

## EDUCATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



**“The LaGuardia SBDC helped me to zero in on my business' strongest assets, learn how to best apply my skill-sets, see my market and grow my business faster.” Evelyn Rozier, Rozier Consulting Service**

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## LaGuardia SBDC Receives Export Appreciation Award

On May 21, 2007, the LaGuardia Community College Small Business Development Center (SBDC) was presented with the Export Appreciation Award by Congresswomen Nydia Velázquez at the World Trade Week Awards Breakfast at Baruch College. Created by the U.S. Commercial Service, the award recognized the LaGuardia SBDC's work to support international trade opportunities for small businesses.

The awards ceremony also inaugurated World Trade Week (WTW), which is a nationwide celebration of international trade observed by businesses and trade-related organizations across the U.S. May 21 -25<sup>th</sup>. This year's WTW activities focused particularly on small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) that have built their businesses by accessing global markets.

SMEs make a substantial contribution to the international marketplace. As noted during WTW, they make up over 90 percent of all New

York State exporters, and the value of the goods they sell abroad accounts for half of the state's merchandise exports - the third-highest percentage of any state in the nation.

The LaGuardia SBDC works to support New York's SMEs to compete in today's ever-evolving global marketplace. Through one-on-one counseling it helps businesses to understand and evaluate a range of factors that are critical to success in international trade, how to avoid common pitfalls, and where to find other valuable resources that support international traders. The SBDC provides presentations & seminars as well as collaborates with government, community and private sector representatives to share expert, timely and practical information on diverse issues that affect businesses operating domestically and internationally.

The SBDC has also worked to provide businesses with



*Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez presenting the Export Appreciation Award to Joyce Moy and Brian Gurski.*

direct commercial opportunities. In August 2006, it organized the LaGuardia Community College International Trade Fair & Symposium. This three-day event hosted an exposition with businesses and industries representing five different countries as well as coordinated almost 20 workshops and presentations, covering multiple aspects of international trade.

The LaGuardia SBDC is honored to receive this year's Export Appreciation Award and remains committed to providing quality services to support New York City's diverse small business community in starting up and growing in either the domestic or international marketplace.

### SPONSORS



## CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

### SomosPadres receives Hispanic Media Award



Lesley Gomez with Mexico's ex-president Vicente Fox at the Hispanic Media Award.

On May 24, 2007, in San Antonio Texas, Lesley Gomez-Varano, Editor-in-Chief of *SomosPadres/We Are Parents*, and LaGuardia SBDC client was awarded the Hispanic Media Award for 2007. The award recognizes excellence in journalism in Hispanic media in the United States.

*SomosPadres/We Are Parents* consists of a team made up of Gomez, Lesley Oviedo and Dina Alvarez. The three pooled their talents and resources in 2004 to create a publication for Latinos and new immigrants with the goal of focusing on topics that truly affect the community in New York. *SomosPadres/We Are Parents* is the only bilingual publication of its kind in New York City.

"This award, without doubt, recognizes all that we have believed in and hoped for as we created a bilingual publication that would help familiarize Latino parents in New York with regards to their children's education," says Gomez. "In the community, Latinos function with a very different and special dynamic, with concerns that are specific to social integration, assimilation and the role of Education," she adds.

The *SomosPadres* team first learned of the LaGuardia SBDC at a presentation with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Queens in Spring 2005 and followed up for a one-on-one counseling session with SBDC Business Advisor and Director of Business & Community Development, Joyce Moy.

According to Lesley Oviedo, "Although we were all well-versed in writing, editing, translating and graphically designing a publication, we soon realized that we needed help on the business side of *SomosPadres*. Passion can only drive you so far in the world of business."

"In a short period of time, the SBDC reviewed our business plan, gave us ideas for a marketing strategy, helped us structure the internal workings of our company, reviewed our media kit, helped us with ideas to position our

company for growth, and always respected our desire NOT to take out a loan until we felt that we were ready," said Oviedo.

The results have been staggering. "What was once a publication with 10,000 in circulation is now at 20,000 and has a website that averages 15,000 hits per month. Our advertising sales have increased with each year. In the next six months, we hope to be at 30,000 in circulation, and we plan to hire additional sales people. The icing on the cake is that we have won three awards for our publication in three years," she concluded.

More information about *SomosPadres/We Are Parents* can be found at:

[www.somos-padres.com](http://www.somos-padres.com).



Lesley Oviedo with Mexico's ex-president's wife Marta Sahagún de Fox at the Hispanic Media Award.

## NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Brian Gurski, Director, LaGuardia SBDC

Dear Small Business Community,

We are delighted to release our first issue of the LaGuardia SBDC Quarterly Newsletter to share our Center's achievements and initiatives as well as to provide timely and useful information that our business readers can put right to work.

It is clear that small businesses are the backbone of New York City's economy. Through their creativity, commitment and assumption of risks, they are providers of a huge diversity of products and services, and serve as a major creator of jobs, wealth and vitality in our communities; that is why they deserve the very best technical assistance in starting up, competing and expanding.

Through its one-on-one counseling services, seminars and events, the LaGuardia SBDC has helped well over 7,000 existing businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs in multiple languages and communities. This work is certainly not done alone. We are proud to collaborate with public and private sector partners including federal, state and city agencies, chambers of commerce, business incubators, local development corporations, banks, micro-lenders and more.

Therefore, consider this newsletter an invitation to get to know us, if you don't already, and to learn how we can help your business get to the next level and how we can work together to ensure the success of the small business community.

Sincerely,  
*Brian Gurski*

## ASK THE EXPERT

### Choosing a Legal Structure for your Business

When establishing a new business, choosing the correct legal organizational structure for your business is one of the most important decisions you will make. Your choice of a legal structure may affect your ability to obtain a loan, attract investors, the amount of taxes your business will be required to pay on business profits, and the amount of protection available to you if you are the subject of a lawsuit.

Sole-proprietorships, general partnerships, corporations and limited liability companies are the most common organizational structures for small businesses. While you are not required to obtain the assistance of a legal profes-

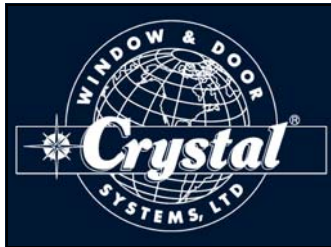
sional to prepare the documentation necessary to create your legal structure, the assistance and guidance of an experienced attorney and accountant could prove to be priceless.

When deciding which business legal structure to choose, you will have to balance many factors. The size of your business, your plans for future growth and your investment needs are some factors to consider. Other factors to consider involve the potential risks and liabilities involved with your business. Are you engaging in risky or dangerous activities that may result in a lawsuit against you because your clients suffered a monetary loss or physical injury? If so, determine which legal structure provides personal liability protection that will shield and protect your personal assets from creditors and lawsuits. What if you are starting a business



Hector Manuel Fernandez,  
Attorney at Law

with very little capital and do not have much to spend organizing your legal structure? You should then consider the rules, regulations and expenses involved with the formation and maintenance of your business's legal structure. Remember, there is no one legal organizational structure that will cover every potential issue for your business. You should choose the one that best fits your needs.



Crystal Window & Door Systems based in Flushing, New York is a minority-owned business with annual sales of \$62 million. It's one of the top 60 manufacturers in North America of replacement and new construction vinyl and aluminum window and door products and high-end fenestration systems. Steve Chen is Crystal's Executive Vice President. His fulfillment of this position marks the leadership transition from the founding generation, his father Thomas Chen, to the next generation.

**Many small businesses start up every day in New York, yet few are able to grow to Crystal's scale. What has made the difference for Crystal?**

*Crystal has worked hard to keep its bureaucracy down so we are flexible, able to move quickly and take advantage of opportunities. We are also fast to change direction if something isn't*

## BUSINESS LEADER INSIGHTS

*working out well. And we hire good, competent people with an entrepreneurial spirit.*

**Many business owners are concerned that growth means losing control of customer service and quality. How has Crystal Windows addressed these issues?**

*Crystal, like all growing companies, went through growing pains on this issue, and resolved them by getting back to basics. Employees, especially upper management, need to always listen to customers – find out and give them what they value. Keep communicating with your customers.*

**What priorities do you advise businesses address if they seek to grow?**

*Constantly invest back into the company – in products, in technology, in people and in business relationships. It really pays off.*

**As the world's economy evolves, what do you believe will be the greatest challenges faced by companies like Crystal Windows?**

*No matter what business, competition for qualified employees will be strong.*

*Also, as companies expand globally, customizing products for different markets will add complexity to operations. Finding reliable quality suppliers will also be a challenge as the pace of business escalates.*

**If you had only one piece of advice for businesses in New York City, what would it be?**

*Take advantage of all the available resources that New York City government and communities offer in terms of qualified employees, markets, training, business advice, assistance and support. The city has a great environment for business.*



Steve Chen, Executive Vice President  
Crystal & Door Systems

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CORNER

The LaGuardia Centers for Economic Development include the Center for Corporate Education, NY Designs Incubator, the SBDC, and WorkForce1 Career Center. This Newsletter issue features the Center for Corporate Education.



Since 1979, the Center for Corporate Education (CCE) has developed and delivered customized educational programs to corporations, government agencies and not-for-profit organizations. CCE faculty train over 2,000 participants annually in such areas as leadership, management and supervision, customer service, computer applications, industry specific ESL and a wide range of communication skills.

Programs are designed in partnership with customers, often after assessing the skill levels of staff and management, to increase staff productivity and improve interpersonal relationships among executives, entry-level employees and entrepreneurs alike.

The Center's staff and consultants are accomplished educators, government experts and business people. Their expertise, combined with the rich resources of LaGuardia Community College, result in timely and cost-effective programs that guarantee a significant

return on investment.

The Center for Corporate Education offers a flexible approach toward working with corporate partners. Learning strategies are aligned with each organization's objectives. Short- or long-term programs are designed to meet specific organizational needs. Courses are delivered either at LaGuardia Community College or at the company site, often at both. Training hours are scheduled conveniently either during the business day, after hours, or on weekends.

The Center for Corporate Education is committed to helping the staff of our partners work more effectively, communicate more confidently, work in a team environment, think creatively, operate with more technical proficiency, and become more customer focused.

LAGCC CENTERS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### CALENDAR OF LAGUARDIA SBDC EVENTS

July 10	6-8pm	Industrial Business Zone Workshop Series Increase Sales Revenue: Closing the Deal Made Easy
July 11	6-8pm	Commerce Bank - Pulling Ahead of the Pack: Marketing for Business Growth
July 11	6-8pm	Flushing Library - Capital: How & Where to Get it For your Business
July 25	5-9pm	Queens Business Networking & Information Expo
Aug. 7	6-8pm	Supporting a Winning Workforce: Employee Training Opportunities for Small Business
Sept. 25	6-8pm	Industrial Business Zone Workshop Series Intellectual Property Issues & Advantages for Industrial Businesses

For more information, please contact the SBDC at (718) 482-5303.

### Small Business Facts:

According to the SBA, 96% of U.S. exporters are small businesses.



Contact us for free professional and in depth one-on-one counseling for existing and start-up businesses in English, Spanish, Korean, and 3 dialects of Chinese.

All counseling sessions are **confidential by law.**

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### Small Business Quick Tips

Recommended e-newsletters for Small Businesses:

#### Internal Revenue Service

<http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/content/0,,id=154826,00.html>

#### Minority Business Development Agency

<http://www.mdba.gov/>

#### NYC Business Solutions Center

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/nycbiz/html/home/home.shtml>

#### NY Empire State Development

<http://www.nylovessmallbiz.com/home.asp>  
(Various publications available)

#### Small Business Administration

<http://web.sba.gov/list/>

#### U.S. Department of Commerce

[http://www.ita.doc.gov/press/publications/newsletters/ita\\_0407/index.asp](http://www.ita.doc.gov/press/publications/newsletters/ita_0407/index.asp)