



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO  
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OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS  
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**\*\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\*\***

## **SAN FRANCISCO SMALL BUSINESS WEEK KICKS OFF WITH EVENT TO CELEBRATE ENTREPRENEURS**

Week-long celebration to highlight and inspire San Francisco small businesses.

**San Francisco, CA**—This week, from May 14 through May 19, the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual San Francisco Small Business Week will celebrate small businesses and recognize their impact on the City, while also offering a series of educational and networking events designed to advance, educate and connect the San Francisco business community. The week kicked off with InspireSF at the newly renovated City View at Metreon, featuring a networking reception and inspirational panel discussion with the owners of Off the Grid, Bi-Rite Family of Businesses, Nomiku and Reem's.

The six-day event is the largest of its kind in the nation, and with more than 3,000 businesses participating each year. In addition, the week concludes with a Shop and Dine in the 49 sidewalk sale in 20 neighborhood merchant corridors throughout San Francisco.

“Our small businesses are job creators, valuable innovators and the foundation of San Francisco’s entrepreneurial spirit,” said Mayor Mark Farrell. “Their success builds upon our prosperity and contributes to the character of our beautiful city. Let’s celebrate small business this week and every week.”

There are 58,622 small businesses in San Francisco, together employing 348,669 people. The City’s small businesses create quality jobs at a variety of skill levels, serve as an engine of economic growth and keep our merchant corridors healthy and vibrant.

“Our small businesses bring charm and life to our neighborhoods. They are the reason why people want to live and visit here,” said Stephen Adams, President of the San Francisco Small Business Commission. “Challenges are mounting for our mom and pop businesses. That is why programs and services at the Office of Small Business like the Small Business Assistance Center and Legacy Business Program are so important to ensure our businesses will succeed.”

Under the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD), the Office of Small Business served 3,500 clients through one-on-one assistance in navigating permits and licenses, financing and regulatory requirements. The Legacy Business Program now has 132 businesses on the Legacy Business Registry who are deemed longstanding, community-serving businesses with cultural and historic significance to San Francisco. Over the past year, the Legacy Business Program delivered



\$625,000 in Business Assistance Grants to 132 Legacy Businesses and \$219,000 in Rent Stabilization Grants to 16 businesses that were able to significantly extend their lease terms. The Open in SF program also helped over 150 entrepreneurs open small brick-and-mortar and food-based businesses.

Aside from the Office of Small Business, OEWD's Invest in Neighborhoods initiative has invested over \$11 million in small businesses and neighborhoods over the past year through a variety of programs, including low interest access to capital, neighborhood improvement grants, facade and tenant improvements, Disaster Relief, Women Entrepreneurship Fund, ADA Assistance, and Construction Mitigation. At the same time, the San Francisco Small Business Development Center helped 415 businesses secure nearly \$10 million in capital. The San Francisco Business Portal also added features to enhance the website such as new online permits and additional starter kits.

"Small Business Week is a time to celebrate the accomplishments of our local small businesses and highlight the dedicated organizations that support them every day through financial assistance, workshops, counseling, mentorship and more," said Julie Clowes, Director of the U.S. Small Business Administration San Francisco District Office. "The SBA is pleased to co-host the Small Business Conference this year with over 40 workshops on a wide range of topics of interest to small business owners."

At the Small Business Week Awards held on Wednesday, May 16, Mayor Mark Farrell, the Small Business Administration and San Francisco Economic Development Alliance will recognize the eight small businesses for their commitment to the San Francisco community.

For more information and a full schedule of events, visit [www.sfsmallbusinessweek.com](http://www.sfsmallbusinessweek.com).

### **About San Francisco Small Business Week**

The 14th Annual San Francisco Small Business Week is a partnership formed to honor and support the more than 85,000 small businesses and entrepreneurs that call San Francisco home. It is presented by Bank of America and produced in partnership with the City and County of San Francisco, Golden Gate Business Association, Golden Gate Restaurant Association, Main Street Launch, MEDA, NAWBO, Office of the Mayor, Office of Small Business, Pacific Community Ventures, Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center, Small Business Commission, SF African American Chamber of Commerce, SF Chamber of Commerce, SF Council of District Merchants Associations, SF Economic Development Alliance, SF Small Business Development Center, Small Business Administration, Straus Events and USF Gellert Family Business Resource Center.

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