Dear Andra,

Welcome to the 2017 First Quarter newsletter of the Hawai‘i Small Business Development Center, O‘ahu office. In this edition, read about our newest staff member, how you can participate in the HiSTEP 2017 export program, and Hawai‘i Venture Capital Association recognition for two of our clients.

I hope you enjoy this issue, and welcome your comments or questions. Like us on Facebook, recommend us on Yelp!, see our new YouTube channel, and connect with us on LinkedIn.

Joseph Burns
O‘ahu Center Director

Procurement Expert Erin Kanehira Joins the O‘ahu SBDC

Erin Kanehira recently joined the O‘ahu SBDC office as a Senior Business Advisor. Her focus is on positioning companies to take advantage of federal, state and local procurement opportunities. This month, she is presenting a workshop on state procurement - see the Calendar section below.

Erin has worked in government procurement for over five years. She has assisted many businesses to start doing business with the government and to achieve certification in federal set-aside programs. Erin graduated from the University of California, Berkeley with a BA and received an MA from Mills College in Oakland, CA. Welcome aboard!

Success Story: Honey Bee Cleaners

Shota Mkheidze contacted the O‘ahu SBDC in February of 2011, and started a cleaning business called Honey Bee Cleaners. His first contract was for $2,500 for cleaning and polishing the floors at Don Ho’s Island Grill at Aloha Tower. During this initial start up period, he had difficulty raising capital because his credit score was not adequate.

Through hard work and help from the SBDC, operations have expanded from only cleaning to servicing cleaning machines, rentals and repairs of cleaning machines, retailing cleaning supplies, and also becoming an authorized dealer for selling specific cleaning machines. Honey Bee Cleaners has an office and
warehouse at the prestigious One Waterfront Tower in Kaka'ako, Honolulu. Recently the SBDC worked with Shota to obtain a term loan from Central Pacific Bank to support his operational expansion, along with a line of credit. Some of his biggest clients to date are Chilli's restaurants, Walmart, California Pizza Kitchen, and Ben Franklin Craft stores. Currently the SBDC is working with Shota to help with his strategic planning, and most importantly his exit strategy as he moves from owner and manager, to leader and visionary. The business has grown to over $500,000 in sales for 2016 and is forecasted to reach $1 million in 2017.

**Sell to the World - HiSTEP 2017**

The world is open for business...your business! Today it’s easier than ever for companies, regardless of size, to sell goods and services across the globe. Hawai‘i is an internationally recognized brand that helps make our products and services attractive to buyers throughout the world.

Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), Hawai‘i’s State Trade Expansion Program, known as HiSTEP, is a multifaceted program designed to support Hawai‘i small businesses with their export development. The program is administered by DBEDT and partner organizations in Hawai‘i, such as the Hawai‘i Small Business Development Center (SBDC), the Hawai‘i Pacific Export Council, and the U.S. Export Assistance Center, among others.

SBA started STEP in FY 2011 as a three-year pilot program with a goal to increase the number of small businesses export, as well as increasing the value of those exports. SBA awards matching-funds STEP grants to states on a competitive basis.

Watch this video to learn more about the [HiSTEP 2017](#) program and how you can participate:

**HiSTEP Introduction**

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**Hawai‘i SBDC O‘ahu**

**Client Accolades**

The Hawai‘i Venture Capital Association 2016 Awards include two SBDC O‘ahu clients:

Iakika Sheehan - [Activiter](#)
Technology Entrepreneur of the Year

Robert Saito - [Herbavore](#)
Student Entrepreneur of the Year

Congratulations to Ikaika and Rob for their well-deserved recognition.

**Calendar - Sign Up Now**

- 02/23/17 State Procurement 101
- 02/23/16 Export University
- 02/28/17 Business Model Canvas
In the Media

How to Prepare for a Trade Show

Why Don’t Small Businesses Protect Their Intellectual Property?

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