

Congress of the United States
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Small Business
2561 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6515

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, House Committee on Small Business
FROM: Chairwoman Nydia Velázquez
DATE: September 14, 2021
RE: Full Committee Hearing: “National Small Business Week: Celebrating our Main Street Champions.”

The Committee on Small Business will meet for a remote hearing titled, “National Small Business Week: Celebrating our Main Street Champions.” **This hearing is scheduled to begin at 11:00 A.M. on Tuesday, September 14, 2021 via the Zoom platform.**

President Biden has designated September 13-17 as its National Small Business Week. To celebrate all of America’s entrepreneurs, the House Small Business Committee is saluting “Main Street Champions,” those leaders who have, over the past year-and-a-half, demonstrated determination, resilience, creativity, and charity in the face of historic, once-in-a-generation economic recession. Entrepreneurs from across the country will testify on their small business success stories. The Committee will examine the efficacy of COVID-19 relief programs in ensuring these small firms could weather the storm and come out stronger than ever, creating jobs and investing in their local communities.

Additionally, Rep. Nydia Velázquez and the Rep. Blaine Luetkemeyer, the Chairwoman and the Ranking Member of the Committee, along with 57 other Members of Congress, introduced H. Res. 634, expressing support for the designation of the week of September 13, 2021, through September 17, 2021, as "National Small Business Week" to celebrate the contributions of small businesses and entrepreneurs in every community in the United States.

The witnesses will include:

Panel One

- Mr. Tod Greenfield, Vice President, Greenfield Clothing, Brooklyn, NY
- Ms. Jan Haviland, Owner and President, Haviland Corp. Linn, MO
- Ms. Shelonda Stokes, President, Downtown Partnership of Baltimore, Baltimore, MD
- Ms. Natasha Hudson, Owner, Hudson’s on Mercer, Dripping Springs, TX
- Ms. Gena Felder, Chief Financial Officer, TJ Hale, Menomonee Falls, WI

Panel Two

- Mr. Eric Childs, Owner, Mind’s Eye Comics, Burnsville, MN

- Ms. Krystal Hernandez, Owner, La Plaza Fiesta, Madelia, MN
- Mr. Maurice Contreras, President, Volcanica Coffee Company, Suwanee, GA
- Mr. Mark J. Lunde, CEO, Lunde Auto Sales, Wadena, MN
- Mr. Barry Schlouch, President, Schlouch Incorporated, Blandon, PA

Panel Three

- Mr. Jaime Di Paulo, President and CEO, Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Chicago, IL
- Ms. Susan Shaw, Owner, Shaw Insurance Agency, Hurst, TX
- Mr. Donald Fox, President and Chief Executive Officer, Fox Theatres LLC, Wyomissing, PA
- Mr. Mitch Cook, Co-Owner, Avalon Bagels to Burgers, Yorba Linda, CA
- Mr. Greg Owens, Chief Executive Officer, Sherrill Manufacturing Inc., Sherrill, NY

Introduction

America's small businesses are a catalyst for creating employment opportunities, driving growth, and developing communities all across the country. Last year, COVID-19 ravaged the economy, particularly small firms, wiping out years of hard work and life savings for many business owners. In response, Congress and the Small Business Administration established pandemic relief programs to help small businesses stay open, keep their employees on payroll, and come out of the pandemic ahead. Today's hearing will allow members to hear directly from small businesses across the country. They will talk about their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of relief programs on their businesses. Below are biographies of the witnesses that will testify.

PANEL ONE

Mr. Tod Greenfield, Vice President, Greenfield Clothing, Brooklyn, NY

Martin Greenfield Clothiers is a Brooklyn manufacturer of hand tailored men's clothing. The company was founded in 1977 by Martin Greenfield when he bought the factory from his former employer. Survivor of the Holocaust and immigrant to America, he joined in 1947 as an entry-level floor boy, ultimately rising to Vice President of Production before buying the company. Now, Martin, along with his two sons Tod and Jay run the company as a trio of managers. Tod has worked around the clock during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure his company stays open, whether by adapting his business to make PPE or utilizing pandemic assistance programs from the SBA to ensure his workers received compensation.

Ms. Jan Haviland, Owner and President, Haviland Corp. Linn, MO

Since 1946, Haviland Corporation has improved the way industries clean. It began by manufacturing squeegees in a small facility in St. Louis. Ever since, the company has grown exponentially. This growth caused it to move several times, finally settling in Linn in 1974. It provides many customized products to diverse industries, including: janitorial; food service; food processing; equipment repair; paving; health care, and educational. Jan became principal owner of the family-owned company in 2014 and has operated it ever since.

Ms. Shelonda Stokes, President, Downtown Partnership of Baltimore, Baltimore, MD

Ms. Shelonda Stokes is no stranger to leadership and accomplishment. She is a problem solver with over 20 years of management, communication, and media experience in the entertainment, government, and commercial business areas. As President and CEO of greiBO, she is responsible for helping the company achieve double digit growth over the past five years and get recognized as one of the Top 100 Minority Businesses in the region. In 2010, she was recognized by the Daily Record as one of Maryland's Most Influential People. She has also been awarded "Top 40 under 40" by the Baltimore Business Journal and "CEO on the GO" by CEO Review for her outstanding accomplishments in the areas of business and community development and Associated Black Charities for philanthropy. In 2020, she was named as the fourth president and executive of the Downtown Management Authority, where she worked to outfit The Partnership's Operations Teams with PPE and the proper safety protocols so they could provide public safety, litter removal, homeless outreach and park maintenance services during the pandemic.

Ms. Natasha Hudson, Owner, Hudson's on Mercer, Dripping Springs, TX

Natasha is owner of Hudson's on Mercer, a state-of-the-art 2800 sq ft music venue in the historic district of Dripping Springs, TX, coupled with 12 sq ft of recording studio and music lesson space. It boasts a large outside patio area and yard stretching nearly an entire block. Natasha is talented singer/songwriter, and began her roots singing in Nashville Tennessee. She co-owns Hudson's on Mercer with her Husband, Chad, a singer/songwriter/producer/guitar player native to Dripping Springs. Before COVID-19 hit the U.S., Hudson's was poised to see its largest crowds ever to celebrate five years of business. In response, the Hudson's transitioned their businesses to allow for virtual concerts.

Ms. Gina Felder, CFO, TJ Hale, Menomonee Falls, WI

Gina has a long history of work at TJ Hale, joining the company as an account manager in 1999. The company has the mission of contributing to the wellbeing and stability of their employees, the growth and value of their clients, and to the health of their community. To do this, they strive to give back to the community through fundraising, donations, volunteering, and more. They have helped support organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Stars and Stripes Honor flight, the American Cancer Society, and many more.

PANEL TWO

Mr. Eric Childs, Owner, Mind's Eye Comics, Burnsville, MN

Since taking ownership of Mind's Eye Comics – his favorite comic bookstore for 20 years - three years ago, Eric Childs has made it his mission to promote literacy for children and encourage them to learn about black history through commit books. In his store, the stories of historic figures like Frederick Douglass, Nelson Mandela, and James Brown line the shelves alongside superheroes typically found in comic bookstores. Being the only black comic bookstore owner in the state of Minnesota, he is a self-described advocate for literacy. He has donated more than \$2,000 in comic books to youth and after-school literacy programs in 2019 and hopes to work more with his school district in the future.

Ms. Krystal Hernandez, Owner, La Plaza Fiesta, Madelia, MN

Ms. Hernandez has been the owner of La Plaza Fiesta for nearly 10 years since her purchase in 2012. The past decade has been filled with challenges. Alongside the COVID-19 pandemic, which shuttered restaurants all over the country during 2020, Krystal also had to rebuild her business after a fire ravaged seven businesses in Madelia in 2016. With the help of charitable donations, community outreach and involvement, Hernandez and her team were able to keep going while they rebuilt on Main Street. While the COVID-19 pandemic didn't reduce the restaurant to rubble, it was crippling financially and emotionally, but the strength they had gained from the fire helped her and her team through it. Now, they are a thriving business with over 30 employees and working once again to rebuild from the ashes.

Mr. Maurice Contreras, President, Volcanica Coffee Company, Suwanee, GA

Maurice started Volcanica Coffee after visiting his homeland in Costa Rica. While he was there, he saw an opportunity to import great tasting coffee from volcanic regions, such as in Costa Rica, to consumers. The company started part-time in his garage and now operates a coffee plant near Atlanta, Georgia with 20 employees that includes his wife and their two adult children. Previously, Maurice was a regional director for AT&T. Prior to joining AT&T, he was the national marketing director of TracFone Wireless when it was a startup helping it to grow to over \$1B in sales. He also held senior management positions with Verizon and Blockbuster Entertainment. He graduated from University of Florida with a B.S. degree in Business Administration and earned an MBA from Nova Southeastern University.

Mr. Mark J. Lunde, CEO, Lunde Auto Sales, Wadena, MN

Mr. Lunde has been the owner of Lunde auto sales in Wadena Minnesota since 2016. Originally from Wadena, he has built his business on helping people with bruised or no credit get used vehicles. With a background in finance, he touts his ability to help people get finance even if their credit isn't great.

Mr. Barry Schlouch, President, Schlouch Inc., Blandon, PA

Barry and His wife Deb founded Schlouch Inc. in 1983 in the basement of their home in Berks County, PA to do excavating and utilities. Their first job in 1983 was a \$15,000 assignment to prepare a site for a Wendy's restaurant in West Reading. Today, Schlouch has 275 employees and expanded services to survey, blasting, concrete, and paving. It is known as a leading total site preparation specialist in Eastern Pennsylvania. They pride themselves on delivering excellent services and often welcome repeat business from local and regional owners, developers, and contractors, representing over 60 percent of their business. In addition, they have built a reputation for handling construction management for many national firms.

PANEL THREE

Mr. Jaime Di Paulo, President and CEO, Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Chicago, IL

In his tenure as the President and CEO of the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Jaime has more than doubled its membership and secured a 2.5-million-dollar grant from the State to find a home for the IHCC to create the first Center for Hispanic Entrepreneurs. He has established four priorities as CEO, such as being a meeting point for the big Latino companies in Illinois,

multiplying the ways to train Hispanics with small businesses, ensuring that Hispanic companies can have all the information to access credit and government contracts, and bringing together minorities from Illinois to access better business opportunities. Throughout his career, he has helped open and grow hundreds of businesses in his community and grew the LVCC membership from 30 to 900 members. He previously served as the Business Development Director for the Greater Oklahoma City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and worked in Mexico as the Director of the Mexican and American Thinking Together Foundation.

Ms. Susan Shaw, Owner, Shaw Insurance Agency, Hurst, TX

Ms. Shaw believes that integrity is the most important key to her success. After spending several years in other ventures, Susan and her husband bought a small, family-owned insurance agency in 2000 that has been serving the community since 1981. Shaw Insurance Agency is built on a solid foundation of honest, trust, and hard work. She is a very active member of the community, serving on the Board of Stepping Stones in Keller, volunteering for 12 years at Community Enrichment Center in the food pantry, where she now serves on the board of directors. She was also selected as the 2018 Officer of the Year for the HEB Chamber of Commerce. A member holding several leadership positions in Metroplex Republican women since 2000, she remains active in the area supporting local officials.

Mr. Donald Fox, President & CEO, Fox Theatres LLC, Wyomissing, PA

Donald Fox is President and CEO of Fox Theatres, a movie theater company based in Wyomissing, a suburb of Reading, Pennsylvania. The company, founded in 1957 by his father, Richard Fox, now operates twenty screens in three theater locations, one in Wyomissing and two in Ocean City, Maryland. Don, with over forty years of industry and national trade association experience, is currently reviving the business after suffering devastating pandemic related losses over the last eighteen months. Federal relief programs, including SVOG, PPP, EIDL, and ERC have been key to its survival. Don resides with his wife in Wyomissing.

Mr. Mitch Cook, Co-Owner, Avalon Bagels to Burgers, Yorba Linda, CA

Mitch is a serial entrepreneur in the food industry. Since 1996, he has been self employed at family owned Taco Bell franchises and eventually at Avalon bagels to burgers. Avalon bagels to burgers is a fast casual restaurant founded 15 years ago. Before working in the restaurant industry, he worked as an engineer throughout California. He lives by his wife, with four kids and ten grandchildren spread out between Fullerton, CA, Chico, CA, and New York City.

Mr. Greg Owens, Chief Executive Officer, Sherrill Manufacturing Inc., Sherrill, NY

Along with co-founder, Matthew Roberts, Greg Owens has lead Sherrill Manufacturing, Inc. (SMI) and Liberty Tabletop through the ups-and-downs of a turbulent economy in the early 2000s, driving what is now a successful and rapidly growing company, as well as a brand that holds the estimable position of being the only flatware made in the United States. As CEO and Co-Founder of SMI, Owens was highly influential in the reinvention of SMI in 2008, when it became evident that the company's previous relationship with Oneida – SMI utilizing the Oneida Ltd. Manufacturing facilities – lacked the necessary structure and focus to build a successful, made-in-America brand. To help launch SMI into its new chapter and carve a viable niche with great growth

potential, Owens focused on creating the Liberty Tabletop flatware brand. In addition to his daily CEO responsibilities for SMI, today Owens is particularly hands on in the web-based development of the Liberty Tabletop brand, placing special emphasis on web-based promotions via social media and cost-per-click advertising. Through his direction, strategic planning and implementation oversight, the brand continues to grow at a fast pace, appealing especially to populations looking to support U.S. manufacturing as well as the jobs and quality assurance that come with it.