



*"Professional Guidance for Business Growth"*

## June 1, 2015

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### **Spotlight on Success – DonChef Bakery**

Anybody looking for an alternative to stale donuts can find it in Eleonora Nikolova's DonChef Bakery in Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood. She specializes in homemade, European-style pastries, including nine types of croissants.

Ms. Nikolova explains her motivation, "I'm a third-generation baker. My grandparents were professional pastry chefs and bakery owners in Bulgaria. I grew up in bakeries. I came to America 10 years ago to be an accountant, but sitting behind a desk was driving me crazy. I needed my work to be more energizing and task-oriented. Plus, I love going into bakeries and trying different croissants and cakes, and I didn't think American bakeries had something quite like the pastries in Bulgaria, which have a different taste and different look. I wanted to share those European-style pastries with Americans."

As with any food establishment, there were many regulations and licensure to obtain before the February 2014 opening. Though an Arlington Heights native, Ms. Nikolova wanted to open her bakery in Chicago to capture more walk-in traffic. After eight months of searching she found the right location.

Ms. Nikolova is very happy she came to the **Illinois Small Business Development Center at Harper College**. "Before I approached the SBDC, I was skeptical about how much they could help me. But they exceeded my expectations. My mentor (Tom Cassell) was very involved and always followed up with me. He always knew what I was dealing with, whether I was struggling to find a location or provide documentation to the bank. He gave me great professional advice, but he also really believed in me and became a friend. All the people I worked with at the SBDC were wonderful. They're really helping people make their dreams come true. I'm still working with the SBDC, and I'm very grateful for their services."

Her advice to other entrepreneurs: "Be patient, and don't take the difficulties personally. That really is the key. I'm not patient, and I spent too much energy on the little struggles of each day. Be consistent, work hard and know where you need to push to improve and succeed, but don't take things too seriously."



Learn more about DonChef Bakery at <http://www.donchef-bakery.com/home.html>.

### **SBDC's In The News- ITCs Involved with Metals Export Seminars**

Our Chicago Area Illinois SBDC International Trade Centers are working closely with the members of Metro Chicago Exports (MCE) and the Chicago Metro Metal Consortium on a series of targeted, focused export seminars for small manufacturers. The first workshop is being held on June 4<sup>th</sup> at Choose DuPage and will include a special presentation from Zach Persons the director of the SBDC International Trade Center at the College of DuPage. Please see the attachment for more details about the five special seminars being held in June throughout Chicagoland. You can also visit [www.MetroChicagoExports.com](http://www.MetroChicagoExports.com) and click on seminars for more information.

### **Maximizing Neoserra – No Economic Impact Survey in June**

Responding to the overwhelming vote of acclamation, the SBDC Lead Center will NOT send out an economic impact survey in June. We will closely monitor Change in Staff, Capital Funding and other milestones to ensure that they are being entered into Neoserra. If this reporting lags we may go back to using the economic impact survey.

### **Valued Resources – Finding the Best Location for a Business**

Open the link below for a quick 8 minute read on locating a small business. The article includes 22 questions to ask when searching locations.

<http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/73784>

### **IESBGA News**

Don't forget to complete the online survey that was recently sent to everyone who participated in last week's IESBGA Annual Conference in support of the Illinois SBDC Network. Please complete the survey as soon as possible to provide the Planning Committee for next year's conference with your feedback on this year's conference and your valued input on workshops and presenters for next year. Also please save the dates of May 25-27, 2016 for next year's Professional Development Conference to be held at ISU in Normal.

### **Network News and Moves**

- **The Rockford 9<sup>th</sup> Annual FastPitch Competition**, hosted by EigerLab and supported by the Illinois SBDC and Illinois PTAC at Rock Valley College, will be held on June 17<sup>th</sup> at NIU

Rockford, 8500 East State Street, Rockford, IL The event is open to the public for the final presentations at 5:00 PM. Please go to <http://www.eigerlab.org/fastpitch-competition/> for more information.

**- ManageHub Business Accelerator** applications are now being accepted on a first-come first-serve basis...

SBDC Network clients are invited to participate in the ManageHub Accelerator. It's a high-value, 8-week, online accelerator course that helps transform a business into a highly organized, innovative, and lean-operating company that is prepared for rapid growth.

Participants will receive the tools and training that teach you how to find the hidden costs and waste within your business. These savings drop to the company's bottom line and increase its profitability.

Participants will also learn how to:

- Free your time to work on your business... and enjoy your life.
- Build a team that really cares about your company's success.
- Create systematic operations that are organized and efficient.
- Delegate responsibility without losing control.
- Put out "fires" once and forever instead of over-and-over again.
- Achieve your strategic goals with accountability and transparency.

The objective is to help improve a company and prepare it to breakthrough to its next level of success.

In order to receive the ManageHub Accelerator for FREE, you MUST complete the application process by clicking on the application link below.

Online Application: <http://managehubaccelerator.com/managehub-accelerator-application>

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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. Please feel free to forward this update to other interested resource providers and key stakeholders.  
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