



**Celebrating 30 Years of Small Business Success**

**May 19, 2014**

**In Today's Weekly Connection:**

- ✦ **Small-Business Confidence Index - Highest Level in More than Six Years**
- ✦ **Illinois – The State of Innovation**
- ✦ **Program Success of the Week – SJB Promotions**
- ✦ **Resource of the Week – Small Business Forum**
- ✦ **Neoserra/WebCATS Update – Saving & Sharing Filters**
- ✦ **Moves and News**
- ✦ **America's SBDC Network Connect**

### **Small-Business Confidence Index - Highest Level in More than Six Years**

[Reuters](#) (5/14, Mutikani) reports the National Federation of Independent Business said Tuesday that its Small Business Optimism Index rose to 95.2 last month. The 1.8-point increase brings the index up to the highest level in almost six-and-a-half years. Owners reportedly had difficulty finding qualified workers, which is going to lead to higher wages and increased inflation in the future, according to the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB). The NFIB also said that the new level should “bolster” hopes of an accelerating economy in the second quarter.

### **Illinois – The State of Innovation**

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity is pleased to announce the second edition of [\*\*\*Illinois - The State of Innovation\*\*\*](#), our state economic development magazine, is now available. To access the digital edition on your laptop, tablet or phone, visit our [website](#) or the [digital magazine](#).

Our economic development magazine is a powerful tool for business attraction on a global level, as well as for investors and site selectors as they consider their investment opportunities. This issue highlights our clean energy sector, tech growth in new start-ups and jobs, a flourishing life sciences industry, our Midwestern dominance in foreign trade and investment, a resurgence in manufacturing and key strengths in agriculture, food production, transportation and financial services. [businessclimate.com/illinois-economic-development/magazine](http://businessclimate.com/illinois-economic-development/magazine)

Please share [\*\*\*Illinois - The State of Innovation\*\*\*](#) on social media with your friends and community. You may also feature the magazine on your blog, website or newsletters with a link or one of our easy-to-use tools.

We know that Illinois is a great place to live and work, which is why millions of people call it home. With your help, we will make it even better. Adam Pollet, DCEO Director.

### **Program Success of the Week – SJB Promotions**

SJB Promotions has been a client of the Illinois Procurement and Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) since 2009. For the past two years Jill Douglas, President of SJB, has been meeting with Mary Turner at the Central Illinois PTAC. In that time Mary has provided invaluable service to SJB. Ms. Douglas recently explained in a letter why Mary has been so important to the success of her firm.

She wrote, "I want to take the time to explain why Mary Turner of the Quincy, Illinois PTAC office is appreciated here at SJB Promotions, Inc. I met with Mary when I bought SJB Promotions, Inc. in November 2009. Although I knew of the programs, and services offered by PTAC, I found Mary an asset to SJB because of her knowledge of the types of certifications that I wanted to acquire. I first started with my Illinois Small Business certification. After that certification was completed, I started the FBE (Female Business Enterprise) certification, which I have maintained since 2010. Mary and I met several times via phone and in person to determine documents needed and people to contact when the completed forms were submitted. Mary is now helping me redirect my efforts to complete a HUBZone certification offered by SBA. We will then be eligible for opportunities to bid at the federal level. I am so excited to have Mary in my trusted circle of friends and as a great advisor/confidant."

### **Resource of the Week – Small Business Forum**

The link below leads to a forum where entrepreneurs share information on small business topics such as financial and legal issues, marketing, website development and management.

<http://www.small-business-forum.net/>

### **Neoserra/WebCATS Update – Saving & Sharing Filters**

Open the link below to see instructions on how to save filters for future use or to share them with other users.

<http://www.outreachsystems.com/resources/help/neoserra/faq.jsp?id=n66>

### **Moves and News**

#### **SBIR/STTR Webinar Series 2014**

Webinar is co-organized with the US Small Business Administration (SBA) - UPCOMING WEBINAR

#### **Understanding the DOE Structure when it comes to SBIR/STTR Funding**

May 28, 2014, 1:00 to 2:30pm ET

PRESENTERS: MANNY OLIVER, PhD  
Director, SBIR/STTR Programs Office  
US Department of Energy  
([full bio](#))

GANESH VENUGOPAL  
Director, Energy Products  
nGimat Co.

MODERATOR: CHRIS O'GWIN  
Program Manager, Commercialization & Outreach Assistance  
US Department of Energy

[http://center.ncet2.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=690](http://center.ncet2.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=690) (Link to the webinar series website)

### **America's SBDC Network Connect**

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to see the May 15, 2014 edition of [America's SBDC Network Connect newsletter](#).

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The **WEEKLY CONNECTION** is distributed by the Illinois SBDC and DCEO Office of Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Technology each Monday to members of the DCEO Illinois SBDC Network to provide the service delivery partners with regular updates on small business issues, opportunities and resources. You may send any information to share with the Illinois SBDC Network to [Tom.Becker@illinois.gov](mailto:Tom.Becker@illinois.gov). Please feel free to forward this update to other interested resource providers and key stakeholders.

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