

Contact: Hannah Greene
Office: 510-272-6768
Cell: 510-220-3866
Email:
hannah.greene@acgov.org

1221 Oak Street, Suite
536
Oakland, CA 94612
Phone: 510-272-6695
Fax: 510-271-5151

**Alameda County
Supervisor Keith Carson, Fifth District**

**For Immediate Release
Press Release**

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Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson addresses Small Business Owners in Berkeley



Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson welcomes attendees at the East Bay Small Business Symposium in Berkeley. (Photo credit: Warren Foster, Anointed Media)

More than 300 small business owners crowded into a ballroom at the Hotel Shattuck Plaza in Berkeley on a recent Tuesday morning to learn from government officials and industry experts how to launch, grow and sustain a small business in the East Bay.

“Nearly 70 percent of jobs in the East Bay are created by businesses of fewer than 100 employees,” noted Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson, Chair of the East Bay Economic Development Alliance (EDA). “Your businesses are the engine of the East Bay economy,” he told attendees.

East Bay EDA staff organized the free **East Bay Small Business Symposium *Learn, Grow & Move Your Business to the Next Level*** to provide business growth tools, business-to-business networking and strategic resources. Attendees were welcomed by Supervisor Carson and then listened to remarks by Elizabeth Echols, Regional Administrator, Region IX, U.S. Small Business Administration and Jim Horan, President and CEO of The One Page Business Plan Company. Assemblymember Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley) addressed the group later in the morning.

After opening remarks, participants attended breakout sessions for Startup Businesses, Young Businesses, Growth Businesses and Mature Businesses. Bankers, CPAs, attorneys and government officials offered professional advice and took questions. Discussion in the Young Business room centered around accessing capital and navigating the SBA (Small Business Administration) loan process.

Attendees in the Growth Business group discussed capital needs as well, but also delved into more advanced topics. Terry Church of Brown, Church & Gee LLP encouraged participants in the service industry to protect their intellectual property. Client lists, business processes, website content and marketing literature can all be considered intellectual property and protected through non-disclosure agreements and copyright registration, he explained. 26 resource providers were also on hand to assist participants.

“The event gave me some great nuggets of advice to help me support my business,” said Vernita Naylor, Founder/CEO of Jabez Enterprise Group, a company that provides government contracting and business development consulting and workshops. “Even businesses that have been around for many years may not have had the opportunity to focus on marketing or new sources of capital,” she noted. “The information in the break-out sessions helped business owners with challenges they are facing now.”

The event in Berkeley was the second in a series. The first symposium took place in Antioch, the third is scheduled for Danville on September 18, and the last will take place in southern Alameda County on November 8. The events are part of the **East Bay Small Business Initiative**, launched in partnership with Wells Fargo, Inner City Advisors, Alameda County Small Business Development Center, Contra Costa Small Business Development Center and Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County. For more information, please visit www.ebsmallbusiness.com

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Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson represents the Fifth District, which includes Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Piedmont, and parts of Oakland (North Oakland, Rockridge, Grand Lake, Fruitvale, and Dimond District neighborhoods). For more information about District 5 and Supervisor Keith Carson, please call (510) 272-6695 or visit <http://www.keithcarson.org/>