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The California Office of the Small Business Advocate (CalOSBA) supports economic growth and innovation statewide. CalOSBA's core mission is to provide resources to all California small businesses, disabled veteran business enterprises (SB/DVBEs), minority and women-owned businesses, and those individuals who own and operate businesses located in low-wealth and rural communities.

CalOSBA supports outreach and engagement efforts through advocacy, sharing resources, and building resilience through programs and our Technical Assistance Network that supports growth and business sustainability.

This month's newsletter highlights the ecosystem and CalOSBA's efforts to serve California businesses statewide.

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### **[From the Advocate: The Importance of Regionalism](#)**



### The Importance of Regionalism

It's the role of my office to provide California's 4.2 million small businesses with the information, content, and resources they need to get started and manage and scale their businesses.

The most important part of that mission is to increase access and services for the people who don't already have them, that is, in those underserved communities across veteran status, gender, and race lines but also across zip codes.

That means increasing access to services in low-wealth and rural and disaster-impacted communities and especially those communities that represent some combination of all these characteristics at one time.

For example, take Bakersfield, a city where I first learned about the power of entrepreneurship and community by watching my grandmother run a beauty salon out of her home. It's also a city where my parents left looking for opportunities that felt out of reach in their hometown.

They had spent the first part of their lives working in the fields of Kern County. In the second phase of their life together, they moved to the Bay Area in the 1960s and became the first in our family to graduate from college, and then obtain graduate degrees.

I got to spend a week last month in Bakersfield and Kern County. I also spent time in Fresno and in Calaveras Counties. And I understand from my time there that the inland regions still face many of the challenges that my parents sought to escape. But I also see these communities' gathering strength, in civic organization and collaboration, in regional identity and pride, in funding, in defiance of the very idea that the only road to new opportunity leads out of town.

Let me point to some examples from my travels in just the past month.

[Read the Full LinkedIn article here](#)

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**[Highlights from CalOSBA's Week-long Activities in the Central Valley](#)**

## California Forward Economic Summit – October 27-28, 2022

*KCCD Community Economic Mobility & Clean Energy Pre-Summit October 25-26*

The California Office of the Small Business Advocate (CalOSBA) advanced the message that innovation and a thriving and diverse small business sector are key to California's future economic success at the California Forward Economic Summit recently held in Bakersfield, CA.

Check out this clip of Director Gray talking with Bakersfield KBAK/FOX58, which set the stage for the conversations to follow at the Summit [here](#).



CalOSBA's focus at the Summit included ensuring access to capital and small business support services in rural and inland communities and finding new pathways to help small businesses owned by People of Color get contract-ready for government-funded opportunities in infrastructure and clean economy products and services. Director Gray also elaborated on these themes in an op/ed in the [Bakersfield Californian](#).

The week started with the [Kern Community College District's Economic Mobility Summit](#). Director Gray was a featured speaker, joined by Windell Pascascio, President, and CEO of electrical and clean energy contractor [Imperial Electric Service](#) to discuss small business opportunities in the low-carbon economy.

**Entrepreneurship and Economic Mobility Task Force Members Ready to Make an Impact**



CalOSBA and [Access Plus Capital](#), a Central Valley CDFI, hosted a breakfast to announce and recognize the 2022 Entrepreneurship and Economic Mobility Task Force, a roster of business and thought leaders selected to help propel inclusive entrepreneurship by recommending policies and programs to ensure that all California small businesses have access to the resources they need to grow and scale. The event was sponsored by CDFI Access Plus Capital. Not all members of the Task Force were present; learn more about the complete Task Force [here](#).



Director Gray announced the mission and priorities of the task force, including the “3 Ds”:

- Democratizing access to capital.
- Diversifying the innovation economy.
- Driving economic mobility through entrepreneurship.

### **Entrepreneurship and Small Business Ownership for People of Color Workshop**





Director Gray and Josaline Cuesta with the [Small Business Majority](#) co-led the Entrepreneurship and Small Business Ownership for People of Color Working Group Session, featuring a panel discussion about procurement and contracting with Norma Dunn of the [Bakersfield Women's Business Center](#), Ingrid Merriweather of [Merriwether & Williams Insurance Services](#) and small business owner, Windell Pascascio. Each table then explored ideas and perspectives about ways to expand these opportunities for business-owners of color and reported out to the entire group.

### **California's Entrepreneurship on the Global Stage**



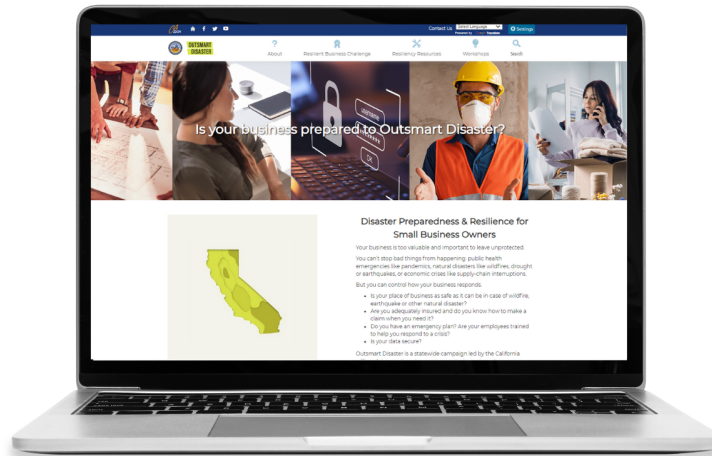
Governor Newsom appeared on stage with [Central Valley Community Foundation](#) President and CEO Ashley Swearengen to talk about California's economic and climate leadership on the global stage including support for the state's competitive advantage in entrepreneurship.

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### **[In The News: CalOSBA Launches New Website to Help Small Businesses Outsmart Disaster](#)**



## OUTSMART DISASTER



Outsmart Disaster is a statewide campaign led by CalOSBA to raise awareness about the importance of preparing for disasters and emergencies. The new Outsmart Disaster website provides California businesses and nonprofits with the training and resources needed to prepare for and recover from all types of business interruptions.

The new website features resources like the Resilient Business Challenge (RBC), a virtual no-cost, self-guided training to promote disaster preparedness and proactive resiliency training.

By taking the Resilient Business Challenge, businesses will:

- Identify their risks
- Document business functions and the impacts of potential disruption
- Strengthen facilities and safeguard data and assets in case of a natural disaster
- Maintain relationships with vendors, partners, and employees during business interruptions
- Understand insurance policies and evaluate financial resiliency in case of interruption
- Document contingency options

In addition, Chambers of Commerce and local business groups can request in-person or virtual resiliency training for their area.

To learn more about Outsmart Disaster, visit [outsmartdisaster.calosba.ca.gov](https://outsmartdisaster.calosba.ca.gov).

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## Grant Programs

**The California Nonprofit Performing Arts Grant Program is Accepting Applications**



The California Nonprofit Performing Arts Grant Program provides grants to eligible nonprofit performing arts organizations to encourage workforce development. Eligible organizations must meet eligibility criteria and may include theater and dance companies, musical groups and artists, and other performing arts companies.

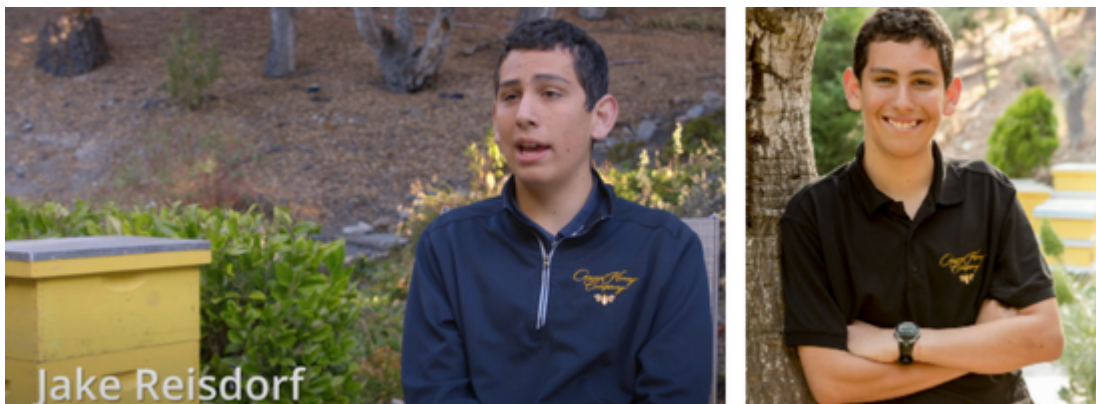
The program is currently open and grants are being awarded on a first-come-first-served basis.

Visit [CANonProfitPerformingArts.com](https://CANonProfitPerformingArts.com) for more information and to apply.

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## [Resiliency & Outreach](#)

### **Central Valley Business is Buzzing with Opportunity**



Jake Reisdorf, Founder/Owner/Beekeeper, is turning his passion for honey into a sweet success! His business, [Carmel Honey Company](#), was born out of a “real world” 5th grade homework project when he created a mock website about bees. He not only got an A on the project, but quickly discovered he enjoyed sharing his honeybee knowledge with his classmates and his community.

Jake started small with only one hive; today, he’s expanded to over 125 beehives and three retail stores located in Carmel By-the-Sea, Cannery Row in Monterey, and the Ferry Building in San Francisco.

In Jake’s own words, working with the [Central California Small Business Development Center](#) (SBDC), a CalOSBA technical assistance partner,



significantly impacted his business. With the help of the SBDC, Jake participated in 'The Startup Challenge' and won \$10,000 to fund operations for his business.

"The SBDC has been a huge help to me and my company. They have taught me so much about business. We really couldn't have done it without them and gotten our business off the ground," says Jake.

Watch a short clip about Jake's Journey [here](#).



### **Honoring National Veterans Small Business Week with SoCal's Veteran Business Outreach Center**



The [Southern California Veterans Business Outreach Center \(SoCal VBOC\)](#) provides entrepreneurial development services as well as counseling, and referrals for eligible Veteran business owners or those considering starting a small business. Transitioning service members, Guard, Reserve, Veterans of all eras and military-connected family members in Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Imperial Counties can all access this free-of-charge support.



Veterans gain significant and competitive skills and education during and beyond their military service and these skills can be leveraged into starting their own business as an entrepreneur.

To harness these skills, the SoCal VBOC:

- Provides specialized training like “Boots to Business” for transitioning military personnel to civilian life;
- Highlights small business success stories that received technical assistance and guidance from the center team; and
- Connects veteran small business owners with resources and opportunities to successfully start, manage, and grow their business.

[Piedmont](#) Print and Frame is a good example of a veteran owned small business success story with the help of a technical assistance partner. Learn more about how John Bethell attended the SoCal VBOC's [Boots to Business Reboot](#) training while stationed at Naval Base San Diego and went on to establish his small business in New Hampshire after he transitioned out of the military [here](#).

We encourage veterans in Southern California to reach out to the SoCal VBOC for guidance to start or grow a small business as follows:

- On the website [here](#)
- In person at 2075 Las Palmas Drive, Carlsbad, CA 92011
- Email at [SoCalVboc@miracosta.edu](mailto:SoCalVboc@miracosta.edu)
- Call at 760-795-8739

Veterans interested in starting a business in Northern California can learn more about the NorCal VBOC [here](#).

### **6th Annual VIB Network National Conference in San Diego from November 14-15, 2022**



Register now for the 6th Annual Veterans In Business (VIB) Network National Conference in San Diego from November 14-15, 2022. This conference is designed to help Veteran business owners and the supporter network build connections between Corporations, Government Agencies, and Primes looking to partner for contracting opportunities.

Learn more and register for the conference [here](#).

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Check out the latest workshops, trainings, and webinars from CalOSBA's technical assistance partners by clicking [here](#) to view the statewide calendar.

For more small business resources and information, visit [calosba.ca.gov](https://calosba.ca.gov)

No-cost and low-cost training is available through Technical Assistance Centers across the state. Browse the training schedule on the CalOSBA website by [clicking here](#).

[Submit a request to CalOSBA](#)



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