



Recorded Events

LGBT Business Builder

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[00:00:40] Good afternoon everyone I'm Marcellus Turner the city librarian and welcome to The Seattle Public Library. I want to thank the U.S. Small Business Administration the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce and the greatest Seattle Business Association for working with us to bring you this program today. I'd like to take just a few moments to talk about all of the great services the library has available for aspiring and current business owners. Libraries have long been a resource for business owners but the Seattle Public Library takes that a step further with our library to business program library to business was specifically designed to offer the kind of information and services new entrepreneurs and experienced business owners need. Fourth success. Library to business offers a tremendous learning and networking opportunity like the one you are about to enjoy today. I encourage you to check out other upcoming business events on our library page online spl.org/business the library can help you identify your target customers locate competitors. I guess that's all of you in the room. Suppliers and partners and identify important market trends. We also offer access to helpful software and online learning tools including Adobe Creative Cloud Linda.com Microsoft I.T.

[00:02:04] Academy and more. As entrepreneurs I'm sure you'll know a good deal when you see it and all of these resources I just mentioned are available with a library card which I'm happy to note is free I encourage you to use our librarians as a resource whether you are experimenting with a new business idea struggling with industry jargon or looking for a way to grow your business. I'd like to acknowledge our wonderful business librarian here with us today Jay Lyman and Jay give a wave. I think. I think Jay might just be a tad bit more popular than quite a few people in this room. Library staff members like Jay are available to answer your questions at any time and can be contacted by online chat. Email phone or simply by stopping at one of our information desk one on one appointments are available as well that tells you that the Seattle Public Library is here to make your business the best that it can be. And now we're pleased to show this video of the LGBT business builder a historic public private partnership

between the U.S. Small Business Administration and the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. Thank you much

[00:03:21] Has sent a message to all federal agencies we need to look more inclusive. We needed to the importance of the gay and lesbian transgender community because it is made up of all these underserved communities. SBA historically for over 50 years

[00:03:40] Has been the mission to underserved and serve working over a number of months with the GLC see. We came up with the idea for the business builder that would marry the LGBT certification that they offer with our programs and services to help businesses take better advantage of the certification to use it as a strategy for growth.

[00:03:58] You know this is really about helping suppliers team up. It's about helping suppliers grow from maybe that one million dollar business to a 10 million dollar business and doing it in a way that allows them to expand their client base expand their customer base but do it in a way that is an authentic representation of who they are being certified has opened up so many doors. We used to have small companies here and there and now I have. Companies like Merck. And Bristol-Myers Squibb. And Edison of Southern California coming to me. And saying. We need some products for. An upcoming event. To find a place for businesses of all sizes in all capacities

[00:04:40] Teaming together being vendors for each other. That's really where the magic of a supply chain is. Today's marketplace is entirely different than when I was growing up. One local florist shop compete against the florist shop across the street. Today it's about how we compete against the entire globe. And so in that regard we have to be bolder at market making and helping small businesses navigate.

[00:05:05] It's amazing how we're not only transforming the way we deliver our services in the field to be more inclusive. We are also changing the culture of SBA within and making our offices more welcoming to to everyone.

[00:05:17] These are fabulous Ma and ma and pa pa shops that are really transforming not only their businesses but their employees and the communities that they serve.

[00:05:25] Last year we can be attributed about 50 percent of our business to being a certified LGBT body and I think it's extremely important for all businesses to get certified and by taking advantage of these opportunities and coming out and getting certified and growing our numbers. We get more opportunities like this on a regular basis certification process is really not scary or it's it's comprehensive

[00:05:50] But it's not difficult. This is a great opportunity to build some legacy for us because we do have children. We do have family we are wanting to become not just known in this

generation but for generations to come. And that's why our partnership that is so special and we think one of the first

[00:06:07] Would be NGL S.C..

[00:06:09] We think it's going to go a long way in setting an example. You know I think it's important that we share this message of these opportunities with everyone we know every LGBT on business should be. Leveraging these opportunities. It's not about taking advantage. It's really about leveraging opportunities. As red blooded taxpaying American citizens. We should be taking advantage of every opportunity that we have. And make sure that our businesses are thriving. Good afternoon everyone

[00:06:43] I'm Nancy presuming on the district director of the Small Business Administration for Seattle for the state of Washington.

[00:06:51] That too I want to give a shout out to some special people that are here today we have representatives from Congressman Smith's office Matt Perry are you here. And from Congressman McDermott's office Lee Slade thank you. Applause. I also want to recognize SBA regional advocate Jennifer Clark. Applause. Thank you for all that you do. So without further ado I am going to start by introducing one of our national sponsors. And probably the driving force behind this Sam McClure the senior vice president for the National Gay Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. Applause

[00:07:41] Thank you. Well hello everyone. So exciting to be here in beautiful Seattle. It's funny I was driving up in a uber car trying to get here and I saw the library building and I was like oh you know I've been here before and I had to hearken back to neither Louise and I can remember what year because you know it was a while ago but the NGL C.C. was brilliantly hosted here in Seattle some years ago. It's been too long for us to remember now but it's exciting and I was thrilled because I remember coming to this building before I was just drawn in by the beautiful architecture and it's exciting to be here again. And I just want to say just once again a big thanks to the library as a beautiful venue for us to be in provided to us. At no cost. And it means a lot. And it's just been a pleasure to work with you Jay. So private that we could be here with you. So you know you saw the video there and I don't want to take too much time to talk about the LGBT business builder partnership as a concept but I do just want to point out and make sure that people notice that that was administrator Maria contrasts suite in the video who is. At the helm of the U.S. Small Business Administration. And you know the Obama administration actually elevated the SBA to Cabinet level early on in the administration which was a very bold move and a strong indication of how the administration really values small business as an engine in the economy. And I think you know what we've seen in terms of a very steady recovery over time is very much connected to the growth of small business.

[00:09:22] So. It to me was a very high point in my career when we signed the agreement for the LGBT business builder partnership. It is a first of its kind very historic partnership. We're planning the signing event and we get a call saying well you know the administrator will be on hand to sign it herself. I have to say I was not expecting that. I took a little gulp when they called and then they said oh and we want to do it at your headquarters so we want to make it a press conference and a lot of the footage came from that really historic event. It was exciting to have her come and be with us and to speak about really what is her vision for real inclusion at the SBA. But I will just say that working in Washington D.C. is surrounded by federal agencies. I hear a lot of talk. I hear a lot of talk and we don't see that many people really walking their talk and taking their initiatives for LGBT inclusion into active programs that take that inclusion right down to where people will be. The user experience where they're having that user experience and if you look at this initiative at the SBA it's the opposite of that. It is walking the talk every day not only in Washington D.C. around their beautiful headquarters and around our beautiful headquarters but more importantly here where you are where you live and where you work. And I do just want to say that you know you're so lucky to have such a strong chamber here with the GCA the district offices strong and this partnership between the GSB and the district office here is going to go on long after this event.

[00:11:10] So today when you're learning about the resources from the NGL CRC with our certification and the resources and tools that you have from the SBA district office to grow and scale your business know that. They'll be here tomorrow and they'll be here as you grow and need those resources. So my hope for today is that you come away having learned about these resources and that you know how to access them right here in Seattle as we move on. And I would just say and I'll plug this three times today I hope. Hope I remember that. Do you want to just note that the conference that I mentioned that was hosted here beautifully some years ago it's kind of in your neighborhood again this year the NGL C.C. international business and leadership conference will be in beautiful Palm Springs California and it's coming up August 20 3rd. And I do hope that all of you will consider being with us. You know we've got. I'm here. Also my colleague Brent Stewart from our headquarters are here all day today will be with you at the reception after as well if you want to know more about the conference. We'd love to share with you. I think it's a really great way to connect with all of your peer LGBT business owners around around the country so hopefully you'll be with us for that as well. And I'm going to save everything else that I have for later and turn it back over to Nancy. Thank you again. Applause

[00:12:36] Thank you Sam. And now it's my pleasure to introduce a wonderful wonderful role model to us at the SBA. He's representing both the national office and region tend today. Please welcome regional administrator Calvin goings. Applause

[00:12:53] Well good afternoon thank you very much. That was a little slow on the uptake but Nancy thank you for the introduction and thank you all for being here. You know it really says a lot about you by investing your time you know for small businesses time is money and that you took time away from your small business which might mean that there is no one answering the

phone right now or some of you may even had to close up shop in order to be here this afternoon. So thank you again for investing your time in this very important event. I also want to say a special thank you to the NGL C.C. the GCA the city of Seattle and the Seattle Public Library for partnering with the small business administration today to put this event on. I think they deserve a round of applause for the work they are doing every day. You know this event also has a lot of personal significance to me as many of you know I've only been out as a gay man for about six years and two of the organizations here today that were so important in that very difficult transition period for me are represented you know as I finally came to terms with who I was always meant to be. The staff at the Small Business Administration my team members were so kind and so supportive during that time in fact some of the very first people I came out to my colleagues at the Small Business Administration. They told me from the beginning that they I had their full support as I made some of the most difficult personal decisions of my entire life.

[00:14:25] More recently as I moved to Seattle about three years ago the board and staff at the GSB continued to allow me to grow into my full gay professional self and the friendships that I have made at the GSB they are like family and very near and dear to me. So I really hope the team at the SBA and the G SBA know that your love and support allowed me to be here today and to become my true authentic self. So thank you from the very bottom of my heart. I will be eternally grateful for that. As I'm also excited that my partner David Hamm is here today and I can't think of a better group to be with to kick off Pride Month than with all of you here today. So thank you for being amazing amazing people and being here today. And that's why events like today are so critically important to our community as we all work together to support and lift up LGBTQ entrepreneurs. The SBA is so proud to be part of the Obama administration cabinet that has made historic. Historic advances in promoting equality for the LGBTQ community. Among the many many firsts are LGBTQ community has experienced during this administration our president has also signed an executive order that says if you as a private company want to do business with Uncle Sam you may not. You may not discriminate against LGBTQ employees no matter what state you happen to work in.

[00:16:09] We're also witnessing historic change firsthand but it's important to remember that we cannot separate the fight for civil rights from the fight for full and equal market rights and for full economic equity and empowerment. Today there are more than one point four million LGBTQ owned small businesses in the United States. These businesses your businesses play a critical role in our community and on our economy. So I'm optimistic that today you'll learn about some new useful tools. As we all work together to improve and grow our economy. Probably no surprise to anybody in this room about how important small businesses are to our economy. Today over half of all working Americans work for a small business and small businesses have created about two thirds of all new net jobs over the past 15 years. So small businesses are key to the long term sustainable growth of our economy and our key drivers of innovation and competitiveness. So at the SBA we work arm in arm with these Main Street small businesses to grow and support their hiring and expansion. And we do that by focusing on three key areas what we affectionately call the three C's at SBA and that's access to capital

access to contracts or certifications and access to counseling which you're going to hear a lot more about today with capital. We work with banks credit unions micro lenders and CDC is to guarantee the loans that they make to small businesses to support their growth growth expansion and hiring with contracts or certification. We work with the federal government to ensure that at least twenty three percent of all federal procurement actions go to small businesses.

[00:17:55] And as you might imagine Uncle Sam is the largest purchaser of goods and services in the world from paperclips to Boeing refueling tankers and everything in between. And thirdly with counseling through events like today we offer an inclusive series of web webinars workshops conferences and trainings to help get an idea for a new product or service off the ground or take an existing enterprise to the next level. So by embracing an inclusive vision of entrepreneurship one that draws upon all entrepreneurs. From all communities all demographics and from all backgrounds. We will continue to grow our economy and create good paying jobs. During events like this we are all reminded that America is at its greatest when we draw from the full spectrum of American diversity driving innovation and creating a thriving economy based in our rich diverse and unique neighborhoods. So what's been the result of this concerted effort. Well we have now had seventy four months in a row of positive job growth in the US month after month after month fourteen point six million jobs have been created. So ladies and gentlemen we at the SBA are bullish on the U.S. economy. We believe that by building upon SBA core programs with access to capital access to certifications and access to counseling we can help you and others find success as we accelerate our economic recovery. Empowerment and growth. So thank you for what you do every day. And thank you for being here. Thank you very much.

[00:19:45] I'm always amazed when I hear him speak. I said he's a great role model.

[00:19:48] I've worked for. I can't tell you how many regional administrators I've worked for in my 29 year career with the SBA but Calvin. You're the best. So now it's my pleasure to introduce a friend that I met a year ago and I'll talk about that a little bit more later but also the local affiliate the sponsor for this event. Louise Shannon who is the president and CEO of GSB the other SBA. Applause

[00:20:26] This is great. This is wonderful. So Martha Marcellus thank you so much for hosting us in our beautiful library. One of the most amazing libraries in the world. Thank you to the SBA and thank you. Who. Calvin we adore you. You are very important to so many of us. Nancy it's a newer friend but I believe a long term friend.

[00:20:52] Melanie everybody here who has worked with us and in jails you see Sam it's so great to have you here. SBA is one of the founding members of the NGL al-Sisi and Sam when she was in Minneapolis. Q A quorum was one of the founding members so I think we met 11 or plus years ago. Who's counting. And so and Brent to have you here so we're really thrilled to have to have a National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce.

[00:21:21] Some of the some of the business groups around the country people are worried about because you know are they conservative are they this are they that so the fact that the LGBT business movement is a values driven movement I think is something our community needs to be incredibly proud of that you know Harvey Milk by the start of the first chamber in San Francisco the Golden Gate business alliance and I know we have people here from from them as well and we are the third oldest chamber and the largest with over eleven hundred members now. And the reason we work is we are community first. We are equality first but we we've equality and inclusion in diversity into economic success and we've been saying equality is good business for 36 years and now it's becoming kind of more popular. I just think it's amazing how how many other corporations and businesses are seeing that because truthfully in this world if you do not have a diverse employee base if you do not have diverse clients and customers you are not going to make it. And we knew that all along that you needed us and every other marginalized community to make this world really work. So I'm very proud to be part of this movement. Everybody in this room I applaud you and I thank you.

[00:22:50] We would not be here all of us without you without the small business owners the ones who came out 45 years ago as LGBT owned businesses and have continued to say we want to sit around the table we want to sit around your economic tables. We want to be part of your anti-discrimination policies. We now want to make sure we don't roll back our civil rights I do have to give a little plug. We are facing an initiative that will roll back our civil rights ordinance on the state level that would would weaken trans protections. It cannot happen in the state of Washington. So please vote no on 15 15 but most importantly if you are a business go online to Washington won't discriminate and sign on your support. The cost to do that is your life and your equality. It's not a financial cost at this time but it is so important. And I thank all the businesses that already have. I think we have close to 150 or almost 200 businesses that have signed on. So that's not the subject of today but it is always the subject of who we are that first and foremost we are about making sure there is equity and equality in our community. I'm proud to be in a state that has a great anti-discrimination policy and a city that was one of the earliest cities in the United States to have an anti-discrimination policy that included sexual orientation and gender identity and expression way before others did.

[00:24:20] So we have a mayor's office. We have a city council King County Council and a state government that really stands up our governor for equality for all. So we're very fortunate here. I don't know everybody sitting in this room but I hope before the end of the day I will I hope you will all join us in GSB. We are not only a chamber that is about working for small business rights we now have a brand new Seattle entrepreneurial women's group for women business owners who have certain different type of challenges and it's going gangbusters. We have a small business council we have a public policy task force. We will bring your voices to the city the state the county and on the federal level. And we have of course a scholarship fund that just gave out four hundred and ten thousand dollars to 55 students. Alone. So we are about leadership development starting with our youth going through our young entrepreneurs to our business leaders and we want to make sure that we are representing your voice. And

while we're representing your voice we have those here who are representing our voice more of our voice officially.

[00:25:30] And I'm really so proud that we have of course we have a mayor. Mayor Ed Murray that is been a member of GSB for over 20 years and who took who course Cal Anderson as many of you know his predecessor in the state legislature who passed away was one of our very early members and then and then Mayor Murray came on for the state legislature and then the Senate and now he's our mayor and then he adjust what he's really good at is bringing very very smart people around him and the smart people. I saw him here and I don't know if he walked out but Michael Matt Miller who is our chief technology officer. So today is gonna be about learning to have another tool and another opportunity for success. And that's really what today is about. GSA is proud that we are a body that works with NGL Sisi to certify LGBT owned businesses and I think you're going to learn a lot. It took me a very long time to really understand the power of certification. We all need a small businesses more tools and the more that we have that we can open a door and have a level playing field.

[00:26:48] You'll also learn that we don't have recognition across the country yet on LGBT certification. And so I'm really thrilled that we have both our city here. We did meet with the state this week with the Office of Minority and my women in minority enterprises and we are moving to get the state to recognize LGBT certification. So. Among the tools besides certification there are so many things small businesses need and we're very proud in Seattle to have an office for economic development that is fully dedicated to see what the needs are of small business and how to address them. And we're very fortunate that the is the current executive director for the office for economic development is very committed to ensure that the LGBT community is also able to access all of the support that the city has for small business. And it's a challenge because small business has own hasn't always received support anywhere in this country. We all like to say it's the backbone. It's like children. They're very important and so are small businesses but then all of our laws don't support them. So I think that we actually have an office for economic development that is absolutely focused on this is important. So thank you Brian Surratt our executive director. And we welcome you here today.

[00:28:08] Applause.

[00:28:13] Good afternoon everyone. Thank you for spending this afternoon with with all of us. And the first place I want to congratulate Calvin and your team for helping bring this this conversation here today and Louise thank you for your leadership again.

[00:28:32] In many ways when Louise calls I always pick up the phone and will leave. When Louise asked me to do something I buy every fiber of my body we'll try to make that happen. You know today was a case in point Louise emailed yesterday is like no Brian

[00:28:50] You Brian are bringing a voice around what is a city what Kansas City would be doing to support small business and in this this community in particular and so that was

helpful. That's the kind of insight that's kind of partnership and honesty frankly that I've always appreciated from you Louise. So thank you for.

[00:29:06] For that I want to also acknowledge Michael Matt Mel I know Louis as you did.

[00:29:12] I think he stepped out and get Marcellus Turner to my fellow cabinet members for Mayor Murray. It's I think again a testament of the mayor wanting to bring new thinking new leaders into his government and really pushing all of us to make government better for people in a day. That's what we do.

[00:29:34] And my shop my hat is around economic development. I love my job in many ways because it depends who you talk to. I got involved means a lot of different things. And believe me every day every day someone gives me advice on what we should be doing. Everyone's an expert on economic development and it makes sense right. You know when you think about. Healthy thriving open communities requires an economy that is healthy that's sustainable. That's fair and inclusive. And it touches all of us the economic health of our community dictates so much of what happens in a community social dynamic. And so economic development every office in my mind in the city of Seattle is an economic development agency because we touch in so many different ways specifically Calvin did a great job of talking about when we think about technical assistance and the importance of making sure these resources are designed appropriately and effective and really meet the needs of small business entrepreneurs. I won't take one step back. I'm trying to put some of that in context. Earlier this year the Brookings Institute released a really fascinating policy position paper on the new model for economic development really challenging the notion around the old way of doing business. You know the aggressive recruitment of big employers that come to your town and spending so many resources trying to go catch that big fish obviously you know large employers that want to find homes. You know you're going to always have resources and infrastructure for that but they really got to the point around that is not a sustainable model when we really start talking about what's really going to be growing our economy in a way that reflects values around sustainability and inclusion and ensuring our long term economic health. And they looked at. This model around and focusing on existing assets and capitalizing on our honor our existing strengths. And that's really about our local businesses are small businesses. New business formation talent development making sure that the next generation has the skills to be adaptable in a new economy and investing in and in place.

[00:32:10] When we talk about you know in Seattle all those factors are very much in play. And I think in many ways that affirms where Mayor Murray wants to go with his economic dilemma vision. He wants to make sure that this office has the tools necessary to serve and support small businesses. There are a couple of areas where specifically I'm really excited about where we're going. And GSD voice is at the table when we talk about small business support the three C's that that Calvin identified. We've got two of those seasons in our office and we leverage and worked really closely with the SBA with SBA to make sure that we're coordinated and leveraging our efforts capital. We don't do direct lending in our office but we

have a plethora of partners out there in the community from SBA all the way down to partners who provide micro financing for four companies and we're able to make that that match for folks. We have a really dynamic business technical assistance team that we have some in-house consulting but oftentimes we need to leverage our partners on the community. A recent example where we partnered with SBA was working with businesses in our central area where we asked SBA and they provided their corduroy of retired accountants and business experts to really help us support these small businesses.

[00:33:44] So our job is to try to be as nimble as possible and meet the needs of folks as where they really need their support and be as relevant as possible. The two areas that

[00:33:57] I want to just flag for this audience Louise mentioned the national conversation I know Sam has been a leader on this at the national level around procurement and and expanding access for folks to participate in and contracting. The mayor has made revisiting our procurement process a priority in his administration. He has set up an advisory committee to reexamine how can we do things better from a government procurement standpoint. And I'm proud to say that SBA does have a seat at that table and to really push all of our thinking around how do we ensure that we have access to as many communities as possible that have been marginalized historically and ongoing.

[00:34:47] And so how do we rethink our our strategies there are also commercial affordability when we talk about small businesses in cities like Seattle where we're in this amazing inflection point where the city is growing by leaps and bounds. And on one hand that's exciting because we can see that the engines of the economy really really moving and lifting all of us

[00:35:17] At the same time.

[00:35:19] So many small businesses I hear from everyday and I know in this audience I'm sure you've heard those stories you may be experiencing that yourself. They struggle with the rising costs of doing business and one of those things includes commercial space and real estate. The mayor has stood up an advisory committee to get to this exact question what can the city do. What framework of policies and programs can the city as it do to help small businesses remain in their space. I think one of the most important reasons why small businesses are such a critical part of our identity as Seattleites we're neighbors we're a city of neighborhoods and everyone loves the fact that they can walk to that bakery walk to that grocery store that corner market and know that the owner has been there for 10 15 years. That's really important for us. And for the new business that wants to find that space that may be priced out. How do we make sure that there's room for them in this market to get a foot in the door and really expand.

[00:36:29] So that is just a touch of what we do in the office of economic development.

[00:36:35] I want to also acknowledge A.J. Corey on my team. He is our You want money. Go talk to him. So I'm glad that he's here representing us again. We want to be deep in every community that we serve because that's what we do. That's what we're supposed to do. So

[00:36:54] Have a great afternoon and conversation and I'm looking forward to hearing more from everyone. So thank you

[00:37:06] Thank you so much Brian. All right. Well now we're gonna get the show on the road. So Sam if you want to come up we'll start the presentation on the panel presentation on certifications. Thank you. Hi I'm back. You

[00:37:20] Are still here. Yeah. I asked my panelists to come on up and let's really change gears a little bit. If you guys are okay with that. We want to have a little bit of a conversation about the LGBT business enterprise certification what it is how to get it. What do you do with it. How it is to scale your business.

[00:37:38] So before we get started I want to know a little bit about you all because we don't know. You know I. I came in from D.C. DC ousted Brent and you know we know a bit about your community and we certainly know a lot about the amazing organization that most of you belong to the GSA. But we need to know about you out in the audience. So just help us out for a second just by a show of hands how many of you in the audience are LGBT people who own businesses just by a show of hands who do the exact audience we wanted. Look at that. Almost all of you. That's exciting. How many of you of those that just raise your hand are currently certified by the NGL al-Sisi as an LGBT business enterprise. Wow wonderful. It's exciting. Thanks for coming out today. Now

[00:38:28] How many of you are there anybody in the audience who's a supplier diversity professional. Well that answers my question. We'll talk about what that is there in a minute. And I understand that there are folks here from some other cities. I see I know Portland. Hey Jill thanks for coming out. Others from Portland San Fran. Yes awesome San Francisco. I hear there are some folks from San Francisco here.

[00:38:55] All right cool. So before we get started we'll say a big thank you to all the city officials who came and spoken to some of them have probably left. Please remember what a wonderful place you live in so many opportunities here in Seattle. And we're going to be a resource to Louise and her team as needed to keep changing that policy conversation here. Your influence is always felt so profoundly when I'm in the city and I'm such a big admirer of that. So how many of you in the audience than before today knew about the LGBT business enterprise. Most of you. OK. So we've got a fairly high level of knowledge. The reason I wanted to ask this question is because we're gonna tailor this panel today to meet your needs. We want to talk about what you want to talk about. So we're gonna aim it at your current level of knowledge where you are now and then we're going to open it up for questions. And I don't know I didn't ask you guys this in advance announce awkward because I'm asking you for the

audience sorry but are you comfortable with taking questions at any point so I'm comfortable with that too. I would say at any point during our conversation if you have a question go ahead and raise your hand and we'll we'll address it. Can I slow down. Absolutely. So I'm southern originally so I can really slow down. We're talking about a topic I'm quite passionate about so if I run away like a freight train you just raise your hand again and I'll definitely slow down before we get started on the ins and outs of certification. I just want to touch on a topic that was brought up by a number of our speakers and that's the changing landscape of public policy that has opened up government opportunities for LGBT business enterprise.

[00:40:41] And I want to compare contrast two things for you right away. Number one the LGBT business enterprise certification was created in 2004 and it was it was created at the request of one of NGL ceases founding corporate partners IBM and they wanted us to do this because they were a leading company on all LGBT inclusion policy. There were a model employer around LGBT inclusion and one day somebody inside the company made a call to a friend of mine who used to work at IBM is named Erwin Drucker. And he was in supplier diversity in this executive. I think maybe innocently asked a question and the conversation went something like this. It was look or when I'm exceedingly proud of everything we've done at IBM to be a leader around creating a fully inclusive workplace for LGBT people. The policies we have are a model for companies all around the nation. We've received every award we could get. I'm really proud of that. I'm just wondering about one thing I'm hoping you can enlighten me on this. The question was Why does our inclusion work stop at the supply chain in our supply chain. We're inclusive of women minorities. Why are we not inclusive of LGBT people in the supply chain and Irwin's I think he said you know my goodness I don't really know. And Irwin happens to be a gay man and I think it was sort of an awkward question like why are we doing this in my department of all things.

[00:42:25] And you know the executive responded with Well I'm glad you feel that way because we're going to do it. We're going to do it now. You're going to be responsible for it. This is an important initiative. IBM is going to lead. We're gonna be the first company to do this or we're going to do it better than anyone. Well. Soon after that a phone call went to the NGL CSA co-founders Justin Nelson and chance Mitchell. And it was Irwin calling and I think you basically said something like OK well I'm trying to do this. I'm trying to include LGBT businesses in my supply chain. But it's kind of difficult.

[00:43:00] How will I find them when I want to find a woman own business. I look at the database of certified women owned businesses. Where do I go to find the LGBT business enterprise what you guys are forming a national chamber.

[00:43:14] I think you should create a certification so we can identify these businesses and we can intentionally include them in all of our opportunities. And really the rest is history. They said to us IBM became our first founding corporate partner and together we created the LGBT supplier diversity initiative and the certification that is now we're gonna fast forward to debt to excuse me to today the certification is accepted by well over one third of the Fortune 500.

[00:43:44] It's a lot not only do these companies recognize the certification but they're actively engaged in intentionally reaching out to these businesses including them in opportunities. And that is a huge amount of progress. And I want you to realize that we had this amount of traction in the private sector in the marketplace if you will without any public policy work. There were no laws anywhere in the nation that said you had to include LGBT businesses in opportunities not one single law.

[00:44:17] Still we got to well over one third of Fortune 500. Were the only diverse segment that went to the marketplace first. And I'm really glad that we did that.

[00:44:27] Now again fast forward to today and we we realize that if we get this kind of traction in the marketplace we should also have recognition at the government level. We started our journey to have LGBT business enterprises included and federal contracting on the fifth day of the Obama administration for the first time we were invited to the White House. And what we wanted to talk about how do we get these LGBT business owners to the table. We're still on that journey today. And I love to tell you that we're very very very close to executive action by the Obama Administration to require the inclusion of LGBT BS in federal government contracting and at the very least at the very least to prohibit discrimination against LGBT business owners. Know Calvin mentioned the Obama administration's executive order that prohibits discrimination against the workers of federal contractors. And make no mistake we applaud that. That was a watershed moment except I won't accept that the government is saying to the LGBT community it's fine for you to be workers but don't try to own the place. We won't accept that and we will get a prohibition against discrimination against LGBT business owners you have my assurance that that will happen and hopefully will happen soon. Also when you're voting please think about that. Because we need.

[00:45:57] We need a friendly administration to follow this one. But there have been some public policy wins the state of California in 2014 passed a lock on HB 16 78. I won't bore you with all the wonky details. Bottom line is it opened eight point five billion dollars worth of economic activity within the public utility sector to LGBT business enterprises. And then we turned our attention to the other side of the country went to work with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. And in November of this year Governor Baker who is a Republican. Please note that this issue will cross the aisle signed really the most sweeping executive order we've ever seen and supplier diversity. It not only included LGBT business enterprises it also included disability owned business enterprises. That's something I am very very proud of. We fought really hard for that also includes that's just a huge huge reform. Also how many of you in this in this room do government contracting work. OK the small group of you you're gonna love this last bit. So there used to be this process to get to the table for the opera house in Massachusetts. And I saw a book with all the forms in it and it was this thick. By the time we got through with this reform effort with the governor it was about this thick two thirds of the process gone duplicate certifications gone.

[00:47:18] The government is recognizing the third party certifications direct. So I spent a lot of progress and I just wanted to share that with you. So those of you that are looking for government work just know that we're down there we're in the trenches trying to get those doors open for you. I don't know if any of you saw the historic bill in New York. It was introduced I think three days ago. It's called The New York supplier diversity act. It will require the inclusion of LGBT business enterprises disability on business enterprises and veterans in the state of New York. And I would also just I mean for what it's worth it's the very first time the phrase supplier diversity has ever appeared in a public policy initiative. And I think that's really important because we're moving from kind of the old way of looking at diversity inclusion and the government programs to more like what the private sector is doing. And that's something we're very proud of. So if you know anyone in New York please tell them to support our bill and we're really proud of it. It was quite a labor of love. And all indications are that multiple states on the East Coast will follow.

[00:48:20] So that's exciting. I hope you'll help us with that OK. It's enough wonky policy talk. So sorry I got in that lane for a second. So I want to actually let's have each of you just introduce yourselves. Talk about who you are and why you're here and then we'll get to some questions great.

[00:48:38] And my name is Brent Stewart. I am manager of supplier diversity at the end GLC C and I help LGBT entrepreneurs and business owners understand what certification is. I help them through the certification process but more importantly I help them understand how to use the vast tools that come with certification to help them grow their business and we'll get into some of those and a little bit. But our our main goal at the NGL CRC is to help LGBT entrepreneurs grow their business and so that's my primary goal as well.

[00:49:11] Hi I'm Sandra Escalante. I'm from your neighboring state and from the San Francisco Bay Area. I'm here to put a face to everything they're trying to talk about and discuss with all of you.

[00:49:24] You know I'm. My business is woman owned minority owned an LGBT certified and it's a great thing but it's not easy. So you know even after this you're more than welcome to approach me if you have any questions and we can discuss it

[00:49:40] Wonderful and and note that we have lots of LGBT youth in the audience who we want you to contribute today as well. So a lot of times in these panels we spend a lot of time talking about how to get certified. And I'm just going to nutshell it really quickly because you guys already know a lot. Very simply to get certified. We have an online process. And Brent would be your staff contact for this region. It's very simple process online application supporting documents. We have a full national committee review of every file for a business that wants to be certified and then you have a local site visit. Those are basically the steps and we can kind of touch base on the steps during this process a little bit but I don't want to get too bogged down in there because this is a very smart audience. But the basic criteria 51 percent

owned operated managed and controlled by a person who's LGBT. That's it. That's how uncomplicated it is. And the process is simply you have to prove that you you. Are who you say you are. You run the thing you say you run. You're the one in charge of it. And that's basically it. And we kind of take care of the rest for you. And we are gonna be around during the reception and during the break to talk about specific details and we'll take questions as they come up but I want to sort of skip and fast forward to like

[00:51:06] Why get certified at all. How do you use this certification as a strategic tool to grow your business. And I want to clarify what we mean by grow. Just for a second sometimes and I come from the entrepreneurial world and I'll cease to run a local chamber. I have some perspective on this. Personally I think sometimes business owners think about growth in only one way they think about where is my next customer and that's actually not really growth that's more like just thriving in covert operations. When we talk about growth in this context we're talking about scale. How do you bring your business to scale. How do you go. How many of you in here are one person shop. Okay so perfect. How do you go from a one person shop. To either a three to five person shop or a one person shop who has you know couple dozen vendors you know not everybody wants to add employees but something means growth for you. How do you get more revenue. How do you get more scale. That's the kind of growth opportunities we're really talking about. We're not here to help you find your next one off transaction. We're here to help you find that next growth opportunity. What kind of opportunity takes your business really to the next level. That's what supplier diversity is all about and that's what you should be using your certification to do. I think. One of the things I want to talk about is. Not only doing business with big corporations like T-Mobile but how do you do business with each other and how does that look like a growth opportunity. I think a lot of times people learn about certification and they think well OK cool. Third the Fortune 500 open their supply chain. I am not big enough to be in the supply chain of any of those companies. Anybody thinking about that.

[00:52:55] Ok so a lot of businesses do think about that. So actually want to start there and I'm going to throw this question to two Brant and and to Sandra just how important it is for businesses that become certified as LGBT business enterprises to seek each other out for business opportunities to find ways to work with each other.

[00:53:18] First of all once you're certified you have access to what's called my NGO al-Sisi. And it's an exclusive business portal that gives you access to all of the other suppliers across the country all the other certified LGBT business enterprises or we throw around LGBT quite a bit through this and so that's what that is it's a certified LGBT business enterprise. So that said you have access to their contact information. So if you're here in Seattle and you want to collaborate and do business with another business here in Seattle you can certainly find that maybe you have an opportunity in New York and you might not necessarily have the funds to be flying to New York quite a bit you can find a collaborative partner in New York City by finding that information. But you know when you when you have an opportunity that let's say for example T-Mobile has an opportunity that's coming up and you can service parts of it. But

you know parts of it are not really within your capabilities or your realm of what you're good at. Why not partner up with another business that does do what you necessarily can't do that T-Mobile is asking for to be able to meet that RFP or that request for proposal or that contract. That's another very valuable opportunity so teaming up on contracts but collaborating with other business owners. That can help connect you with the types of customers that you're really looking for. You know we all have a vast array within our network. We know a lot of different people. So sometimes you might reach out to Sandra and ask Hey do you happen to know this particular person. Maybe you can do an introduction to me you know just building those relationships and growing your network is incredibly helpful and valuable to growing your business.

[00:54:59] And I did the same thing vice versa. If I'm being approached by for instance I'll use the San Diego Gas and Electric utility. We were I received this phone call one day and it was very weird coming from a huge contractor called cute construction. By the way I don't think I mentioned that we're an electrical supplier and our core business has been dealing mostly with high end residential light industrial commercial in our neck of the woods basically within the 50 mile range. And when I purchase the company is 32 years old and I purchase 51 percent of it last year after having worked with them for about two years and being one of their biggest customers in my old world when I was an electrical contractor you know all of this just came about. Then one of the things that happens is well first I was trying to get certified to be a woman owned minority certified business and for some reason the minority business enterprise just wouldn't accept me. They could not believe the fact that I really purchase 51 percent of the company proving who you are what you are what you do is. A lot harder than it sounds for some certifying agencies. So I started there and they said no we think you were a front to this family that has owned this company for 31 years we think you're a trusted employee we do not believe that you really own it even though I sent them all the proof of how I got the money and everything else.

[00:56:39] It didn't matter so I'll go back to. I attended a mixer for Chevron Chevron is right in our backyard and even though Jim Lehner has owned this company for 30 years Chevron would not look at leaner electric supply. They're dealing with the big boys. They're dealing with the West Coast in the Granger's of the world but when I attended this local neighborhood thing and I think it was a PR of. You know event for them because they wanted to do a rehab and modernization for the refinery. And so they had to promise the city of Richmond to try and hire local and purchase locally. So they did this event and I was there and I was like Yeah but how I can't even get certified as a woman on minority owned business how can I participate. And Dave Feldman who is their director for supplier diversity I remember that they put his arms around Sid said. Forget the minority forget the woman owned you have so much competition do the NGL CCN. I looked at him go. What's that. And he goes it's a national gay and lesbian chamber of commerce. Go talk to them we reached out I spoke to Brant and I think to date I don't know if I'm wrong but I might still be the only electrical distributor in the nation that's LGBT right set of fire.

[00:58:07] Thank you. Thank you.

[00:58:09] And in my world in my industry we're sorry guys but it's 90 percent white male dominated. I attended a six thousand group member. Conference in Chicago. I'm Marc Klaas. April. And everybody was talking about how North Carolina's governor is ruining their business. And here I am talking about being gay and being with the NGL CDC and they just looked at me like. Is this for real. And then after I we have our own little network group which is about 20 people. After that the precedent of I mark which is comprised of about ten thousand members took me around like a little kid going OK. This is Sandra Escalante. She's got this thing going with the gay people.

[00:59:00] It's called You know it's called it's called NGL season whatever. So if you need you you need to collaborate with somebody. She's the one. She's not a fly by.

[00:59:11] She's been an eye Mark member for 20 years she really does own the company. It's not a garage. They have 18 employees. They have 20 thousand square foot their brick and mortar. They're legit. Partner up with them. And between that and the supplier clearinghouse where it does show me is really being the only LGBT certified company I've been getting phone calls left and right. So going back to my little story with you. That was for the San Diego national for not actually called Cleveland National Forest. I'm thinking in my head it's in Cleveland only to find out and since San Diego. And only to also find out about three months later that it was the San Diego Gas and Electric that's telling them to contact me. That they want to increase their LGBT participation that they want to drive up that number. And I received another one about a month or two later from a company called a B same thing. We have a hundred million dollar spend. That we need to spend on an LG BTC company. And you're the only one right now. So

[01:00:24] Keep my fingers crossed.

[01:00:25] Nothing has happened but 2016 has been explosive. I've been really really busy. Chevron is of course talking to me now. It's real. They vetted me. They have a lot of requirements. I'm getting another one from

[01:00:40] From a company called Fisk electric.

[01:00:43] Everyone it is very very very important that you attend your local chambers mixer. That's what I did. After like my first month of certification I was invited by Don Ackerman who also did my site visit for NGL S.C. and she says Sandra. Now you have to meet the local folks. I haven't met anyone yet at that time so I went and I met this beautiful wonderful man. Mr. Paul Pendergast who is also highly involved in a lot of high profile mega construction projects and are in our area and he got me to sit at the table with a company called Fisk electric. And there are multi-billion dollar electrical construction company who wouldn't even look at someone like us. Well right now we have a pending contract for about four million dollars.

[01:01:34] Yes. Oh my gross revenue is about seven million. But I think this year it's probably going to hit 10 to 12 easily and next year. I can't even if everything happens and as I said we're there. I don't have an actual. Buy from anybody yet. But when it does happen it's going to be explosive.

[01:01:54] And you know that's my little story. But you have you have to really just be you just have to really focus on what you want

[01:02:04] And be open what you can and cannot do. Be prepared. You know I walk around like a. First I think in Sacramento and we had a mixer like this. I was asking Brent Brent what the heck is a capability statement. How do you put one together. Be honest and I think Mark also Mark's here somewhere. Yeah. They're smart. Mark gave me more rallies.

[01:02:27] Yes and Brent gave me a copy of something to follow and I did and from then on I just sent that out. I sent it out. And even with my fellow I mark members I said let me help you. If you're trying to do a job specially those there in Washington D.C. and those in Massachusetts if you're trying to get a project. And you need participation let me help you. Let me be that person so advantageous to me. It'll be advantageous to them and at least they know me. They know what I stand for. And I was talking to Leo here earlier and I told Lay I said Hey you guys are doing a project even in Seattle. I can ship being a small company. I have a lot of concessions that I can do I'm more than willing to help you guys out here's the cost. Let me make a little bit for the overhead I can scratch the profit out but let me help you guys.

[01:03:19] And that's been my stance that's been my code of ethics since I've taken over and so far it's it's working.

[01:03:27] I think everyone knows right now why we chose Sandra for a panel. And I just want to point back to sort of what started this line of conversation was about collaboration you're about to get a lot of collaborators Sandra just say you know I want to underline a couple of things that that you brought up and then I want to come back to you this thing about being prepared. Let's just talk about numbers just for a second because we're talking about collaborating we're talking about the network of LGBT ease that you join when you become certified who knows in this room how many businesses in this country are people are owned by people who identify as LGBT. It was mentioned earlier I don't know but one point four million I heard it up there from from someone who should know the expert Louise Chernin it's beautiful. It's a wonderful thing one point four million businesses in America are owned by people who are LGBT. That is a lot of economic development mojo right there and I think it's why we get so much attention and cooperation from the Obama administration through the U.S. Small Business Administration. But let's talk about another number right now who knows how many. Currently of those businesses are certified as an LGBT business enterprise. Take a guess. 175

[01:04:48] And we're doing better than that. Eight hundred fifty we're getting closer. We're just under 1000. And I don't. Don't be don't be confused.

[01:05:00] I'm really proud of that number because it was hard to get to that number. But look at those two numbers and the crazy imbalance that is there. And so I want to talk about Sandra's beautiful story about being the only LGBT being environment a business environment and having someone just take her arm and say I want to introduce you to every one because of some biodiversity professionals are actively seeking out LGBT bees. She's the only one in her field. That's the way it is right now. It will not be that way forever. We're near 1000 right now looking at the trajectory of growth. We will be at fault five thousand in the blink of an eye. It will come very quickly. Now all of you entrepreneurs out there who thinks your opportunity to compete in this space is better right now. Than it will be when you get to 5000. Good I want to make sure you pay attention to that because you know the long lens of history is going to look back on this. I want everyone in this room who's qualified to be an early adopter to this program. We do not want you to miss the golden opportunity that is right now.

[01:06:05] I'm sure it will not be long before Louise and her staff compel full inclusion of LGBT business enterprises right here in Seattle in the state of Washington. Right now there are more opportunities than we have businesses to fill them. We need you to participate and take advantage of these opportunities right now and we can help you get started to day. So let's go back to talking about. Navigating with your business after your certified you know Sandra made a really good point about being prepared to sell your business to a supply chain opportunity. So I'm gonna throw this question to you. What's the best way for a business owner to come to someone like yourself fully prepared for a conversation. You know we've got our business and leadership conference coming up very soon August 2013 Palm Springs California one of the biggest features of the conference are matchmaking opportunities. So I want to talk about what those opportunities look like and from your perspective as a supplier diversity professional someone advocating for our suppliers inside of corporations. How does the supplier prepare for one of those meetings. One thing I want to underline

[01:07:18] Probably jumping ahead of what you're about to say but it's really important. Say the name of Dana's company one more time. He core international. Did I mispronounce. No. I just want to give her another plug. Great success story. So something that Dana did and Sandra did and this is really important. They led with their capabilities you lead and any conversation is supplier diversity space with what is unique and different about your business. What solution do you bring. What are your capabilities as a business do not lead with being LGBT certified because that's not really relevant. It's what got you that meeting. If you come to our conference go to matchmaker it's what got you the meeting. What's going to get you the relationship that's ultimately going to get you the business is your skills and capabilities.

[01:08:03] So if you think about this as an easy analogy let's talk about icing on the cake the certification icing what you do what makes you unique and innovative as a business owner I know all of you are that's the cake lead with the cake. Always always lead with your

capabilities. That's absolutely critical and never ever ever ask a supplier diversity professional. So what do you guys buy. Because if you don't know that before you sit down at the table you're going to fail. You have to know that ahead of time doing your homework absolutely essential to everything going on and on that topic right.

[01:08:38] Yeah. Not to sort of get too off point but once you're certified it's not like OK here's your certificate. Good luck. Not at all. You know one of the things I really enjoy about my job is helping business owners understand. OK. Now that I'm certified How do I use my certification. How do I leverage my certification if you do not have a capability statement. No one get one. They're not super hard to. Well they're they're very very important. They're not very long. They usually one to two pages Max but they're incredibly important when you're reaching out to folks at T-Mobile or other corporations or other certified businesses. You know if. If somebody wants to know what you're doing it's like it's a business resume. But it's incredibly important. Once you're certified we have a lot of different types of programming we offer monthly webinars. A lot of different types of educational series that will help you better understand how to craft a capability statement. We have a lot of resources here. Mark Morales has offered that up in the past. We have a template of how to do your capability statement. That's just one piece. Having an elevator pitch is another important piece being able to communicate what your business does and a concise small amount of time but effectively that's also I think incredibly important especially if you're making an introduction for your business though learning those types of things. Those are just some of the. Those are a few of the very vast amount of resources that we have available to you. Once you're certified that's very important.

[01:10:09] I want to just clarify a couple of things really quickly. California Public Utilities Commission has come up a few times. That was in both examples. And you know to Elise's example in the film about getting a call from Southern California Edison will say it's very unusual to get a call like that from a supplier diversity professional loan to seek you out aggressively. But you know what we've tried to create at the NGL CRC is an ecosystem where opportunities can take root and grow and relationships can take root and grow. I believe you met Terrence Fryer said at our conference. So I just want to switch gears to talking about the conference for a second but I just want to clarify California Public Utilities Commission the law that we passed in 2014 opens those opportunities for you the diverse spend the last year it was reported it was eight point five billion dollars. That's with a B. So it is a real thing that someone's looking to spend one hundred million dollars with someone that is absolutely real and the CPAC staff very helpful. The utilities the biodiversity people very helpful. And this is really important. If you hear nothing else about the CPAC hear this you do not have to live and work in California to take advantage of the opportunities with the California Public Utilities Commission that when was for everyone. It just happens to be the procurement happens in California. The same thing is true in Massachusetts. If you think you have something you can sell to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts you do not have to live there.

[01:11:38] You could do that work from here. And I also just you know I want to mention another thing about California because your close neighbors California Insurance Commission

commissioner Dave Jones had a very innovative take on supplier diversity inclusion and started surveying the top rate payers in California way back in 2012. By the way well in advance of any law saying you had to do so there's still no law saying yes to do so. He is also. Taken that innovative program and exported it to five other states who will now certify or will now survey the top rate payers on their supplier diversity efforts and includes LGBT and among those five states includes Washington state. So your insurance commission will now be surveying the insurance companies. So if you have an option you do business with an insurance company you should be very very aggressive in that space right now. And I just want to give a big shout out to Mark Morales. Give a wave if you would. Not only is Mark the president of the L.A. GLC which is a very strong chamber Los Angeles. Also congratulations just won a major award from the SBA Small Business Advocate of the year but has volunteered to serve on the insurance commissions diversity task force has been serving for a long time and has been an aggressive change agent. If you're interested in learning more about the insurance commission work do talk with Mark Jeff a question.

[01:13:11] I just want to say so Cal had had contacted one of our members heard we had a gay trucking company and who actually does hazardous waste and chemical waste and and turned out was certified in the state of California and was blown away. He was only a member for two months never thought being part of an LGBT chamber that that Southern California Gas would be giving him a call. Because he was a certified LGBT business and we never thought we would have an LGBT trucking company.

[01:13:46] That's amazing. I love it. Thank you for sharing. Yeah absolutely.

[01:13:53] So just one more thing about the insurance commissioner I like numbers. We're entrepreneurs we like numbers I like numbers that involve money especially. When the California Insurance Commission started surveying the companies they were looking at 300 insurance companies. That's a lot. Exporting it to five states change that number from 300 to 600. The opportunities which have barely been touched by LGBT bees as far have now doubled. So if you're looking to do business in the insurance industry be aggressive and the insurance companies buy just about everything. So there's a lot of space and opportunities there. But let's let's. I want to change gears and talk about our conference a little bit. The conference experience. Have you been to a conference yet. Have you been to a conference yet. OK. Well yes. One question right here and there were to come back and maybe at least maybe you can help me with this question.

[01:14:49] My question is before you change gears about if you work primarily with government contracts how might this be a benefit to you. And it just if you're a small I saw a lot of people raise your hand you know one person show or just. Seasonal employees or something like that. How do you even determine whether you should be throwing your hat into certain rings. I heard you touch on that a little bit like do you think you're too small to do this work. So you're kind of a combination of my focus. My work has been with government contracts I'd really like to know more about that.

[01:15:26] Sure absolutely and then we'll come back to conference. So government contracting so right now there there is no federal recognition of the LGBT business enterprise that is on that has parity with minorities and women.

[01:15:43] However there are federal agencies that the secretaries have signed M.O. use with us that they will intentionally include LGBT business enterprises and opportunities. So if you're looking at federal agency work anybody here looking at federal agency work

[01:15:58] Ok. So the agencies that have signed our memorandums. Department of Commerce U.S. Small Business Administration Department of Labor. Most recent sorry.

[01:16:10] Yeah. Thank you. We're so proud to. It was really exciting to see Secretary Julian Castro strolling up on our stage to sign that M.O. you at our dinner HUD recently D O T as well I think that one surprised a lot of people a lot of the federal certification good things and the challenging things live at DOJ. So that was very important when if you're looking at lower scale or smaller more local government contracting state of California all those no preferential bidding and it's important to note none of those agencies offer that either they are intentionally inclusive of LGBT business businesses there is a box to identify yourself in procurement and state of California obviously the public utilities commission sort of quasi government because it's actually procuring with

[01:17:02] The private sector but in a highly regulated industry insurance is the same Commonwealth of Massachusetts fully recognizes our certification first state to fully recognize it on par with the other diverse certifications. So I heard two questions one is how do you even determine if you're if this if this will be valuable for you in government certification or government work I would say if you're gonna do government work you should have every certification that you qualify for. So if you qualify to be NBC WB veteran service disabled veteran HUD and the list goes on and on. You should look at all of them but try to look at them and order that strategic for you like what makes the most sense for the opportunity that you're approaching. If you're looking at a government opportunity and you know they're looking for hub zone businesses get that one first if you know they're looking for something else. Get that one first. I will tell you that you do not earn a penny while you're getting certifications. So I have met a few businesses that like took a month off. To do all the certifications. I just like to say for the record that that's insane. Do not do that. I don't know how you will make payroll that month. Stay focused on whatever is productive for your business. Keep the revenue coming in and then chip away at these certifications one at a time. And by the way if you can delegate getting the certification done to your CPA or your lawyer do it lets you stay focused on what's best for you and then to the scale question I would just go back to what we said earlier.

[01:18:41] Not everybody is going to be a prime contractor at the top of a supply chain. I would argue that not everyone should even try that. It's actually quite high risk. I'd rather be tier two or three where you're insulated from some of that risk. Look at all levels of the supply chain.

You know you can be a vendor to another government contractor and let that. Let that entity carry the risk of the contract and you go down a little bit further and mitigate some of the risk. And I know that you'll hear some talk about that on the SBA panel as well. You know there's not a better resource for determining what's the best fit and strategy for you than your local district office of the small business administration. So I think they'll come to that as well. So I want to talk about the conference just for a second it is coming up. It's fairly close to you here and I want everyone to understand what is that experience like how do you use it to your best advantage and how do you prepare for it. And if someone could just get a mike over to Elise Lindbergh I guess everyone knows you here in this room.

[01:19:43] Right. Right here.

[01:19:46] I would just I guess my question to you is you know just talk a little bit about what is the conference experience and what kind of value you find as a business owner to it.

[01:20:00] And the best way to prepare is that on it. Yes. Hello my name is Elise Lindborg.

[01:20:05] I'm the top dog of Zippy dogs and we help you promote your company through the use of promotional products been in business 16 years and around 2010 ish George Piper said you need to get certified like you get to play the gay card. And it's been the best thing that I have ever done for my business at the time. We're about five hundred thousand dollar company. And now we're at about a million dollars. And even when we were five hundred thousand dollars we only had three employees and we still have three employees. So we were working on getting larger contracts and that was through the NGL C.C. and and now working smarter the first conference I went to. I can't remember where it was. Does Dallas. Maybe I can't read remember number one. I went to the conference and my eyes were this big. I was just like what the hell. But it takes a while to get used to the culture. And how you can use your certification. So if you get certified you can't just do what Brent said and say I got a certificate that will get you nowhere. What you need to do is you need to keep showing up. And keep touching these people and showing up because they need to learn to trust you. They need to see your face. They need to see it over and over again and even early it's one time a year they remember you because all of the supplier diversity reps there they're all family themselves so they know each other and they talk to each other. And if somebody does some good work for one company they'll tell the other person across the country that this person does good will work. Sometimes it happens sometimes it doesn't. I haven't. Been trying to get into Starbucks for about three years and finally got my foot in the door and they already referred me to Coca-Cola. Nothing's happened but

[01:22:16] It just it just starts going like a snowball. The court

[01:22:24] In my previous careers I've been to eight hundred million conferences the NGL CCE conference is one of the best I've ever been to. It's well planned out. It's run like a tight ship. They have educational opportunities from how to balance your checkbook all the way up to

how how to acquire a company. They have keynote speakers that are awesome Marcus Lemon. He is. He has a show called The Prophet. He's only a billionaire and he came and spoke to us last year it was Suzy Orman. Shaun T Oh and Barbara Cochran. And it was the first time I think at a NGL S.E.C. conference that someone dropped the f bomb.

[01:23:15] So it was dirty Aquino during a keynote that made me love her even more. It was still a great speech though ironically it was fantastic.

[01:23:27] So it's jampacked it's three days jampacked. You never know who you will meet. And even though you get to meet one on one with supplier diversity reps from the different Fortune 500 companies. Most of the deals that are done are either standing in line waiting for a buffet. The cocktail receptions in the evening. You just talk and you talk and you hand out your card. You be on your best behavior. Try not to drink too much although I did. A deal. With Bristol-Myers Squibb skinny dipping. So it happens everywhere.

[01:24:16] Well we're in Fort Lauderdale. I mean you know and I didn't get arrested

[01:24:22] So I highly recommend it. It's just there's so many opportunities and it's not and it's not just what the Fortune 500 says. It's with other LGBT owners across the country support each other and you learn about mentorship program some of the Fortune 500 have mentorship programs. I've I've. Had a mentor through Chevron

[01:24:45] I forget the other one but it's awesome. So they're small. This year they're only allowing a thousand people and I think it's 65 percent sold out so if you have any questions follow me to the pool.

[01:25:02] Thank you Elise.

[01:25:03] What did you pass that Mike back behind you there are give either way. Sorry. I do. You do not. You know we would welcome you to come and explore these opportunities. I will say to you though and I I will say this as a really loving caring business advocate. I want nothing but your success. I get up every day to try to help LGBT entrepreneurs succeed. You will get more out of the conference if you come already certified because there is more access to opportunity and every supplier diversity person you meet is going to say OK it sounds amazing. You certify and if you say no you're going to slow your process down. So if you qualify you should definitely get it before you get there. If you can and there is still time I will say also that there are businesses that attend that just don't qualify for certification. There are 50 50 owned or other allied owned or the woman owned or something but they find value in our conference. So everyone is absolutely welcome. It's an environment where I think it's the only environment I've ever been in where literally every person there with you wants you to succeed. So the thing you have in common if you if you follow any of our social media once in a while you'll see this hashtag pop up in GLC family and it just kind of happened organically because we've create an environment where people are coming together with shared

objectives and wanting to support each other to help everyone grow. So that's really exciting. And we do hope that many of you will join us. Any other. Questions out there

[01:26:33] What's the web address for the conference. If you go to NGL see dot org you can't miss it. So you can click on you can get to it a number of different ways. It's a banner that's. Yeah. NTSC C dot org there's a banner that scrolling. So when it hits Palm Springs I think that's the first one that comes up you click on that you can click on events. If you type in NGL S.E.C. conference Google it it'll come up but if you go to our Web site and you also see dot org you can't miss it.

[01:26:59] What stopped you from becoming certified and expanding and diversifying into products that would be under the same corporate structure.

[01:27:10] Are you 51 percent owned operated managed controlled by a person who is LGBT. Me. Nothing stops you. Okay come on and we'd love to have you. And you know I see a lot of publishing companies expanding in that way. You know if you can print a magazine you can print an annual report.

[01:27:28] I'm a veteran and I'm also disabled. I've never taken advantage of any of those.

[01:27:33] We would love to help you get all three of those. We're happy to support you. Thanks for your service. Right here.

[01:27:39] And then one one thing right here a lot of supplier chain of companies you know work rights your company commercial residential service.

[01:27:51] Pinsky You talk a little bit about that. Yeah. Jump into it Brent if you have a question. So if I understand correctly you're more of a direct to customer company is you're saying you know I think that certification still makes sense for you and I would go back to looking at different places in the supply chain for entrepreneurs I always ask the question Who's your ideal client and most kind of paint a very similar picture. They want someone who appreciates the quality of their product is decisive and can afford their product. And I would say to you that a CEO of an LGBT owned company would be a brilliant client for you when you get certified and you come into this ecosystem just as you have here in the GSP say you're surrounded by other entrepreneurs who in fact would be brilliant customers for you. And I can't imagine that there's not some applications for your product and in some industrial spaces as well. But it might be a long journey to figure that out. You know while you're getting there let's get you some really high quality clients that you want. And you know I also find CEOs are my favorite client as well. One of the reasons is because they refer they refer aggressively.

[01:29:07] And can I jump into you know I think I like to use this analogy. I like carpentry work so it works for me but I think certification is sort of like a toolbox where you have a ton of tools in there and you may use some of the tools. Now you might use them tomorrow you might use

them five years from now to build whatever it is you're trying to build and whatever it is you're trying to build is your business and achieve those respective goals right. Some of those tools. You might never use but some of them include things like educational programming so you know you can always learn better ways to save money within your business just on Tuesday we actually hosted a webinar on how to franchise your company you know that's very specific. But that said there's so many different educational opportunities that you can take advantage of as a certified business. A lot of times our corporate partners will we'll share some of their resources the SBA certainly does that very well. So I think there's there's really something in certification for everybody as long as you're looking to grow your business and become better at what it is you do better best.

[01:30:12] Hi I just wanted to touch on the certification and the conferences. We got certified. I actually own a business that is LGBT owned it's owned by myself and my husband. We originally got certified so I could teach other chamber members how to get certified. We never thought that we would use that certification. And so we went to the first conference in Las Vegas and our company imports Asian antiques and sells them to the movie studios interior designers and hotels. So it's a very specific thing. So the first thing that I learned was Do not waste Megan's time sitting across from her in a matchmaking trying to sell her Asian antiques to T-Mobile. So think about what you sell and whether you can sell it to the to the person that you're talking to. The other things that I've learned is you know to to be valid to use those capabilities statements and your small bit of time that you have with somebody like Megan in explaining what you do succinctly. Because Megan doesn't buy anything she doesn't have a checkbook and she's not buying you know your product or service she has to explain to her procurement people what you do and if you can't tell somebody succinctly what you do these conferences will help you in learning how to do that

[01:31:39] Yeah. That's great. If you want to say more about that I mean the role of supplier diversity professional is very important to understand how they actually operate within the company. Forget about the deal. Just forget about it. Forget about the deal. Focus on the relationship. Get to know and trust this person let them get to know you and understand what you do have a question right down here. Let them get to know what you do so that they can advocate for you internally and you'll get good results if you stay focused on the deal. It gets a little bit tricky so focus on the relationship.

[01:32:12] The question you're talking about a certification site visits and such. Can you speak to application with like home based businesses or you know email limbs or with service stuff I knew you talked about. You know SEO is a great customer. Totally agree. But figuring out like how that fits in because my wheels have been turning about all the potential things but I really before I came here didn't have any idea about any of this. So I'm super excited but I'm also like what can I do what can't I do. How do I fit what's the what. So if you have any recommendations.

[01:32:41] Yeah. So. A couple of things one in regards to the site visit as part of the application process. Many of our certified businesses have home based businesses to cut down on overhead it totally makes sense if that is the case. We can do a site visit off site the site visit is composed of two things One tour if applicable. If you have a home office usually there's not really a tour. So that's sort of sort of not applicable. The.

[01:33:07] The second part though this is my laptop. That's right. That's true. Nothing wrong but this is base is my office.

[01:33:16] But the second part really is the interview and that can be done. You know I usually recommend a Starbucks as long as it's quiet enough to have a conversation. We can do the site visit there once you're certified. We have a pretty robust orientation that we ask you to attend. It's a webinar and I think that'll at least show you what shows you want it shows you everything. That certification has to offer. So then you can help throughout. You can sort of identify OK these things to my point earlier. These things might be well suited for me now these things might be well suited for me later or oh you know I hadn't even considered Tier 2 or tier 3 contracting. That's that's perfect for the scale and size of my business. So I think the orientation really helps you get a better sense of where you fit into certification and how it can help your business and brand the plane may energetic. As I've said I recently just got certified with NGL S.C. that only occurred last September but prior to that. You've mentioned me saying that trying to get a certification with an MSNBC we actually paid them a thousand dollars to do an expedited certification and these people did not even bother to send us a

[01:34:33] Certified letter saying that we were being rejected. Finally when we when we. When I reached out to them they said oh yes we sent you something. I go where no one's ever received it. Finally they emailed it to us. We asked for reconsideration. They denied it. I just want to say that NGL S.C. very professional from beginning till the end till now. I mean everything Brent would even send me emails on oh by the way San Francisco Business Times is conducting a list for top 50 LGBT businesses. See if you qualify.

[01:35:12] Thankfully we did qualify in fact of the 5th M B one of the ones being profiled for that list. So but

[01:35:20] They're great they're great they're very helpful.

[01:35:25] Both Brent and Sam. I went to the gala last year. It was phenomenal and I'd been to a lot of gala dinners I've attended a lot of conferences. It was just unbelievable. It was very very nice. Beautiful I went out and bought a brand new tux. My wife went out and brought a bought a brand new dress for this event.

[01:35:45] It's worth going to and I understand for small businesses it's hard but when you think about it it's also business right off. So it's a way to take somewhat of a vacation and let Uncle Sam put some of the bill but really it's. I learned a lot. There was also matchmaking

there and it's nice it's nice to shake the hands of the movers and shakers friend GLC C and everybody else.

[01:36:11] So that's sorry. So make that along.

[01:36:14] Thank you for that beautiful plug. I'm going to come right back to you one second hold them back. I'll be right there. One thing I just want to make sure that we get in because we're getting close to the end of time and often this question comes up and it didn't come up so I'm going to ask myself this question. Geez how much does it cost to get certified. What is the application fee to get certified. There's a very important question and I don't want anybody to be surprised you have an application fee for our certification. It's 400 dollars is well in line with all the other certification bodies we're proud of our price. We think it's competitive. I'll make no apologies to anyone for the fee that we charge but I will say this is really important for you to understand. If you're a member of the GSB pay you send us a receipt or a letter from Louise or her staff stating that you're a member in good standing of the GSB. We're going to waive your fee. We want you to invest those dollars right here in the GSP. It's. It's really important to make this point and it's not just because we want to support the GSP and we do but it's because Brent's analogy earlier about the tool box certification is one tool in your toolbox. The powerful local network that you have here with your local chamber is another tool. They're equally as important. We want to see them buried together. We want you to get certified and we want you to maintain your local membership when it's time for you to recertify. If you're still a member will waive your fee again forever as long as you keep investing those dollars here locally.

[01:37:41] Hi. That was actually the perfect segue way because I just wanted to share my story. I'm Jenn humanities and I'm owner of Eastside women's health center and I've been a midwife for 20 years one of my services is LGBT family building specifically for the queer community and trans guy care. I moved out here from New York eight months ago and I quickly wanted to find out where my community was and it quickly led me to the GSB. I became a member. And my fee was waived and I got an email from Brent and I wanted to publicly thank you for all your help and going back and forth with me almost immediately real time about the information that I needed what I was missing. What are the steps with the application process and I got an email yesterday saying that my certification is pending. So hopefully within the week we'll be certified and right away. Ari Rosen also a big shout out to our army who is a big part of the GSB who's an incredibly. Incredible staff member with the GSB a expedited that process and it's been smooth and so fast and so rewarding. And yesterday it came home pretty late from Central Washington University. I spoke at the dyke rally there and my daughter I have twin daughters and one of them left me a post saying congratulations on your LGBTQ certification mommy hashtag. Happy day. So it's real it works. The process was wonderful very swift and if you're not a member of the GSB become a member. They're incredibly important. This is it's an important way to be part of your community and if you are a past member definitely renew well said thank you for all the

[01:39:34] Applause. We have four minutes left. I'm going to leave it to the audience questions comments. So we must have been incredibly thorough. Or else everyone wants a cup coffee right now and we're all that standing between you and break time right now. I want to thank all of you so much for your kind attention. Great questions will all be hanging around for the rest of the day and for the reception. So we look forward to talking to you more. We're gonna take a break right now to enjoy some refreshments and then we'll come back and we're here from the SBA district office.

[01:40:08] Thank you. Okay so

[01:40:16] We're gonna come back to the second part of the program. Again I'm Nancy pauses oh I'm the district director the SBA here in Seattle. Really want to thank all of you for coming out today. This is a really impressive turnout for the first you know this is the first time we've ever done this and it definitely tells me we're going to have to do this again. So I thank you. Yes. So what we're talking about today we're leading a panel of SBA Resource Partners. And what I've decided to do I'm going to have each of them introduce themselves and talk up to 10 minutes. You know just tell a little bit about what you do and about the programs that you're discussing. So let's go ahead and get started with Julie McFarlane is the deputy district director in our Seattle office. Julie

[01:41:04] We're at fourth in battery and Bell Town and we have quite an active office there which you'll find out about with all these wonderful resource partners. I'm going to talk a little bit about the the third see are one of the Seas contracting and certifications. We talked a little bit about the federal government and those certifications which I'll go into a little bit. But to start off I just want to say that selling to the government in fact any level of government is a good way to increase your revenue your customers and and grow your company because the federal government spends about four hundred billion dollars every year and 23 percent of that is supposed to go to small business. And last year it exceeded 25 percent. So that meant 100 billion dollars went to small business which is the highest it's ever been. And so we were really happy about that. Someone wanted to know what a small businesses and it's different for every business every business has. A naked code. And that's a description of the industry that they're businesses in. So NAIC stands for North American industrial classification code. And so you figure out what your next code is and then SBA sets the standard for what is considered small. So it's really quite generous. But ninety eight percent of businesses are considered small businesses. So construction is I don't know the exact number I think like thirty seven and a half million per year. If you're under that you're considered small. So

[01:42:46] Most businesses are small.

[01:42:50] As I said the federal agencies they have goals to meet 23 percent of their dollars are supposed to go towards small business 5 percent to Woman Owned Small Business 3 percent to hub zone businesses and I'll talk a little bit about what those are and then service disabled veteran on small business is supposed to get 3 percent. So last year I said you know

small business exceeded the 23 they got 25 service disabled got 11 percent which added up to thirty five point four billion. So these are big dollar amounts that you can have an opportunity to participate in. The SBA certifications are the 8a program the hub zone program service disabled. Program. Ada is kind of our flagship certification program it's been around since the late 60s and what it is is a certification for to be in the program for nine years and you must be socially and economically disadvantaged to be certified for that program. And it's actually a fantastic program if you qualify because if you want to do business with the government it's all about learning how to do that and actually getting matched with sole source contracts. So you learn it's just a wonderful program to learn how to do the federal government contracting. Hub zone is based more about upon where your business is located so you best be located in an area that's considered to be high unemployment or low income.

[01:44:33] And then 51 percent owned. No that's not right the the. Employees 33 percent 35 percent of the employees must live in any hub zone so that the purposes of this program is to help low income and high unemployment areas. Woman on small business is really taking off right now. They've set up a new certification process called certified SBA dot gov where you go in and electronically get certified that way and then they're going to be adding the 8a program to that in the hub zone program to that system. What happens is the federal agencies get to set aside their contracts for just for a sole source to in a day or a hub zone depending on the situation or woman owned. They can compete it among just that small pool of. Bidders. And in a large full and open competition they get a 10 percent reduction in their bid or they add 10 percent to the highest large business bids. So you get a benefit that way too. Also everything the government buys between 3000 dollars and hundred fifty thousand dollars is considered simple Simplified Acquisition threshold. So all of those are set aside for small business. So if that's kind of your sweet spot of what you like to bid on that's all for salt. Small business which is a huge amount and all of the. Procurements are listed on Fed biz ops. Which is the national Web site for where every federal agency lists.

[01:46:21] Their procurements that are out there. So you can also learn from their what each agency buys as well. So again it's all about research. When you're going to talk to a federal agency. They all have a small business specialist sort of like a diversity supplier person. And when you go to visit them same thing you need to know what they buy make it easy for them to use you. We talked a lot of earlier about being a subcontractor. That's a really good way to get into federal government contracting as well because you can just be a sub to that large prime and again not have the big risk but you can get involved in the system and learn how it works. Everybody has to be in Sam. I don't know if everybody's heard of Sam. The system for award management that's where you register so the federal government can find you and pay you. And it's another way to use that system to market and see who your competitors are and and what they're. What kind of contracts they're winning. So maybe you can go after those as well. Don't forget about the other levels of government the state the county the city the port the libraries the schools all of those. Have the same kind of processes where they're looking for diverse. Businesses so that they can

[01:47:50] You can participate with them as well.

[01:47:55] The main thing is on SBA dot gov under contracting we have a ton of information. We have. Contracting courses everything from how to sell to the government to what our certification programs are to how to apply. There's also blogs on various topics on like how to research what federal agencies buy. And also instructional videos just a ton of information. Anything you want to know is going to be there but there's a lot of assistance out there to. The P tax Washington State P Tech. Is the best place I would send everybody there first. If you want to get involved in government contracting because they help you get your Dunn's number get your cage code help you with your capability statement. They are the professionals and it's a free service. They're funded by Department of Defense which is the largest purchaser of spender of money from the federal government and I will let these guys talk about what they do because they're the service providers as well who help small businesses grow their businesses. So any questions. Fee tech procurement technical assistance center. Procurement technical assistance center. And they we we are so fortunate in this state we have the best PE tech ever. They are so knowledgeable they put on a ton of workshops. They work with you one on one and most all of it is free. They also have a big matching service which is a kind of there's a little cost involved with that but once they know what you want to sell to the government they'll search databases and they'll say okay here's a match for you you might want to bid on this one. I mean it's fabulous. They're all wonderful and they're all over the state. The main office is down in Olympia but there's one in Tacoma. All over the state

[01:49:58] Thank you Julie. That was great. Great information. Let's move on Michael France is a C is a business advisor with the Washington State Small Business Development Center program and he's the first one of that organization that I met when I moved to Seattle 11 years ago. Michael you've been a wealth of information and such a help to businesses. I really appreciate that.

[01:50:19] Thank you. Good afternoon everyone. The Washington Small Business Development Center is partially funded by the SBA and it was created by an act of Congress in nationally as a program in 1980. So every state has this program. Our mission in Washington is to promote economic vitality within the community. And we do that by providing expert advising business advising demand driven high quality training and secondary research by existing to existing businesses and entrepreneurs. So in other words we deliver business advising and high quality business training. The format is no fee. It's one on one and it's confidential but it's not free. And what that means is it's goal oriented and we look for a commitment with the people that we work with to work towards a goal and commit to objectives the statewide network is hosted by WSU and the logic behind that is that. WSU is a land grant institution and can project this program to the four corners of the state. We're aligned under an associate V.P. of economic development and external affairs. His name is Anson Flatland and our state director is located in Spokane. His name is Dwayne Flatland and he's my direct boss. I'm located in downtown Seattle. There are 24 centers around the state. Twenty six certified business advisors and we have two export specialists one on the east side and one here in

Seattle the Puget Sound region. Here has eight centers and twelve Certified Business Advisors. The typical advisor will have direct experience with owning a business managing in a significant capacity advanced degrees such as an MBA. And also is certified by our peers internally and that's a pretty rigorous credential they must have. A glimpse of the career X Bertie's of the twenty six. Advisors around the state. Two former bankers. CPA two engineers two manufacturing experts Internet I.T. and a few people for career experience coffee industry retail. A CFO. Commercial leasing venture capital human resources and export. What that all means is that we team together and collaborate for various kinds of business cases where we can bring specialized background to the table in team fashion

[01:53:36] Some demographics and numbers just to give you a sense of scale. Last year we serve thirty five hundred businesses statewide represents over 33000 hours of work. It resulted in creating Thirteen hundred jobs. Sixty one million of documented capital formation resulted. One hundred and seventy one business starts. That's an example of the results that come out the other end from this program in Puget Sound. The businesses that we served last year. Break. Break down like this twenty nine percent were minorities and 18 percent were veteran owned businesses. To give you an idea of a bottom line metric. The increase in sales for the businesses that we have worked with. Last year. Was ten point five percent. In other words they grew sales by 10 percent. The statewide average is 5 percent. So it shows. That a technical assistance program like this can advance your business goals. Assist you in growing the increase in employment above our business clients advanced about 17 percent compared to a statewide average of 2 percent. They were growing. There are three. Categories or levels of service as to how we work with entrepreneurs and business owners.

[01:55:24] The first is a phone session or an email and maybe an information exchange. A question that comes in by telephone email or some other type of contact

[01:55:36] It may be a specific referral to a professional consultant lawyer CPA or a sense of direction for a program and a link to some data. The second category is short term assistance on specific projects that typically can be a problem. Or it can be a short term goal such as a business plan for financing

[01:56:07] Buying or Selling a business. Other kinds of specific organizational issues hiring and those meetings are set up as a series of appointments with email and phone type interactions that take place between meetings. The third category of how we work with businesses is more intensive. It's a longer term objective has more complexity. It's appropriate for a small number of businesses. Business owners. We work very commonly comprehensively to analyze the business and work on long term goals. We have some. This program has some supporting resources that may be of interest to you. One is professional market. Secondary market research done by professional market researchers at the University of Texas San Antonio. They serve our national program. All centers we have an intern team in in our headquarters in Spokane that will work on market research requests. We have an employment law advice

online and happens to be a collaboration with the local employment. Law firm and it's a great archive of information for hiring and recent human resource issues

[01:57:41] We deliver a program called profit mastery. It's an entrepreneurial finance program that's very very good and it drives performance in a business and we have some data sources one of which is called industrious CFO. It's data profiles for various kinds of businesses and it can help with planning and it can help with troubleshooting business we also have a national association that provides a lot of professional development and various kinds of financial tools and so forth. And we have an Internet collaboration software platform that we use between meetings or for meetings to work with business business owners that are away

[01:58:38] Geographically from downtown Seattle let's say or in other parts of the state. How do you access the advisors in the small business development center. First of all one option is to go to our Web site which is w SPDC dot org. And there's a request form on that Web site. You can send in and one of us will respond. The primary way to engage us is simply to contact one of our centers

[01:59:11] By email or telephone. You can find them on our Web site give some background give some insight into what you're trying to accomplish and what you need help with and the process will develop from there. With one of our advisors thank you

[01:59:34] Thank you Michael. And I want to remind those of you that are from out of state California and Oregon. These services are available in all 50 states. SBA has 68 offices across the country so you'll find them in your states you just won't find as good quality as what we have here in Washington. Put in a plug for Washington. Thank you Michael. Next help Brookins is a mentor with the Seattle scorch chapter and he's going to tell you about their program

[02:00:03] Good afternoon. How many people here have heard of a elevator pitch. How many people have won. A few less to have an effective elevator pitch. You need to. One identify yourself. And your product or service. Secondly. What do you do. Third how you do it. And fourth. Specifically how the individual you're talking with. Could benefit from. So. Simply. My name is Hal Brookins. I'm with Seattle's score. We are a nationwide organization of 11000 plus members. We provide one on one mentoring. Tools templates. And workshops. And when we have a client. Starting in business or can be even in business already wants to get unstuck and grow we can show that you have a 50 percent chance better chance of succeeding when working with a score mentor. Did I say we're all free. We're all volunteer we're all free. And you can use score. For as long as you want. My job as a as a mentor is not to find you every single answer or know everything. But like Michael said to tie you into a network of professionals that can get you the answer that you need when you needed. In order to access score. How many people are from out of state. Okay. The National score website. Is WW w score dot org. In the state in Seattle it's Seattle dot score. Dot org. You can go on there and register. Go under. Find a mentor or just hit the button says mentor and then you can either. Sign up to get one on

one mentoring or you can. Go to online mentoring. Once you sign up you're in the national system. You can go anywhere in the country. And talk to anyone over 11000 plus mentors. You can use us for as long as you want. We have one of our mentors that has been working with a client for 23 years. They started out with one pet supply shop. They now have 33. And they're looking to transition. Into retirement. And he's still working with them.

[02:03:07] They say we're free. I went to score. Twenty three years or. Forty two years ago excuse me

[02:03:21] We've been around for 52 years this year. But I went there forty two years ago and I had. Four jobs in three years out of college. And my mother in law was ready to kill me. I went into business for myself. In capital equipment but I found myself going back to. Working for. A Fortune 500 company

[02:03:45] Company as Herman Miller. I sold office furniture to the government. Julie said government has lots of my spends lots of money. Yes. And they buy nice office Ranger too. When I retired four years ago I came to score. And

[02:04:06] Being a sales guy. I went well besides knowing about sales. I have a wonderful background in government. And I knew all of the Pittock tech. Folks. So I'm the only person at that score that can spell GSA. So if you want to work with. The government or sell to the government. I'm your guy

[02:04:31] I can help you. Now Herman Miller was a very inclusive company. And. I know the

[02:04:42] Lady that was here earlier supplier diversity. New Herman Miller. But. We were the first Fortune 500 company in the country to have a published LBJ T Q policy and. Being Michigan based that seem incongruous. But fortunately they consult with other Fortune 500 companies today to help them become become more inclusive. And when I went to score I looked around I said something done feel really good here

[02:05:19] Is a bunch of old fat bald straight white guys here. Well I complained. And they made me the chair for two years. And then I wrote a grant. To go out to the communities

[02:05:39] To get branch offices to help underserved areas of the country or the other Puget Sound.

[02:05:46] I was successful. We have now an office in South Everett kits up. Bellevue Eastside. And I personally run the Rainier Valley office and do work on Capitol Hill. I am looking for women and minorities. LBJ T. Q. clients. And also mentors. People who have a few scratches on him from doing the business battle. For 40 years. It could be less than 40 years but. I'd like to talk with you if you're interested. And if you have any questions. We'll wait till the end after Julianne is done.

[02:06:32] Thank you. Thank you. Well

[02:06:40] You never know what he's going to say but it's always good stuff. Thank you for that.

[02:06:45] And I would like to add that one client that he talked about that's been with them for 23 years is just now growing size standards and will be considered a large business if not already. So that's. Something that can happen when you work with the score organization for an extended time. So next we're going to go to Juliana do so and she is the director of the Veteran's Business Outreach Center.

[02:07:08] Julianne is going to tell us about a couple of programs that are offered through business impact northwest.

[02:07:14] Hello everybody. So like Nancy said I'm Julianna do so. So I want to talk to you about a couple of different programs today. So

[02:07:23] In case you figured out the small business administration funds a few different programs so there is an amazing office on Fourth Avenue where you can go talk to a lot of folks. That's where score's gonna be located but they also find a few different programs they partially fund SPDC and they fully fund our organization the Veteran's Business Outreach Center and then they also find women's business centers. So there's lots of options for you through the small business administration but I also don't want you to get hung up on the names so Women's Business Center Veteran's Business Outreach Center. Those are definitely groups that we target and we do a lot of outreach too but then the nice thing is and I'm going to differ with how that we're not free. You've already paid through us with your tax dollars so we're all taxpayer funded.

[02:08:17] So if you fit into that category as a person who files taxes you should come visit us because you've paid for our services. All of us.

[02:08:28] Right. So for example at the Veteran's Business Outreach Center we're about 85 percent veteran and about 15 percent non veteran. So. What. The point I'm getting at is. That we all have a lot of great services. And you should work with. As many of us as you can because we all have a lot of different backgrounds all of the counselors have different backgrounds all of the centers. There's nothing that says you can't work with all of us. You can go to a class. That we're putting on you can go to class one of these other guys is putting on and you can get lots of really good quality free. Previously paid through your taxes or. Per your efforts as Michael said advice and counseling counseling and training. So our organization Veteran's Business Outreach Center and the Washington Women's Business Center are located at the business impact. Northwest used to be called Community Capital Development. You might have heard of that. It's called Business Impact northwest. Now we're located at 16th

and Jackson where a g SBA members and I'm really excited about that. You can come to us. We have a few different programs that we put on twice a month. We have a jumpstart orientation program we can just come learn about the services get some information about if you want to start a business even where do you start.

[02:09:58] What are some of the basic pieces that you need quarterly. Each program puts on the women's business center's side puts on a launch and grow program. The Veteran's Business Outreach Center site we do a three day it's a. Fund it's a. Planet. Crowdfunded hashtag it three days in a row. Classes someone's ones on the business model canvas writing a business plan the next one is on crowdfunding or different funding options and then the last one is on social media. We visit the Veteran's Business Outreach Center. We actually work with four states Washington Oregon Alaska Idaho. If you were at the same event in Portland about a month ago you might have seen me there. I was there. Hello. Welcome to Seattle. But we as you can imagine working with veterans they're very technology savvy now. So we actually use Google Hangouts Skype telephone you're welcome to come see us. We love to see you. Right. But you can also work with you lots of different ways and very remotely. And so we're really excited to work with you. And if you have any questions I'm going to. Order in the back. Raise your hand Ira.

[02:11:17] And Steve in the back. Raise your hand. And Joe you can raise your hand to I get really excited about order and Steve orders our program coordinator. So she's the person I make sure I'm always where I'm supposed to be and if you email us to ask questions or just probably going to be the first person you talk to Steve is a business counselor for us. And so you'll probably be talking to Steve as well if you need to sign up for our services. And I did want to add a few things when the. Panel was up here earlier. They talked a lot about elevator pitch. How talked about it a lot. I like to call it strategic statement. I sold insurance for a long time and office supplies door to door and they talked a lot about your elevator pitch and it made me feel really like think Glengarry Glen Ross. You know cause kind of squeezey so I don't like to say elevator pitch I like to see a strategic statement. But it's the same thing right. Unity capabilities statement you need to know who your customers are. You need to know how to reach them and all of those specific pieces. And even to get your certifications. And so if you need help with any of those things. That's why we're here. Right. Whether you're a small business whether you're a one person business and you want to expand or you want to stay small or you're thinking about starting a business and you don't want nowhere to start. You always have lots of questions. And if you just think Man I wish I had somebody I could just call and ask this question to really quickly or I could just email them and get a response back. You're looking at a table full of those people. Right. And none of us I mean we all have teams and peers that do lots of the same. And do those things so please please use our services we're here for you.

[02:13:02] What we're here for. Thanks Julianna

[02:13:11] So before we go into the Q and A session I want to just touch on SBA loan programs because you just heard from two of the seas and I think Mr. Goings addressed that earlier.

[02:13:21] The three Cs of the SBA but contracting and counseling the capital end is probably what SBA is best known for is our loan program. We do. Last year we guaranteed about eighteen hundred loans just short of a billion dollars in our district. Impressive and it's a very robust program. We offer that through a group of lenders. And there are probably about 90 lenders in our district that support the SBA loan program. We are we're lucky to have some with us today we have representatives of homes Street Bank from two states. That's that's pretty cool. Scott Harvey and Mark Morales are here and Debbie and Debbie Weber is also here. And I was talking with Scott Harvey. I asked him a question just to verify your question about what is a small business because there are a couple of different ways to look at that. When we work with our example our 8a program. We look at the businesses based on their next codes and you could determine if you're small based on number of employees or annual receipts. But I asked Scott how he looks at it as a lender and he said. First of all you should know 98 percent of the businesses in the state of Washington are small. So most likely anybody is going to be small but if you have a net worth less than 15 million dollars. Or your net receipts averaged over the last two years or less than five million dollars. Chances are you're small. Did I get that right Scott.

[02:14:59] Net income net income. Right. Then you're small. And Scott also told me and I'm going to share this news because it's. It's kind of fun to hear something successful that happened just very recently

[02:15:18] An LGBT couple in this community. Is it Seattle Scott. He. Was recently awarded an SBA loan for five hundred thousand dollars. And that was through home state bank. And. They they took out the loan to open their second PI business. So I think congratulations. You know you're reaching out into this community and you're making loans to. Well a business that's very dear to my heart. I love pie. Thank you. That's great. Thank you. Let's see what else do I need to tell you about the loan program. Basically we get a lot of people asking about our programs and there is a a cap of about 5 million on the limit that we can guarantee. But you'll get your best information dealing with one of the partners that's listed it are seated at the table because they're all working with businesses that are interested in expanding or even starting a business. And they're going to be working with business planning and that's a very critical part of it. And you heard that over and over but the business plan once it's completed you're going to take that to the lender and work with them and they'll make the determination if they want that to be an SBA backed loan or if they're going to do it on their own. We really have a great program in the state work very closely with our. Many lenders. I think that that said we can move on to some Q and A so. Let's have some questions. Anybody have something to ask our esteemed panel here. Oh my they did too good a job of telling me what they do. Okay so I've got answers. Yes this lady over here I believe ask about government

[02:17:07] Oh did you ask of a government attack. I think of hitech. Yeah OK.

[02:17:15] We measured it a couple of times earlier about capability statement. There is a format. That. Is available to you either through P tack or or me. I have a graphic person who actually will do a capability statement for you. And she's really reasonable. And I'm not supposed to recommend any one particular person of the three that I have. There is one that is really really good.

[02:17:46] Anyway anybody but you need to have that capability statement because in the small business set aside area these prime contractors have to have an office to do business with minority and small businesses and they need to have your physical document in their file. And the SBA has a group that goes round and audits them to make sure they haven't

[02:18:16] So the question I had and I think anybody could answer this so jump in. I noticed that in the room several of you have been in business more than five years which means you've you've been in business during a very difficult economy. So I'd like to ask. Anyone on the panel what are some of the challenges that you think these businesses have faced as a result of. Of a recessive economy over the years. And how how could you help them with that. Anybody

[02:18:50] Talk about the business model canvas how I will also answer one of the one of the things for you Nancy. You know I just think about the struggle in the economy and where it's been. Access to capital is one of the first things that comes to mind being able to access the capital and meaning getting loans and things like that and now coming through on the other side. What does your credit look like. As a result of that what kind of collateral do you have. Working with veterans it's a huge issue because a lot of veterans don't have a home. You've been deployed or you've been overseas right. You don't have a home so collateral so that access to capital peace retaining good employees peace for a small business your first employee your first hire is probably one of the biggest decisions you'll ever make because you go from being the face of the business to now you have somebody else representing your business. And that first hire. So and I think especially now if you work in the city of Seattle I know a lot of people are really concerned with some of the minimum wage laws and things like that and how does that affect your business and how can you balance it and can you when you pay people how much can you pay them and does it hurt.

[02:20:02] Does it have to be competitive for them to be able to live in Washington state and have a good wage you know and all of those pieces are big dynamic pieces that can have a huge effect on your business right. So just all of those pieces so I think just off the top of my head I think about good hires retaining good people being able to pay them what you can afford to pay them and be a viable business and not have to be a hobby business but also to to retain them over a large enough amount of time and then access to capital. How want to me to talk about the business model canvas a little bit and you heard me mention it earlier. So. Who here is or when you wrote when you started your business wrote a business plan because we

have a lot of people. When you wrote your business plan. Who here it took you let's say six months or longer to write your plan. And you probably wish you could have gone to market sooner write down your plan. So there's a there's a tool called Business Model Canvas if you've heard of lean lean anything right lean is the big thing now.

[02:21:10] So if you do project management there's Lean Planning it's it's come now into the small business world. So the business model canvas is a lean startup tool to one page. It's basically a one page document that has all of the pieces that go into a good business model. Who are your key partners what are your key resources what are your costs going to be what's your basically your value proposition which is your elevator Elevator Pitch strategic statement all those pieces right right in the middle. And it has all of those pieces on one piece of paper so you can think through your business model on one piece of paper in one setting and then once you've kind of hashed out where you want to go then you can go start to do some research on and get more in-depth on those smaller pieces. But the idea is that if you're not getting a loan or you're not going to go you're not going to be trying to get investors and you don't need a 50 page business plan which most people don't. Because if you did write a business plan you more than likely did not look at it ever again once you were in business right.

[02:22:17] That I like to go. There's the quote you know the plan is not really that valuable but the planning process is invaluable. So. That's a huge new business plans with the business model canvas gives you the ability to have everything laid out in front of you in one place. And then if what you're thinking through doesn't work well you just scrap it and start over but you've done it quickly so you're able to get into business more quickly you're able to start putting money in your pocket more quickly and then you're able to troubleshoot a lot more quickly and really work out your business model and what that looks like. We. I'm a big fan of it. We have in everybody's office we have a big. Huge poster size of it. So if you come in with us you get to use different colored posts and put them all over in each of your customer segments is on a different color posted and we get to put it up and you get to track how you're going to reach that segment. How are you going to pay what products they're going to buy. Goes all the way through it's pretty fun. Who doesn't want to play posts. Thank you.

[02:23:27] And so the comment to Nancy's question is people get lazy. They may have a passion at one time but unless they write it down. They just they lose all the good stuff. And they keep going over and doing it again and again and again and they just don't get to get to market. Solve

[02:23:50] Planning. Michael anything to add.

[02:23:54] Yeah I think I'm seeing over the last year a lot of issues that connect to growth. So I was impressed by the number of people here that have businesses and especially at the five year mark you're beyond the first couple of years you get beyond the first couple of years of establishing a business and now it begins to find its niche. And the question becomes where do I take it. And many people want to grow it for a variety of reasons. Grow your business or

have a vision. And. Then the issues that growth presents to you become the challenges. So for example hiring. Growing through the incremental costs of hiring. New product lines and so forth. One challenge that's happening right now is on the expense side of the business. The expenses are increasing creeping up and you can raise prices to some extent. But the challenge the true core challenge in that case is to do business better and to evolve. And. So. Here's something to remember. It and most people don't remember this. Until. They get to the end. Of. Their interest level in the business and they want to dispose of it. It's an asset and it has value and that's a challenge. It's a challenge. While you're wearing all the hats and growing your business and. Thinking ahead. Working with your vision making it happen. And managing it day to day it's a challenge to remember that your business is an asset. And ultimately you're going to do one in four things with it. And it's a challenge to think about this in the present. You're going to close it. You're going to sell it. You're going to. Transfer to a family member. Or you're going to merge it into another business. So what you do now today affects the eventual value and in in the long term view most of the challenges I'm seeing today. Keeping your mind on all of those different daily and long term issues.

[02:26:43] Thank you very much. Julie did you have anything to add. Yeah I think. You have to keep learning and not just work in your business but on your business and SBA we have a couple programs once called emerging leaders. It's like a masters level. 12 week course. That's 26 weeks all of us every other week. Yes. So you there's as a small number of people in this class maybe 18 20 and meet every two weeks and go over different business topics and get to network with other small business owners. And. I think something like that where you're networking you're learning you're looking outside at your business is something that will really help you grow. And also attending workshops like this like score has workshops on how to build a business plan how to get a loan. You know just go go out there and keep learning about your business and small business and all the resources that are available. Also in September we have something called Jump Start. No it's called is fair and it's held at Renton vote tech. It's disarray with days. Last Saturday in September and they get maybe 500 people there and it's a bunch of free workshops on a. Ton of topics. Lots of resource tables where you can learn what people buy this you know different state agencies or their cities or their resources are there. So just kind of maybe you could sign up for our newsletter and we highlight these things all the time of what's coming up and Desiree can help you if you want to get signed up on our our newsletter but just be out there and be with other small businesses and just keep learning.

[02:28:35] Thank you Julie which is a great segway as we're about ready to wrap this up. Any of these programs you can learn about by going to the Web to SBA dot gov. And if you do slash w a it'll be our local programs or in another state just go SBA dot gov and you can. Hear more you can read more about all of these programs and your local resources your local contacts. I want to thank the panelists. Thank you for taking the time and sharing your insight with everybody today. Please pick up their cards if you can. You've got a lot of talent sitting right there and I want to thank all of you for your patience and. Thank you. As

[02:29:19] Another round. Thank you so much. Nancy and Calvin before and the SBA team really wonderful applause

[02:29:29] And of course I want to thank NGL C.C. and salmon Branford for coming out from D.C. We really appreciate that and all of you for taking the time. You know we started out the day talking about equality in business and that we are one of the business sectors the LGBT community that has really understood the importance of that for a long time. And I'm really proud that to close our program today we have someone who's very important in Seattle. He is a good friend of business he is a good friend of social justice. So he really gets the LGBT business community because he understands that equality is good business. He's been very involved with GSA. He definitely supports the small business community. He's worked a lot on education especially for four preschool and four early infants to make things better. He's Mr. transportation right now and maybe he'll mention how a small business you must support sound transit 3 as we're gonna be getting to that important thing. But he also is part of our county. He leads our county is our King County Executive. He supports LGB Seattle's LGBT tourism initiative by being a good partner with GSP around our tourism initiative. So we're very fortunate to have this very close partner and our King County exact Dow Constantine.

[02:31:05] Thank you Louise. And oh boy you gave me a whole bunch more things to talk about I will not add to the length of the speech.

[02:31:13] But I do want to say thank you so much for inviting me here today and staying to the end of a daylong event to hear me speak for just a couple of minutes. I hope you found today's business builder event both enlightening to you and helpful to your business. And I want to thank in particular the small business administration U.S. Small Business Administration National Gay and Lesbian Chamber and our own GSB for putting on today's event. I'm not I'm pretty sure I'm not the first person today to make mention of the fact that our country's 28 million small businesses are a big deal. Nationally it's 54 percent of sales 55 percent of jobs. And since 1990 as big businesses have downsized by 4 million jobs small businesses have added 8 million jobs. And here in King County our economy is a little different but even in the land of Amazon and Boeing and Microsoft these mega employers more than 1 out of every three jobs is provided created by small business. I have worked with the GSB on an awful lot of issues. Louise rattle off some of them. We will work together on many many more including the promotion of tourism which I think is tremendously important our region is a progressive and inclusive place to come visit. It's also a fun and exciting place to come visit and we have a lot of upside still even with all the tourists and business visitors you see a lot of upside in the visitor industry.

[02:33:03] But believe it or not I'm also here today because I have a major interest in the riveting topic of government procurement processes. See when I was elected executive in 2009 a lot of folks approached me and wanted to give me a little insight into what it was I was getting into and a lot of those were business people who wanted to share with me that King County had a reputation not entirely unfair reputation for being difficult to do business with and

making King County a better business partner became a really early charge for me and my staff. And this is especially true for small businesses who don't necessarily have the capacity to secure a team of lawyers on a complicated process but need to focus on doing the thing they do best. And so it's been a continuing focus throughout the last six years or so we issue ourselves a report card quarterly on our progress and we make an annual report to the County Council. And so far I. Please report to you we've given ourselves very good grades. So. Teacher's pet. Yes. King County's contracting opportunities program them. It's. It was founded just after our state's voters I think in advisedly outlawed the use of racial preferences in contracting in order to correct the impact of historic inequities so our system is by design.

[02:34:47] Race and gender neutral. But we do track our performance regarding minority owned disadvantage and women owned business enterprises as there is no law against doing that. And our focus is to expand the percentage of contracts so that small contractors and suppliers a certification we do ourselves that generally includes many of the businesses in the other categories that that percentage continues to expand. We've also joined with so we brought together Sound Transit and the Port of Seattle and the Seattle colleges so that this one certification list gives contractors access to a much broader range of opportunities throughout all of those governments. We've more than doubled in fact that list since 2010. We've gone from eleven hundred certified contractors to over twenty three hundred and in the first five years monitoring we boosted the total dollar value of small business contracts just from our government from 23 million to fifty six and a half million in 2014. We've been impressed with the benefits of LGBT owned business certification program. And I want to thank the SBA for partnering to ensure that this program receives the attention it deserves. But as I mentioned at the county since Initiative 200 we've been focusing on monitoring our performance on when women owned minority owned disadvantaged businesses. I intend to add this program LGBTQ owned business certification program to our tracking and for our county to set goals for LGBTQ business participation.

[02:36:40] I think it's long overdue.

[02:36:42] More than that I want you to know that King County stands ready to work with you to provide the support you need in seeking those government contracts whether with us or with others so that we can ensure your participation in increasing participation in contracting acknowledged the specific challenges that are faced by LGBTQ owned businesses. And I celebrate and appreciate the contributions of the businesses represented in this room and by G SBA in our community to the contributions to the people of King County. I want to invite you to help me as we seek to reach out to more LGBTQ owned businesses to get them on the certified list so they can then get in the queue to be able to get contracts and compete for contracts from King County and the Port of Seattle and Seattle Colleges and Sound Transit which by the way thanks Louise will be having quite a few new contracts coming up. I spent this a diversion because you mentioned that I spent the morning getting by a unanimous vote. The New Sound Transit 3 plan teed up and out of the Sound Transit Board which I chair.

[02:38:04] It is exciting we've been able to move up many of the timelines in addition to adding some features that people wanted. Like an entirely grade separated route to Ballard an extension from Bellevue to South Kirkland to station at 1 thirtieth more infrastructure in Renton. But really importantly for folks delivering three four or even five years sooner than we originally thought. And those are the outside dates we're going to continue to do better as we do this we will tie together all of the residential centers all of the job centers all the growth centers in this three county region which for all intents and purposes is one big economy one big city it needs a transportation system that allows every person to have access every business to have access to that entire market. That is the way in which we're going to provide opportunity for all. So I want to thank you for participating in today's LGBT business builder event. And we're making our community not only a better place but a more prosperous place in which to live.

[02:39:13] Thank you very much.

[02:39:20] I just I just have to say. County Executive Constantine. This is really historic what he said. I mean we have mentioned it a few times but to actually say that LGBT certification will be acknowledged and will be part of the supply chain in King County which is the largest county in the state of Washington is amazing. So a round of applause Thank you. Don't forget you heard it here first

[02:39:53] Thank you so much for joining us county executive Constantine. That was wonderful. All right we're going to have some closing remarks and start with Sam McClure senior vice president of NGL S.S..

[02:40:09] I want to be really quick. I just want to say almost just want to say what Louise just said. Again thank you so much for that verbal commitment right here in front of this very influential audience which is connected to Twitter I'm pretty sure. That's amazing and I just want you to know that the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce would be happy to be a resource as you integrate with help from the GSP here as well. We're excited to be a part of a deeper inclusion here in the state of Washington in the city of Seattle also. That's amazing. And how cool to be on site for that little announcement. Yeah. Big deal. Big deal. And. Lastly I just want to thank all of the small business owners here. You guys are what makes me get up out of bed every day I live to just help you thrive and succeed as I know Louise and her staff does as well and many of the advocates around the country and our colleagues at SBA you're the reason we do this and we're happy to do whatever we can to support your success. I'll be around for the reception. Look forward to talking with all of you. And then just once again huge thanks to the library. What a great venue. So generous to support us. And. As always I want to give a lot of deep thanks to our friends and colleagues at the GSB. You are a model chamber and you've many colleagues around the country that aspire to be more like you. So I want to thank you for that and I'm going to turn it back over to you guys.

[02:41:41] I know you have a little more business just thanks everyone.

[02:41:48] Thank you Sam. Louise would you like to make a few closing remarks. I know we need one


[02:42:02] But I do really want to thank you. Please contact all the people who have said that they have resources for you. I think that that is so important. Call GSP a call SBA. There's a lot of BS in this.

[02:42:15] I guess better than B.S. But anyway it's the end of the day. I think I'm losing it. OK but Nancy has something to say that's pretty exciting too.

[02:42:25] So stick around Louise. And I'm going to read this because otherwise I'll forget what I'm saying.

[02:42:31] As we bring this event to the close I want to thank you all whether your sponsors presenters behind the scenes workers or attendees for helping to make this LGBT business builder the success we've enjoyed today. All of this was made possible through the development of a partnership between a small federal agency and a vibrant community organization. I have to tell you I first met Louise a year ago when we held the underserved. Roundtable and we did that for the purpose of finding out what SBA was doing right. What we were doing wrong what we could do better and it was a real eye opening experience. But one of the things we found was that we had a potential partner here that we didn't know about. And as a result we had a couple meetings and I decided we liked each other. Yes we could complement each other's services. So as a result of that we decided to put together a strategic alliance memorandum. And today I'd like to announce that we have we are signing that and I'm going to present a certificate to Louise to kind of memorialize this event. So maybe you can get a picture this Matt.

[02:43:49] Well thank you Nancy. So I think this is great. I think I said that at one of our phone calls but to have the SBA just like we had originally the last week the Puget Sound Business Journal but a few things starting to recognize the economic impact of the LGBT community. We've always known it's there. They've had the benefit of it. But to actually have it acknowledged and to have it acknowledged by the agency nationally that takes care of small business I think is really really important. And so we need to use them. We need to use each other. I always believe we should all be using each other. And I am you know our city and county people aren't here anymore but it is really important. We're facing a lot of changes for small business. As you all know in the city of Seattle especially not just the state of Washington but whether it's minimum wage or paid sick leave many things that are important to make people's lives better that are really in very urgent right now with income inequality are also really hard for small business. And so we need to make sure they understand the impact our government agencies and that small businesses get certain advantages as we are facing changes in the workplace that are important for the employees but we also want to make sure we stay in business so that we have those employees. So let us know how we can help you on



those policy. We really do have to ensure that our governmental agencies aren't just touting how much small business means to them but they're actually supporting small businesses with affordable rents with tax breaks with helping us when there's construction in front of our businesses with a crane on every other block. We don't want to become a city of just big box stores. So thank you for all you do to make this city vibrant and important both for LGBT for equality and for small business and come to the reception and raise a glass of wine over a great day of work. Thank you.

[02:45:55] Before you leave I want to say one more thing. One more special thanks to the library Jay Lyman. Did you want to come up. I want to recognize here is a guy that can get it done. And he has been such a good partner to us. He works here at the library and he had just a couple of things you wanted to mention.

[02:46:14] I just want to say thank you all for coming. And I also also can can help you all with business information.

[02:46:21] So if you're looking for who's my competitors who's my customer what are the market trends affecting your market. Come talk to me. We can set up some time sit down and talk. We have a lot of tools we you can use for free. So. Thanks

[02:46:37] This podcast was presented by the Seattle Public Library and Foundation and made possible by your contributions to the Seattle Public Library Foundation. Thanks for listening.

