finance Unit reviews the applications, including financials, to ensure all required documents have been provided and the proposals are fiscally sound. After the hearing, the Business Finance Unit staff disperse the awarded funding and monitor compliance with the terms of the award.

The Strategic Fund provides grants toward qualifying projects in the following categories: capital expenditure, job performance, job retention, and job training. In FY '24, a new program was added to the Strategic Fund offerings: the Modernization Investment Support Initiative (MISI). MISI grants are available to support Delaware companies who are at-risk of having their facilities closed due to outdated production equipment or similar concerns.

The Strategic Fund also supports the Delaware Technical Innovation Program, the Brownfield Assistance Program, and the Delaware Rural

Irrigation Program, which is being updated, expanded and renamed for FY 25.

In FY '24 the Division was responsible for the distribution and monitoring of \$32,625,327 in Strategic and associated state funding approved through the Council on Development Finance.

Since the beginning of FY '24, every one million Strategic Fund dollars spent on grants is matched by more than \$20 million in private funding. The projects are contributing more than \$602 million to Delaware's GDP.

Descriptions of FY '24 projects are on the following pages. No loan requests were presented to CDF in this fiscal year. Descriptions of additional programs mentioned in this section, follow the Strategic Fund award description.

Strategic Fund Grants

AGILE COLD CLAYMONT LLC

The cold storage solutions provider was approved for a Delaware Strategic Fund capital expenditure grant of up to \$4,050,000, and a performance grant of up to \$510,500 for the creation of 130 jobs in Claymont, DE.



ACCREDO HEALTH GROUP

The specialty pharmacy company was approved for a Delaware Strategic Fund capital expenditure grant of up to \$2,677,860, a retention grant of up to \$540,000 for the retention of 87 full-time Delaware positions, a training grant of up to \$250,000, and a performance grant of up to \$1,150,000 for the creation of up to 132 new full-time Delaware jobs.



DCP Tour & DCP Ribbon – 2024 ribbon-cutting and tour of Delmarva Corrugated, which had been approved for Delaware Strategic Fund monies in 2020

COMPACT MEMBRANE SYSTEM, INC.

The high-growth, advanced membrane solutions company was approved for a Delaware Strategic Fund performance grant of up to \$115,000 to support the creation of 38 full-time Delaware positions.

ETAIFLOW LLC

The supply chain management company, focusing on the distribution of electronic goods, which was a recent spin off company from PC Online365, was approved for a Delaware Strategic Fund performance grant of up to \$155,970 to support the creation of 45 full-time Delaware positions.

HIGH-TECH MACHINE COMPANY, INC.

The precision CNC and wire EDM machine company was offered a facility Modernization Investment Support Initiative (MISI) grant of \$219,525 from the Delaware Strategic Fund to modernize their existing equipment to remain competitive within the industries they serve.

FFI IONIX, INC.

The developer of advanced exchange membranes for electrolysis systems was awarded a Delaware Strategic Fund retention grant of \$42,500 for the retention of 22 full-time Delaware positions, as well as a performance grant of up to \$70,400 for the creation of up to 25 new full-time Delaware positions.

RIKARBON, INC.

The early-stage company specializing in innovative technologies for carbon capture and utilization was awarded a Delaware Strategic Fund performance grant of up to \$26,000 for the creation of up to 12 new full-time Delaware positions.

INCYTE CORPORATION

The global biopharmaceutical company that specializes in discovering, developing, and commercializing proprietary therapeutics was awarded a Delaware Strategic Fund capital expenditure grant of up to \$5,670,000 and a performance grant of up to \$9,117,075 for the creation of up to 866 new full-time Delaware positions.

PHASE SENSITIVE INNOVATIONS, INC.

The company specializing in RF photonic devices, components, and systems, was awarded a Delaware Strategic Fund performance grant of up to \$139,800 for the creation of up to 54 new full-time Delaware positions.



Incyte representatives with DPP, DSB and City of Wilmington officials following 2024 CDF meeting where company was approved for Delaware Strategic Fund monies

FINANCIAL PROGRAMS | DELAWARE STRATEGIC FUND

COMPANY	COUNTY	TYPE OF GRANT	TOTAL AMOUNT AWARDED	# OF JOBS RETAINED	# OF JOBS CREATED	TOTAL # OF JOBS
Agile Cold Claymont LLC	New Castle	SF Grant	\$4,560,500.00	0	130	130
EtailFlow LLC	New Castle	SF Grant	\$155,970.00	0	45	45
Accredo Health Group	New Castle	SF Grant	\$4,617,860.00	87	132	219
Compact Membrane System, Inc.	New Castle	SF Grant	\$115,000.00	18	38	56
High-Tech Machine Company, Inc.	New Castle	MISI	\$219,525.00	16		16
FFI Ionix, Inc.	Kent	SF Grant	\$112,900.00	22	25	47
RiKarbon, Inc.	New Castle	SF Grant	\$26,000.00	6	12	18
Phase Sensitive Innovations, Inc.	New Castle	SF Grant	\$139,800.00	63	54	117
Incyte Corporation	New Castle	SF Grant	\$14,787,075.00	1,072	866	1,938
Total			\$24,734,630.00	1,284	1,302	2,586

Laboratory Space Development Fund

In FY '24, an appropriation of \$5 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 is reviewed and approved by the Council on Development Finance.

Companies that received funds from the Laboratory Space Development Fund in FY '24:

- Compact Membrane Systems, Inc. awarded \$760,480.00
- RiKarbon, Inc. awarded \$109,167.00
- FFI Ionix, Inc. awarded \$1,604,960.00
- Phase Sensitive Innovations, Inc. awarded \$566,090.00



Lab Grant (and other grant) recipient Phase Sensitive Innovations following 2024 CDF meeting: DPP's Erica Crell, Dr. Dennis Prather of PSI, DPP's Noah Olson and Dr. Ahmed Sharkway of PSI

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. Council on Development Finance reviews all applications for their impact on Delaware’s economy.

Acts Retirement-Life Communities, Inc.

The retirement community was approved for a bond to be issued by DEDA in the amount not to exceed \$106,000,000. The proceeds of the bond will be used to refund or refinance all or a portion of existing debt, and improve existing communities owned and operated by ACTS in the State of Delaware.

Wilmington Friends School Inc.

The school was approved for a bond to be issued by DEDA in an amount not to exceed \$15,000,000. The proceeds of the bond will be used finance the renovation and improvement of its educational facilities in Wilmington, DE.

Young Men's Christian Association of Delaware

The YMCA of Delaware was approved for a bond to be issued by DEDA in an amount not to exceed \$18,000,000. The proceeds of the revenue bonds will be used to: (i) refinance the balance of the Series 2007 variable rate bonds; (ii) fund capital expenditures at various YMCA of Delaware branches; and (iii) fund the cost of issuance.

Exceptional Care for Children Inc.

Exceptional Care for Children Inc was approved for a bond to be issued by DEDA in an amount not to exceed \$16,800,00. The proceeds of the bonds will be used to finance the construction of 22 additional beds to help better serve its teenage population and provide transitional services as they become young adults. The new construction is a 3 story plus basement, 38,556 square foot addition to the campus.

COMPANY	COUNTY	TOTAL BOND ISSUANCE AMOUNT
Acts Retirement-Life Communities, Inc.	Sussex	\$106,000,000.00
Wilmington Friends School Inc.	New Castle	\$15,000,000.00
Young Men's Christian Association of Delaware	New Castle	\$18,000,000.00
Exceptional Care for Children Inc.	New Castle	\$45,000,000.00
TOTAL		\$155,800,000.00

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 '24.

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.

No DRIP projects were approved during FY '24. This program is currently being reworked for FY '25.

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 '24, an appropriation of \$10 million was budgeted to the Department of State for the Site Readiness Fund. In FY '24, 5 Site Readiness Fund applications totaling \$4,700,000 were approved for funding.

COMPANY	COUNTY	AMOUNT
FDPN Management, LLC	Sussex	\$1,000,000.00
Pugs 2 LLC	Sussex	\$1,000,000.00
Industrial Partners V Heald, LLC	New Castle	\$1,000,000.00
MCI Bayside Drive	Kent	\$1,000,000.00
CMT, INC	Kent	\$700,000.00
TOTAL		\$4,700,000.00



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 that focuses on 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 \$306,872) and Phase II (up to \$2,045,816). 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).



THREE COMPANIES RECEIVED A DTIP GRANT IN FY '24:

- **BallyDel Technologies Inc.** in Wilmington focuses on providing material and technology for space exploration, defense, public health and society. - **Awarded \$50,000**
- **Moonprint Solutions, LLC** in Dover is an engineering company that uses soft goods to create inflatable or flexible products to solve challenging problems. - **Awarded \$50,000**
- **Oakgrove Bio LLC** in Newark is developing a new biological production technology for small proteins (also known as peptides) that will significantly decrease their cost of manufacturing. - **Awarded \$50,000**

From FY '15 - FY '24 there have been 35 DTIP awards made to Delaware entities.

FEDERAL AWARDS FY '15 - FY '24	DE AWARDS	TOTAL AWARDED	AVERAGE AWARD
Phase I Grants	245	\$40,421,154.00	\$164,984.30
Phase II Grants	126	\$151,872,579.00	\$1,205,337.93
TOTAL	371	\$192,293,733.00	\$1,370,322.23

STATE DTIP AWARDS FY '15 - FY '24

AWARDS	ENTITIES	TOTAL AWARDED	AVERAGE AWARD PER ENTITY
35	20	\$1,740,000.00	\$87,000.00

State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI)

The Division of Small Business (DSB) is administering the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI), a federal program from the U.S. Treasury Department, aimed at helping small and diverse businesses access capital.

Delaware was awarded \$60.9 million to be used to support four programs over 10 years. Delaware received the first tranche of funding totaling \$19,577,177 in FY '24. The four programs supported with SSBCI funding are and will be explained on the following pages.

- Delaware Capital Access Program (DCAP)
- Delaware Loan Participation Program (DELPP)
- Accelerator and Seed Capital Program (DASCP)
- Early-Stage Venture Capital Program (DESVC)



DELAWARE
SSBCI
STATE SMALL BUSINESS CREDIT INITIATIVE





DCAP

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 '24 there were 7 DCAP projects approved (see chart), and every dollar spent through DCAP generated \$7.8 in private funding.

APPLICANT	AMOUNT	COUNTY
The Mill Wilmington, LLC	\$30,000.00	New Castle
NERDIT Now, LLC	\$30,000.00	New Castle
The Rooted Mane LLC	\$28,000.00	New Castle
UrbanPromise Wilmington	\$30,000.00	New Castle
West Side Laundry LLC	\$32,000.00	New Castle
Manna Christian Fellowship Church Inc.	\$30,000.00	New Castle
Taste 302 LLC	\$59,000.00	New Castle
TOTAL	\$239,000.00	

DELPP

DE LOAN PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

The Delaware Loan Participation Program is designed to give lenders a tool to provide loans to businesses that might not otherwise qualify for a traditional bank loan. The DELPP promotes entrepreneurship and help stimulate and sustain small business growth in Delaware. No DELPP projects were approved in FY '24, as division leadership was working on building partnerships in the banking community.

DASCP

DE ACCELERATOR & SEED CAPITAL PROGRAM

The Delaware Accelerator and Seed Capital Program is designed to provide very early-stage, or idea-stage Delaware start-ups with access to matching capital in a fundraising round. The DASCP will support high-growth startups and innovation in Delaware. No DASCP projects were approved in FY '24, as division leadership was working on building partnerships in the banking community.

DESVC

DE EARLY STAGE VENTURE CAPITAL

The Delaware Early-Stage Venture Capital Program is designed to strengthen Delaware's ability to provide venture capital to high-impact startup companies that have an outsized economic impact on the state. The Division of Small Business will contract with a private, non-profit, or experienced fund manager, that will provide seed and early-stage venture capital to Delaware-based companies. No DESVC projects were approved in FY '24, as division leadership was working on building partnerships in the banking community.

Workforce Development

The Division of Small Business provides Workforce Development Grants (also known as Blue Collar Training Program 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 '24 Contracts

1 COMPANY WAS A SMALL BUSINESS

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

- \$12,665.52 was awarded to that business with a match of \$12,665.52
- 21 participants are to receive training

OVERALL

- 2 new contracts were awarded totaling \$40,165.52
- 56 participants will receive training

COUNTY BREAKDOWN

- New Castle County – 1
- Kent County – 0
- Sussex County – 1

Completed FY '24 Contracts

STATISTICS ON CONTRACTS COMPLETED IN FY 24:

- 2 contracts were completed totaling \$59,250.03
- 50 participants were trained
- 1 company was a first-time applicant
- 1 company was a small business

COUNTY BREAKDOWN

- New Castle County 1
- Kent County 0
- 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	61%	Yes	4%	White	55%
Female	31%	No	86%	African American	22%
No Response	8%	No Response	10%	Hispanic	12%
				Asian/Pacific Islander	2%
				American Indian	0%
				No Response	9%
AGE		DISABILITY		EDUCATION LEVEL	
16-20	2%	Yes	0%	Did Not Complete High School	0%
21-30	22%	No	94%	High School or Equivalent	35%
31-55	47%	No Response	6%	Post-High School/Training Program	14%
56-65+	22%			Some College	19%
No Response	7%			2-Year College Degree	6%
				4-Year College Degree	12%
				Additional Degrees	6%
				No Response	8%

Program Participant Profile Continued

RESIDENCE		LIMITED ENGLISH		RECIPIENT OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE	
DE	92%	Yes	16%	Yes	0%
MD	0%	No	75%	No	0%
PA	0%	No Response	9%	No Response	100%
NJ	0%				
Other	0%				

MARITAL STATUS		EMPLOYMENT STATUS 90 DAYS PRIOR	
Married	42%	Unemployed	2%
Single	42%	Employed Part Time	0%
Single Parent	5%	Employed by This Employer	86%
Other	1%	Employed by Other Employer	2%
No Response	10%	No Response	10%

State Employee Training Program

The Department of Human Resources receives \$100,000 annually from the Workforce Development Fund for the State Employee Training Program. Below is a breakdown of the courses that were awarded in FY24.

COURSE NAME	COST
Rapid Learning	\$10,432.80
Put it in Writing (International Writing Institute)	\$1,802.57
Licenses for How was your Day (ATANA Media Partners)	\$ 4,732.00
HRD Press	\$2,030.63
Excel Basics	\$14,800.00
Excel Level II	\$ 6,000.00
The Reid Technique	\$ 10,149.00
Verbal De-escalation Training	\$2,039.00
Flatworks	\$350.00
Basic Welding	\$3,750.00
75 hrs. Physical Plant Maintenance Course- BASIC	\$10,500.00
60 hrs. Physical Plant Maintenance Course- Advanced	\$8,625.00
Excel Basics Plus	\$6,900.00
Drone Pilot Training	\$5,054.00
Communicating to Manage Risks & Misunderstandings	\$50.00
US Coast Guard Captain's License Training	\$4,400.00
Practical Advanced Spanish Communication	\$1,100.00
Medical Terminology Training	\$5,000.00
Vocabulary, Writing, and Grammar Training (Learning A-Z)	\$2,500.00
Variable Frequency Drives Hands on Training (HVAC)	\$121.00
TOTAL FY2024 BLUE COLLAR FUNDING	\$10,000.00
	\$99,604.00

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

RAPID LEARNING SESSION INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING COURSES:

- A 4-Point Model for Leading High-PA 4-Point Model for Leading High-Performance Teams (27)
- ADA Accommodation: Supervisors and the 'Interactive Process' (148)
- Change Management: How to Disarm Passive Resistance (8)
- Complaint Investigations: Compliance Training for Managers & Supervisors (32)
- Controlling Rumors: Filling the Vacuum (113)
- Empowerment and Accountability How Much Rope Should You Give Your People (6)
- Fact-Based Decision-Making: The Five Whys Technique (158)
- Handling Employee Complaints: What Every Manager Needs to Know (34)
- Handling Excruciatingly Difficult Conversations (124)
- High Stakes Problem Solving: How to Get Crystal-Clear Thinking When You Need It Most (125)
- How to Turn Around a Struggling Team (48)
- Inclusion & Diversity - Why Good Intentions Aren't Enough (457)
- Leadership Credibility Part 1: The Confidence Base (53)
- Managing Distractions: The "Got A Minute" Trap (166)
- Managing Team Conflict (61)
- Managing Workplace Stress: How To Stay Productive Under Pressure (78)
- Overcoming Confirmation Bias in Hiring (274)
- Performance Reviews: How to Deliver The Change Message (7)
- Six Managerial Styles You Need to Lead Effectively (58)
- The FACE Method: How to Ensure Crystal-Clear Communication (187)
- The Feedback Conversation (AFIRM) (3)
- Time Management: Why It's Not About Time (569)
- When Your People Resist Change: Turning Objections into Objectives (32)
- Working with Other Departments: How to Win Over "Porcupines" (40)

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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