



AN ENTREPRENEUR'S STORY TO NAVIGATING SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES

When Pernel Cezar and Jarrhod Johnson were growing up in Gary, Indiana, they both had the same dream – to one day give back to their communities and support disadvantaged youth. The dream and their “why” to start their own business were planted, but in what industry, they were still unsure.

To do that, Cezar and Johnson did research. They looked at commodity industries and naturally gravitated toward a business within the commodities in which they were passionate, “coffee and tea,” Cezar said. They started small, with only a one-and-a-half-pound roaster in Cezar’s garage.

“I roasted in my garage, just to validate my curiosity of being in the coffee business,” Cezar said. During that time, he was also teaching himself the ins and outs of coffee roasting, testing the product on friends and family, and learning about industry resources. After roasting several small batches and feeling confident in the product he was developing, Cezar and Johnson officially launched [BLK and Bold LLC](#) on June 1, 2018, to create organically sourced coffee and teas. Even after their launch, their market research continued. Cezar made calls to other manufacturers in the specialty coffee roasting market and continued learning about the specialty coffee industry.

He said this process took time. Recognizing that market research is an important aspect for starting a business, the State of Iowa helped address this aspect of starting a business by partnering with researchers at the University of Northern Iowa to offer free market research for small businesses.

Through the Iowa Business Concierge on the [IASourceLink.com](#) website, business owners can speak with a business research specialist and request market research. This includes prospect lists, market demographics, trends and industry statistics, competitor’s sales figures and financial benchmarking metrics – at no cost.

Then, BLK and Bold turned to the [Targeted Small Business](#) (TSB) program when they were ready to move out of the garage and into a bigger facility. In addition to becoming TSB certified, Cezar and Johnson received a loan through the TSB program to help buy equipment. (TSB loans are managed by the [Iowa Center for Economic Success](#), and loans up to \$30,000 are available for new businesses and up to \$50,000 for established businesses.)

Throughout the process of vetting the equipment and acquiring a loan to purchase, Cezar also learned about the process for to become a licensed food manufacturer with the State of Iowa.

Although he navigated the process on his own, businesses in Iowa can utilize the [Business License information Center](#) (BLIC) on the [IASourceLink.com](#) site to research the certifications needed for businesses in various industries, or call the toll-free number to reach an individual who can provide the specific information they are seeking.

BLK and Bold is now located in a space provided by Fox Brewing Company in West Des Moines, and the company is growing as it heads toward its one-year mark. Holding true to its original intention, BLK and Bold now contributes five percent of its profits to local non-profits in the markets in which they operate, including [By Degrees Foundation](#) in Des Moines.



bus•iness-con•ierge

[Biz-nis-kon-see-airzh] - noun



An information specialist who assists small business owners in finding solutions to their most pressing questions by facilitating connections to the right people, data and resources.

AN ENTREPRENEUR'S STORY TO NAVIGATING SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES, CONTINUED



Mentorship and continued investment in himself as a business owner helped Cezar along the way during the business's first year. He recommends other business owners work with a mentor or business consultant to build their business. In Iowa, mentor programs are available through resources such as the [Small Business Administration's SCORE program](#) or through local chambers of commerce, like the Greater Des Moines Mentor Connection program.

"Find a program that works for you, but you have to challenge yourself as a business person to stay ahead of what you're building. You don't want to tap out too fast on what you're capable of," he said. Even though mentorship and professional development have left him open to vulnerability as a business owner, it's been crucial to helping him identify the things he needed to focus on.

Businesses looking for resources to help them in either starting or growing their business can also find information about classes, free resources in their area and webinars on [IASourceLink.com](#).

Cezar also recommends that businesses ask a lot of questions, learn about their markets and focus on what they do best. Above all, he advises that business owners shouldn't shy away from vulnerability, especially when asking advice of others as they get started. "Once you decide to go into entrepreneurship, you're going to have to be vulnerable for the rest of your life," he said.

VENDOR ORIENTATIONS

Want to learn more about doing business with the State of Iowa or Iowa State University? Plan to attend an upcoming vendor orientation session!

Iowa State University Procurement Services Vendor Orientation

Tuesday, October 29 - 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Learn how to do business with Iowa State, what they buy, the bid process, invoicing and payment and information available to vendors online. The Center for Industrial Research and Service (CIRAS) will also present information on their services to help Iowa businesses throughout the state in obtaining government contracts at the federal, state and local level. At the end of the session, purchasing agents from ISU, Department of Transportation and representatives from CIRAS will be available to answer questions.

Contact the ISU vendor desk at quotedesk@iastate.edu to sign up for a session. Include your company name, the date of the session, and the names and email addresses of the attendees.

FY '20 Department of Administrative Services Central Procurement Vendor Orientation

November 14, 2019 • January 15, 2020 • March 4, 2020 • May 6, 2020

Learn the basics of public procurement, what the state purchases, where to find solicitations, other procurement information and whom to contact. All sessions will be held at the Hoover Building, Level A, Procurement Conference Room, located at 1305 E. Walnut St., Des Moines, IA 50319. To register or learn more, email purchasing.mailbox@iowa.gov.

NEWEST MEMBERS OF THE CERTIFIED TARGETED SMALL BUSINESS DIRECTORY

In the last quarter, 34 new businesses have become Targeted Small Businesses. Please welcome the following to the [Targeted Small Business Directory](#):

[Thompson Contracting Company, Marshalltown](#)

[Acecor, LLC, West Des Moines](#)

[Astig Planning, LLC, Iowa City](#)

[Barney And Company, North Liberty](#)

[C.P.I.A. Cleaning Services, LLC, Des Moines](#)

[Contractor's Choice, Ankeny](#)

[Cornerstone Demolition & Clearing, LLC, Bettendorf](#)

[Courageous Fire, LLC, Des Moines](#)

[Cultural Perspectives, LLC, Cedar Rapids](#) & [L Cleaning Solutions, LLC, Iowa City](#)

[Docs in a Row, Johnston](#)

[Elite Staffing, LLC, Sioux City](#)

[Flex Fitness 24/7 LLC, Tama](#)

[Gues, LLC dba Full Life Innovations, La Motte](#)

[J Schmidt Consulting, West Des Moines](#)

[Jackson Contracting, LLC, Des Moines](#)

[K C Auto Repair, LLC, Coralville](#)

[Key Light Render Studio, Des Moines](#)

[Kingdom Enterprises, dba The Great Frame Up, West Des Moines](#)

[Kranto Professional Media Solutions, LLC, Des Moines](#)

[Kranto Dance & Fitness, LLC, Des Moines](#)

[LINO20, LLC, Marion](#)

[M3 Marketing, Inc, dba Allegra Marketing Services, Urbandale](#)

[MF Trucking, LLC, Blockton](#)

[Midwest Construction & Design, LLC, Ankeny](#)

[Moulton Education, LLC, dba CEI, Clive](#)

[Neely Unlimited, Inc. dba Bottle & Bottega, Des Moines](#)

[Peace Tree Brewing Company, Knoxville](#)

[Stricktly 4 Kids, LLC, Des Moines](#)

[The Side Garage, LLC, West Des Moines](#)

[Tres Menten Gourmet Foods, Inc., Grimes](#)

[Twig Websites, LLC, Des Moines](#)

[VNV Enterprises, LLC, Des Moines](#)

[The Wright Associates, Des Moines](#)

Remember to use the directory as a resource when marketing to other local businesses!

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT STATE PROCUREMENT?

- Visit the [DAS Central Procurement Website](#)
- Contact DAS Central Procurement Manager [Karl Wendt](#), 515.281.7073
- Review [How to do Business with the State of Iowa](#)
- Find out [What Does the State Buy?](#)
- Learn about state purchasing practices in Iowa's [Procurement Administrative Rules](#)
- Understand [TSB Procurement guidelines](#) for state buyers
- Register your business at the [Vendor Self Service Portal](#)
- Locate your [NIGP Commodity Codes](#) to receive solicitation notifications
- Review current [Bid Opportunities](#) open to all businesses

IOWA LEGAL AID SERVICES



Iowa Legal Aid has a new project providing free legal services for low-income business owners, the Community Economic Development Project (CED). CED can help people start a business, or if the business already exists, can help with legal matters related

to the business. Examples of assistance include drafting contracts, reviewing and negotiating contracts and leases, entity selection, entity formation, answering specific legal questions and giving advice on a variety of business-related matters.

Clients must meet eligibility requirements, including income restrictions and other considerations.

Another goal of the project is to complete Community Legal Education presentations for the public. Iowa Legal Aid can present on general business law topics or a specific topic, if that's of interest to a group. Iowa Legal Aid can present in different languages. There are three ways to apply for Iowa Legal Aid Services:

1. Walk into any of 10 offices - open Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (except Thursday afternoons.) Bring paperwork about your business.
2. Call 1.800.532.1275, Monday - Friday 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. or 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. (except Thursday afternoons.)
3. Apply Online - Do not apply online if you have deadlines. www.iowalegalaid.org/resource/applying-for-help-from-iowa-legal-aid

For issues or questions, please contact Samantha Wagner, Staff Attorney for the CED Project, at swagner@iowalaw.org.

GOLDMAN SACH'S 10,000 SMALL BUSINESSES PROGRAM

The Goldman Sachs [10,000 Small Businesses](#) program has helped entrepreneurs across the U.S. create jobs and economic opportunity by providing them with greater access to education, financial capital and business support services.

This year, the program launched locally in Iowa, and has already graduated two cohorts! The first two cohorts included many of our Iowa Targeted Small Business owners, shown below:

- Melissa Carlson, [818, LLC](#)
- Lori Bride, [Jumpy Monkey Coffee Roasting, Co.](#)
- Ashley Kiger, [McMahan Industrial Services](#)
- Jessica Ledger-Kalen, [Royale Concrete](#)
- Stacey Robinson, [Welch's Insurance Agency](#)
- Jenny Steffensmeier, [Steffensmeier Welding & Manufacturing](#)
- Christy Jones, [R Jones Collision 1](#)
- Stephen Stegall, [Golden Heart Senior Care](#)
- Katie Wold, [Market 124](#)
- Candace Drahn, [M's Machine & Manufacturing, Co.](#)



Based on the overwhelming success of the first round of applications, the program has launched a third cohort for the winter of 2019 and is now accepting applications.

The 10,000 small businesses program is a free opportunity for business owners to gain access to tools and knowledge to grow their businesses. Professional workshops are delivered in-person and online, where business owners can learn from the experts, trained by the top entrepreneur college in the nation, about practical business skills, such as contract negotiation, finance and people management.

To be eligible for the program, businesses must have been in business for at least two years, have at least \$100,000 in revenue and have at least two employees (including the business owner.)

To apply, please visit www.10ksbapply.com/iowa. The application takes less than 15 minutes to complete!

For more information about the application process, please contact Karen Stiles at Des Moines Area Community College: kastiles@dmacc.edu. You can also learn more and hear some of the program graduates' perspectives [here](#)!

TARGETED SMALL BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS

Luis Leon, owner of **LT Leon Associates** in Des Moines, was selected by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Iowa Section as the [2019 Outstanding Civil Engineer](#), and awarded the honor at a ceremony on September 12 in Ames. The honor is awarded to an ASCE member who has an established reputation for service, has made significant and lasting achievements in improving employment conditions under which civil engineers serve, has made a significant contribution toward improving the professional aspects of civil engineering education, has provided professional guidance to young people seeking civil engineer as a career and helped to advance the society's objectives.



Christy Jones, owner of **R Jones Collision 1** in Des Moines, has been selected as the [National Association of Women Business Owners – Iowa's 2019 Business Owner of the Year](#). Honorees for this award were selected from a set of nominations submitted earlier this year as the candidate best aligned with the award qualifications. The NAWBO Iowa 2019 Celebration of Excellence will be on November 7, from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at Glen Oaks Country Club in West Des Moines. R Jones Collision 1 is the only female owned and operated collision repair facility in Des Moines.



Pink Spear Productions, owned by Colleen Bradford Krantz of Adel, was awarded one of the state's new [Greenlight Grants](#), intended to encourage film and television production in Iowa. Pink Spear finished raising the required match in September and will begin filming the pilot episode of a proposed television series called Complete Bull. The fictional series is centered around a young woman who works in the modern world of agriculture. The Greenlight Grants, provided by the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, Produce Iowa and the Iowa Arts Council, require both the grant and match to be spent with Iowans only.



Kim Augspurger, president and owner of **Saxton, Inc.**, Des Moines, spoke at the [Business Record Commercial Real Estate Round Table](#) event in May regarding real estate trends, market facts and information on the real estate industry. Additionally, Kim also spoke at the Downtown Des Moines Chamber of Commerce's September Panel focused on "[Leaping Large: Community and Career](#)."



Kat Hutchinson, owner of **Project7 Design**, joined Kum & Go as the second [Platinum Sponsor of Capital City Pride for the 2020 Pride Year](#). Project7 will be contributing in-kind services in the amount of \$11,000 to support the year-round marketing planned for 2020.



Jenny Steffensmeier, owner of **Steffensmeier Welding & Manufacturing** in Pilot Grove, was invited to discuss the issues on the minds of Iowa voters and why the state's economy is appealing for small business owners with Governor Kim Reynolds, during an episode of "[Talks at GS](#)", which is available to view on YouTube. Jenny was also recently selected to the [Leadership Iowa class of 2020](#).



Bettendorf information technology company, **Quadyster**, owned by Hari Banda, was featured in the [Summer 2019 issue of the Center for Industrial Research and Service \(CIRAS\) newsletter](#) for experiences in landing government contracts after working with a CIRAS government contracting procurement specialist.



Kavir Ramos, owner of **Tortillas Chihuas**, in Iowa City, has recently been featured in a number of publications, including the [Daily Iowan](#), [The Gazette](#), [KCRG](#), [Iowa Student](#), and presented at [1 Million Cups](#) in Iowa City. Kavir has shared his story of immigrating from Chihuahua, Mexico, utilizing the DACA program to start a tortilla factory using a family recipe.



PARTNER EVENTS

Small Business Success Summit

Time: November 8 - 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

**Location: FFA Enrichment Center at DMACC
1055 SW Prairie Trail Parkway, Ankeny, IA 50023**



**GREATER DES MOINES
PARTNERSHIP**

If you're a small business owner, join the Partnership for a summit created for you. Attend presentations by keynote speakers from industry leaders that will inform and inspire, participate in workshops with fellow business owners in Greater Des Moines (DSM) and engage in in-depth conversations at breakout sessions ranging from talent attraction and work culture to data privacy and financial management.

SMALL BUSINESS SUCCESS SUMMIT

3 Keynote Speakers | 18 Breakouts | 28 Resource Partners

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Whitney Cox, "An Introduction to Machine Learning for Businesses"

Small Business Manager, Google

63% of organizations indicate they are making investments in automation and machine learning. But what does that mean for your business? This workshop will focus on explaining the "what" and the "why," leaving you to craft the "how" machine learning can meet the needs of your business.

Paul Long, "The Sincerity in Service"

Creator of "Fundamism" and Motivational Speaker

What is a world-class customer experience? Are you certain that your definition will differentiate you from your competitors? Through Paul's concept of Fundamism, you will learn principles that aid in listening and connecting with others while stressing the importance of sincerity in every interaction.

Holly Hoffman, "Never Give Up – The Survivor Way"

Author and Motivational Speaker

As we survive life's challenges, we come face to face with fear and uncertainty. Challenges may allow us to step out of our comfort zone and push ourselves above and beyond our own self-limitations. What makes us is how we choose to overcome challenges. Holly's experience of being on a reality show encourages audiences to think about how they decide to survive on a daily basis.



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To register, visit:

dsmpartnership.com/growing-business-here/business-resources/small-business-resources/small-business-success-summit

\$79 for Members; \$99 for nonmembers. Includes keynotes speaker sessions, breakout sessions, resource partners and food (breakfast, lunch and reception.) Have questions about the Summit? Contact Christina Moffat, Director of Small Business Development at 515.386.4904 or at cmoffatt@DSMpartnership.com.

PARTNER EVENTS, CONTINUED

SBA Events

SWAG Networking Opportunity for Women entrepreneurs

Date/Time: *Third Monday of each month, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.*

Location: SBA offices in Cedar Rapids, 2750 1st Ave. NE, Ste. 350, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402

Each month, the U.S. Small Business Administration hosts a monthly networking opportunity for women in Central Iowa entitled “SWAG” for “Stellar Women Achieving Greatness” (SWAG).

SWAG offers women who are in business, or who are thinking about starting a business, the opportunity to meet, connect with and provide mutual support to each other. Attendees give a short elevator pitch and then share thoughts, ideas and suggestions with the rest of the group with the goal of making connections with others who have faced, or may be experiencing, similar issues in starting and growing a woman-owned small business in Iowa.

SWAG is casual, and no pre-registration is required. Attendees are welcome to stay for the entire time or come and go as their schedule permits.

For more information, contact Jo Eckert at 319.362.6535 (office), 319.450.2027 (cell) or at jo.eckert@sba.gov.

QuickBooks Online Workshop

Date/Time: *October 8, 4:00 – 7:00 Pm.*

Location: 8345 University Blvd Ste. F, Clive IA 50325

Cost: \$15

Join the Iowa Center for this hands-on + interactive QuickBooks Online workshop led by John Short, QuickBooks Pro Advisor. John launched his own accounting firm in 1988, was the owner/operator for 28 years, and navigated a successful exit strategy in 2016. John is an expert in the QuickBooks program, a volunteer for SCORE and is excited to share his knowledge with new and existing business owners.



Expected Topics

- QuickBooks Online 2019 Training (note: NOT for QuickBooks Desktop users)
- Overview of QuickBooks Online
- Chart of Accounts and Items in QuickBooks Online
- Setup and Customization
- Sales and Receivables
- Disbursements, Banking, and Payables
- QuickBooks Online Payroll
- Reporting
- Year-end Procedures

Registration: theiowacenter.org/calendar/events/event-536/

PARTNER EVENTS, CONTINUED

November First Friday: Sarah McCoy, The Permanent Collection, Letterpress and Design Studio

Date/Time: November 1, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

December First Friday: Amy Doyle of Emory Dry Ice

Date/Time: December 6, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Location: 8345 University Blvd Ste. F, Clive IA 50325

On the first Friday of every month, hear the savvy, successful business owners + entrepreneurs of Des Moines share their story. In a laid-back environment, you'll catch some words of wisdom from women + men who have been through it before—and maybe walk away with a new connection (or two).

Sessions are completely free and open to the public, and are held from 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., with networking from 11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. This First Friday will be held at The Iowa Center 8345 University Blvd, Suite F Clive, 50325. Seating is first come, first served. Lunch is not provided, though we encourage you to bring your own if you'd like.

November Registration: theiowacenter.org/calendar/events/event-526/

December Registration: theiowacenter.org/calendar/events/event-534/

Quad Cities Local Procurement Event

Date/Time: October 9, 9:00 - 12:00 p.m.

**Location: Birchwood Fields Learning Center,
4620 E. 53rd St., Room 111 & 112, Davenport, IA 52807**



This networking event starts with area business updates, sharing of business related leads and a presentation on building a business with employees by IowaWorks.

Registration: www.eventbrite.com/e/quad-cities-local-procurement-event-tickets-64615650149

You are a Certified Targeted Small Business (TSB) - What's Next?

Date/Time: October 16, 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.

Location: Webinar

This webinar series is provided in partnership with Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) and TSB program with the State of Iowa. This webinar is useful for companies that have recently received TSB certification from the State of Iowa. The session will provide information on next steps and considerations to take advantage of the procurement opportunities for TSB's with the state of Iowa. TSB staff will explain and explore the structure of the state and independent buying agencies and review the types of products and services they buy, discuss in greater detail the procurement benefits to the program, how to best do business with the state as a vendor and TSB, as well as marketing best practices. Additional procurement and preference programs that you may be eligible for as a TSB will also be discussed. This session is also suitable for companies eligible for TSB certification but would like to review the procurement processes and opportunities prior to pursuing certification. For questions, please contact Melissa Burant at mmburant@iastate.edu.

Registration:

www.eventbrite.com/e/you-are-a-certified-targeted-small-business-tsb-whats-next-webinar-registration-59907960322

PARTNER EVENTS, CONTINUED

The Disadvantage Business Enterprise (DBE) Certification – Is it Right for You? – Webinar

Date/Time: July 25, 2020, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.

Certification as a DBE may provide greater opportunities for businesses to bid on state or federal contracts. The basic qualifications include that a company must be a small business, owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. This webinar will address some benefits, as well as the other requirements/eligibility for the DBE certification such as: business size, ownership, financial requirements, onsite reviews, renewals, denial of certification, etc. Information about the DOT's Small Business Program will also be discussed. For questions, please contact Mary Zimmerman at maryz@iastate.edu.

Registration: www.eventbrite.com/e/the-disadvantaged-business-enterprise-dbe-certification-is-it-right-for-you-webinar-registration-69230194375

Preparing a Winning Proposal

Date/Time: October 23, 2019

Location: 136 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City, IA 52240

Success in government contracting requires you to convince a government agency that you are the best choice to fill any particular need. Doing that requires knowing how the system works, who to deal with, what the rules are, and how to cast yourself in the best light. CIRAS can help you. In four different sessions scheduled for four different cities, learn everything from how to read and answer an RFP to tips for organizing your proposal and getting questions answered. You'll also learn how to avoid some of the most common mistakes

Registration: www.eventbrite.com/e/creating-your-government-marketing-strategy-webinar-registration-60481047441

Meet the Buyers

Date/Time: December 12

Location: Goodwill of Central Iowa, 5355 Northwest 86th Street, Community Room, Johnston, IA 50131

Business is about relationships. Selling your product or service depends on someone wanting to buy it – someone who trusts that you're dependable and able to deliver on promises. This two-hour event is an opportunity for Iowa companies to meet face-to-face with procurement staff from various government agencies. Learn who they are, what they buy, and what purchasing methods they prefer. For questions, please contact Justin Niceswagner at jnice@iastate.edu.

Registration: www.eventbrite.com/e/meet-the-buyers-registration-68626272027