

### Norwalk Chamber Creates Connections

Frantone's Restaurant was the location for our January "Creating Connections" luncheon, which was attended by many local business owners and elected officials. Networking is all about making those business connections and creating relationships so that your business can grow and thrive in today's economy. Your Norwalk Chamber of Commerce is always on the lookout for tools that can help support that business growth. Connecting over lunch is one of those tools and a great way to build relationships with other Chamber members. When they have a need for your specific product, they will think of the business connections they made at a networking event first.



Attendees at the Norwalk Chamber "Creating Connections" Luncheon at Frantone's Restaurant are pictured with owner John Tesoriero.

Our next "Creating Connections" lunch will be on Tuesday, February 24th, at Agave Junction Cantina. They are located at 11957 Firestone Blvd, here in

Norwalk at 11:45am. We look forward to meeting you there are helping you create those connections!

### Norwalk Chamber Online Marketing Seminar Series to Begin March 26th

The Norwalk Chamber of Commerce presents a series of morning workshops geared toward kick starting your marketing for the 2015 year. Collaborating with Constant Contact, whose mission is to empower small businesses and nonprofits to grow customer relationships and succeed we will host three morning workshops beginning on March 26th in conjunction with our networking breakfast events. The topics for these upcoming workshops are as follows:

- March 26th Email Marketing Success Secrets
- May 21st How to Build Your Online Tool Kit
- July 16th How to Be a Social Media Rock Star

Mark Mikelat of Building Aspirations will be the presenter for these three workshops. Mark comes with a 20 year plus background in online marketing. He is a consultant to many small businesses and has extensive experience in marketing and sales strategies. Some of his clients have included Microsoft, Coach Luxury Brands, Hewlett Packard and the Los Angeles School District. Mark provides humorous programs that are filled with practical advice that your business can put into action immediately to increase sales and win more clients. Mark is also a published author of the books "50 Tips for Effective Networking" and "Aspirations."

To find out more about this upcoming Seminar Series visit the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce at [www.norwalkchamber.com](http://www.norwalkchamber.com) or contact our office at 562-864-7785. RSVP today for this opportunity to network with our Chamber businesses and gain valuable skills to grow your business.



Pictured at Frantone's Restaurant are Norwalk Chamber Board Member Gordon Stefenhagen of Norwalk Realty, Marilee Stefenhagen, Norwalk Soroptimist Club, Chamber Financial VP Karla Butler, Thompson Bookkeeping, Ambassador Craig Wicks, Budget Car Sales and Ambassador Richard Sneed, Norwalk Records.



Ambassador and Special Event Chair, Sue Arthur with Sarah Ambrose of the American Cancer Society.



Susie Knouse of Stonebridge Memorial with Karla Butler of Thompson Bookkeeping.

### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



As Norwalk Chamber celebrates 91 years of serving the business community in the City of Norwalk, I want to assure you that Norwalk Chamber is dedicated to creating community partnerships with our public and private sectors in an effort to cooperatively identify and resolve local and regional issues. We are devoted to being the ultimate business resource for our members. Whether through networking, promotion or advocacy, we are committed to helping your business and our communities. I encourage you to become an active chamber member and take advantage of all that Norwalk Chamber has to offer.

Welcome to our newest Norwalk Chamber members: **Mary Kay Cosmetics** – Holly Noble, **Tsunami Express Car Wash** – Yury Levitan and **LegalShield Independent Associate** – Moni K. Ung. **We look forward to serving you for many years to come!**

We had the largest turnout ever at our January Creating Connections Luncheon, held at Frantone's on January 27. Our monthly Creating Connections Luncheons provide our chamber members with an excellent opportunity to network with other businesses while enjoying lunch at one of our local restaurants. Our next Creating Connections Luncheon will be held on February 24th at Agave Junction Cantina. I hope you can join us!

Our Women in Business Council met on January 14 at Black Angus in Lakewood,

enjoying a presentation by Olga Mizrahi on "Sell Local, Think Global". This month's meeting will be held on February 11th with a presentation on wills, trusts and probate. For more information about the **Women in Business Council** or to find out more about this and other upcoming Women in Business events, contact Christina Jones at Christina.Jones@hubinternational.com or at 714.739.3177, Ext. 204 or the chamber office 562.864-7785.

On January 16, I presented American Legion Post #359 with their new member plaque while celebrating their newly renovated facility. Home Depot awarded grant funds to this location for much needed renovations. Staff from local Home Depots volunteered along with American Legion members to work night and day for five days to complete the renovations in time. Stop by and check out their facility when you're in the area!

This month, please join us for the **45th Annual Mayor's Prayer Breakfast** on February 11 at DoubleTree Norwalk. To obtain tickets or for more information about this event, please call 562.443.0655. On February 20, join us at **Norwalk State of the City Luncheon** at DoubleTree Norwalk. To purchase tickets or for auction/sponsorship info, contact the Norwalk Community Coordinating Council: 562.400.8188 or 562.888.1936 / [nccc@usa.com](mailto:nccc@usa.com) On February 25, join us at the City of Norwalk Transportation **Department's Ribbon Cutting** for the new **Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) Fueling Station**. For more information about this event, contact Norwalk Chamber at 562.864.7785.

I want to assure you that your Norwalk Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Ambassadors and Chamber Staff will continue to provide exemplary programs and services to help our local businesses succeed as we look forward to a brighter economic future.

On behalf of my Norwalk Chamber Board of Directors and Ambassadors, and our Chamber Staff, I want to thank you for your chamber membership. We look forward to serving you, your business and our community in 2015!

Sincerely,

Toni Grijalva  
2014-15 President  
Norwalk Chamber of Commerce

Norwalk Chamber of Commerce  
12040 Foster Road, Norwalk, CA 90650

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**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

February 11th  
Mayor's Prayer Breakfast  
Norwalk DoubleTree Hotel  
13111 Sycamore Ave.  
Norwalk CA  
For tickets call: 562.433.0655  
Email: uniteorg@yahoo.com

February 11th  
Women in Business Council  
Black Angus Restaurant  
5000 Clark Ave  
Lakewood CA 90712  
Topic: Effective Estate Planning  
Call the Chamber office for Reservations

February 12th  
Executive Committee Meeting  
Norwalk Chamber Office  
7:30 am

February 18th  
Board of Directors  
Norwalk DoubleTree Hotel  
7:30am

February 20th  
State of the City  
Norwalk DoubleTree Hotel  
13111 Sycamore Dr.  
Norwalk CA  
11:30am  
For Tickets call: 562.400.8188  
Email: nccc@usa.com

February 24th  
Creating Connections Luncheon  
Agave Junction Cantina  
11957 Firestone Blvd.  
Norwalk CA 90650  
11:45am

**NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS**

**New Members**

**Mary Kay Cosmetics**  
Holly Noble  
10317 Spruce St.  
Bellflower CA 90706  
562-882-0857  
www.marykay.com/hnoble

**LegalShield Independent Associate**  
Moni K. Ung  
Norwalk CA  
1-866-385-4104  
www.gobiz4u.com  
info@gobiz4u.com

**Tsunami Express Car Wash**  
Yury Levitan  
13218 Rosecrans Ave.  
Norwalk CA 90650  
562-229-9274  
www.tsunamiexpresscarwash.com

**Renewing Members**

The following companies and individuals renewed their membership with the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce and the services we provide are made possible by their support.

**39 Years**  
**Wells Fargo Bank**  
Kathy Hernandez  
www.wellsfargo.com  
562-406-7220

**32 Years**  
**Best Western**  
Allen Chi  
562-929-8831  
www.bestwestern.com

**26 Years**  
**Norwalk Lions Club**  
President  
www.norwalklionsclub.org

**24 Years**  
**Cerritos College**  
Toni Grijalva  
562-860-2451

**22 Years**  
**Best Buy Tire Pros**  
Andy Kasbarian  
562-868-7724

**Premier Wheel & Tires**  
Manuel Garcia  
562-926-0048

**20 Years**  
**Espana Motel**  
Sam Bhakta  
562-864-5951

**19 Years**  
**PIH Health**  
562-698-0811  
http://pihealth.org/

**16 Years**  
**Rotary Club of Norwalk**  
Teri Bazen  
562-868-7777

**12 Years**  
**Duckett-Wilson Production Company**  
Troy Bemis  
310-478-8757

**10 Years**  
**Caremore Medical Group**  
562-622-2900

**9 Years**  
**Bright Now! Dental**  
Lizeth Rosales  
562-863-4775

**8 Years**  
**Mid-Cities Federal Credit Union**  
Bessie Griffin  
310-638-5147  
www.mcscu.org

**The P.C. Help Desk**  
Steve Guzman  
562-869-4435  
www.thepchd.com

**3 Years**  
**Starbucks Coffee**  
Ashley Allen  
562-807-3715  
www.starbucks.com

**2 Years**  
**Fast 5Xpress Car Wash**  
Lisa Miles  
949-640-6420



Moni Ung, LegalShield Independent Associate, received her new member plaque from Norwalk Chamber President, Toni Grijalva of Cerritos College.



Holly Noble, Independent Senior Sales Director with Mary Kay Cosmetics is presented with her new member plaque from Toni Grijalva, Norwalk Chamber President.



Richard Rowe, CEO of Coast Plaza Hospital receives their renewal plaque from Chamber President, Toni Grijalva of Cerritos College.



Starbucks Coffee receives their membership renewal plaque from Norwalk Chamber President, Toni Grijalva of Cerritos College.

**AMBASSADORS CORNER**

The Norwalk Chamber Ambassadors are looking for a few new members that are interested in growing their businesses through their involvement as Ambassadors. Our Ambassadors attend events and ribbon cuttings, work with new members on taking advantage of their Chamber membership and provide support to Chamber staff at our events. Ambassadors are the outreach arm of the Chamber and they are here to help.

Meet our newest Norwalk Chamber Ambassador, Leo Spencer of Paychex, Inc. Leo joined the Chamber in October of 2014 and has been a go getter since that time. You can meet Leo at most Chamber events. His business, Paychex, Inc. provides business support in accounting, payroll, human resources, taxes and more. They can help any size business with their finance and accounting needs. If you need support in any of these areas be sure and

meet Leo at our next Chamber event!

To find out more about the Norwalk Chamber Ambassador program, contact the Chamber office at 562-864-7785 or by email to info@norwalkchamber.com.

**From the Membership Desk...**

New Norwalk Chamber Members

New Member Moni Ung of LegalShield tells us that a LegalShield membership provides access to a law firm for your most common legal needs for a low monthly fee. We have plans for Individuals and Families, your Small or Home Based Business and a plan to protect you in case of identity theft. We are certified Small Business and Group Employees Benefit Plan. Check out www.gobiz4u.com for our Business Opportunity

Holly Noble of Mary Kay Cosmetics is one of our new Norwalk Chamber Members. Holly is an Independent Senior Sales Director with Mary Kay Cosmetics. Holly says "As your Mary Kay Independent Beauty Consultant, I'll tailor my service to fit your needs and preferences. That means you decide how Beauty Comes to You™. "Mary Kay Cosmetics is holding a Beauty Country Makeover Contest where the Grand Prize is an exclusive fan experience to attend the 50th Annual Academy of Country Music Awards, April 17-19 2015,

in Arlington Texas. For details on obtaining a complimentary color makeover, contact Holly before March 2, 2015 at 562-882-0857 or by email to hnoble@marykay.com.

**MEMBERSHIP SERVICES DIRECTOR  
CAREN SPILSBURY**

**Want to Boost Your Company's Exposure?**

**Like Us on Facebook**



www.facebook.com/NorwalkChamber

Remember if they're looking at the Chamber they're looking at you!

~Like Us and We will Like you Back~

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The bi-monthly meeting of the Gateway Chamber Alliance was held on January 28, 2015 at the Cerritos Regional Chamber of Commerce Conference Room. The new legislative sessions both Federal and State are barely 1 month old but the Gateway Chambers Alliance members have identified a number of Federal and State Bills and Issues that affect business to track in the coming weeks and months.

### Federal Bills/Issues the Alliance will be tracking:

- a. 40 hour work week – HR 30 (Young, Lipinski) and S30 (Collins, Donnelly, Murkowski, Manchin) – restore a 40 hour full time definition under the Affordable Care Act instead of the 30 hour workweek as it is currently defined
- b. Trade Promotion Authority (Already supported by Gateway Chambers Alliance)

Federal legislation may be tracked at: <https://www.govtrack.us/>

### State Bills/Issues the Alliance will be tracking:

- a. SB3 (Leno, Leyva) – Would move minimum wage to \$11/HOUR ON 1/1/2016. The bill has been referred to committee (labor, Industrial Relations)
- b. SB8 (Hertzberg) – Taxation reform: raising state sales taxes/lowering income taxes – referred to committee (RLS)
- c. SB14 (Pavley) – Groundwater management – referred to committee (NR &W)
- d. AB11 (Gonzalez) – Amends Healthy Workplaces, Health Families Act of 2014 (sick leave) to include in-home support service workers

State legislation may be tracked at: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/bilinfo.html>

The Gateway Chamber Alliance meets bi-monthly. If you are interested in attending the meetings, please call me at the chamber office.

-Vivian Hansen

## MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

### Stater Bros. Raises Over \$1.7 Million to Fight Hunger In "Harvesting Hope" Holiday Campaign

Throughout the months of November and December 2014, Stater Bros.' 6th Annual "Harvesting Hope in our Community" campaign raised over \$1.7 million to assist with hunger relief efforts in the communities that Stater Bros. serves.

During November and December, food barrels were located inside each Stater Bros. Supermarket, and as a result over 240,000 pounds of food, valued at more than \$410,000, was donated to local food banks. Stater Bros. operates supermarkets in six counties including San Bernardino, Riverside, Orange, Los Angeles, San Diego and Kern Counties.

Over \$150,000 was generously donated by customers and employees at Stater Bros. check stands during November and December. These funds will be allocated to food banks in the summer of 2015 when food reserves are traditionally low.

Stater Bros. Charities, the company's charitable arm, presented over \$455,000 in cash donations to over 100 Southern California food

banks and self-help organizations.

Stater Bros. contributed over \$36,000 to qualified nonprofit organizations for the purchase of turkeys to feed the hungry for Thanksgiving.

The traditional Salvation Army Red Kettles in front of Stater Bros. Supermarkets collected \$643,000 this Holiday Season to provide much needed assistance to the local poor and homeless.

Stater Bros. partnered with KTLA-TV for a special one-day donation/food collection event on Tuesday, November 25th at three Stater Bros. Supermarkets located in Chino, Placentia and Santa Clarita. This food drive collected over 14,000 pounds of food and over \$43,000 in funds to go back into the local community.

"Together we can make a difference," stated Jack H. Brown, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Stater Bros. Markets. "The 'Harvesting Hope in our Community' campaign encourages everyone ... employees and customers ... to take part in the fight

against hunger in their communities. At Stater Bros., we just don't do business in a community ... we are part of the community. Helping our neighbors in need ... is being part of the community," Brown further added.

Stater Bros. was founded in 1936 in Yucaipa, California, and has grown steadily through the years to become the largest privately owned Supermarket Chain in Southern California and the largest private employer in both San Bernardino County and Riverside County. The Company currently operates 168 Supermarkets, and there are approximately 18,000 members of the Stater Bros. Supermarket Family. Since 2008, Stater Bros. and Stater Bros. Charities have contributed more than \$75 million in food and funds to local Southern California communities. For more information, go to [www.staterbros.com](http://www.staterbros.com).

Norwalk is fortunate to have two Stater Brothers stores in our community. They are located at 12523 Alondra Blvd and at 11300 Firestone Blvd.

## LABOR LAW CORNER

### Progressive Discipline Best Remedy for Workplace Cellphone Abuse

*Question: We are having problems with employees taking long rest breaks. These employees take their cellphones and go to the restroom for long periods of time. What can we do to curb this problem?*

This is a problem that has been increasing steadily, as employees are tied to their cellphones for communication/calls, playing games, and surfing the Internet. There are a number of ways to handle the problem, but the best remedy is progressive discipline.

#### Rest Break Policies

When employees are taking long rest breaks, it becomes a matter of the employer's rest break policies and what happens when there is noncompliance.

Noncompliance usually leads to a disciplinary action, frequently starting with an oral warning, with the classic progress of going to a written warning next if the situation doesn't improve. The progression can continue up to and including termination if the problem is severe enough and the employee does not respond.

Some employers have reported that employees

are taking rest breaks of 30 minutes, twice a day—this can result in a substantial loss of productivity, and "overpayment" if nonexempt employees are not reporting time properly.

#### Medical Concerns

Occasionally, an employee might claim to have medical issues that require longer rest breaks. If this is the situation, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements come into play, and the employer and employee can enter into the "interactive process."

During this process, both parties explore ways to resolve the problem, with the employee participating equally in searches for solutions. Sometimes it might become necessary to get a doctor's note, with possible recommendations from the doctor.

#### Restricting Cellphone Use

It is important to remember that employees have no absolute right to bring their cellphones (or any other electronic devices) to the workplace. Some employers are restricting the use of cellphones in the workplace, or even banning their presence entirely. This is permissible and it is not illegal.

Many businesses, however, need various electronic devices for their employees. If this is the case, it is recommended that you consult with legal counsel to draft the appropriate policies accordingly.

**The Labor Law Helpline is a service to California Chamber of Commerce preferred and executive members. For expert explanations of labor laws and Cal/OSHA regulations, not legal counsel for specific situations, call (800) 348-2262 or submit your question at [www.hrcalifornia.com](http://www.hrcalifornia.com).**

### Help Available to Determine Facilities' Accessibility Compliance

Making sure that a business is accessible to all members of the public, including those with disabilities, can be challenging in California.

One way to ensure a business is in compliance with the various construction-related accessibility standards and to minimize the threat of litigation for technical violations is to obtain an inspection from a Certified Access Specialist (CASp).

A CASp is an individual who has been tested and certified by the Division of the State Architect on his or her knowledge of complex, construction-related accessibility standards and how those standards should be applied. A CASp will know which standards apply to a specific building based upon the age of the facility and its history of improvements. A CASp also can help put together an action plan for any changes needed to bring the building into compliance. In addition, a CASp inspection can help the business limit its financial liability if it becomes the subject of an accessibility-related lawsuit.

The cost of an inspection can vary. A business can find a CASp that provides services in a particular area on the Division of the State Architect website, [www.dgs.ca.gov/dsa](http://www.dgs.ca.gov/dsa). Those who are available for inspections will have a "Yes" in the "Do Inspections?" column.

Additional information and answers to questions regarding CASp services, inspections, and inspection reports can be found in the "For Business Owners, Property Owners, and Consumers" section of the Division of the State Architect CASp Web page. <http://www.dgs.ca.gov/dsa/Programs/programCert/casp.aspx>

Or, a business may contact Ida Clair with the Division of the State Architect at [Ida.Clair@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:Ida.Clair@dgs.ca.gov), (916) 322-2490.

The Department of Rehabilitation website has additional information on accessibility requirements in a video series titled "Boost Your Business." The California Commission on Disability Access ([www.cdda.ca.gov](http://www.cdda.ca.gov)) also has information on its website regarding how to protect your business.

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### ARE YOU TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE CHAMBER ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES?

As a member of the Norwalk Chamber you have an opportunity to purchase ads in the Norwalk Patriot weekly newspaper for very reasonable and discounted rates. The Norwalk Patriot is distributed to over 22,000 businesses and residences in the City of Norwalk every week. This means your company name not only reaches other Chamber Members, but much of the Norwalk business community and residents.

As a Norwalk Chamber Member you may also include your company's flyer in the Norwalk Patriot weekly publication for a nominal fee.

Also as a Norwalk Chamber Member, you may also submit an article to be published in the Norwalk Chamber Business Connection Newsletter. This monthly publication is mailed to our members only. Articles are due by the 3rd Friday of each month prior to distribution the following Friday.

You may choose to insert your flyer to Norwalk Chamber Members Only for \$125. Please supply 375 flyers.

**Please call the Chamber Office at 562.864.7785 for details.**

## LEGISLATIVE CORNER

### Paid Sick Leave Law: A Look at Employer Compliance Options

With the signing of the legislation mandating that employers provide employees with paid sick leave starting July 1, 2015, many employers are questioning what options they have to comply with the new law and how existing or newly adopted employer policies will coordinate with this new mandate.

AB 1522 (Gonzalez; D-Sherman Heights; Chapter 317) provides employers with three options by which to satisfy the requirement to provide employees with paid sick leave, thereby offering employers some flexibility to implement a new or existing policy.

#### Accrual Method

The first option employers have to provide paid sick leave is the statutory mandated accrual method that requires an employee earn one hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked.

Under this option, an employer will have to track the hours of each employee to determine when the employee has accrued one hour of paid sick leave. An employer may cap an employee's accrual at six days or 48 hours. Any accrued, unused paid sick leave must be carried over to the following year.

#### 'Front Loading' Policy

The second option for providing paid sick leave is a "front loading" employer policy that provides an employee with at least three days or 24 hours of paid sick leave, paid leave, or paid time off at the beginning of each year.

Under a front loading policy, an employee does not accrue leave during the year, as the employee receives all of the paid sick leave or paid time off on the first day of the year. Under this option, an employer does not have to track the employee's hours for accrual and does not have to carry over any unused paid sick leave.

#### Employer Policy

The third option is an employer policy that provides an employee with at least three days or 24 hours of paid sick leave in a 12-month period, year of employment, or calendar year.

Under this option, an employer can determine the accrual rate or method, so long as the annual amount provided to all employees is at least three days or 24 hours of paid sick leave, paid time off, or other paid leave.

Specifically, Labor Code Section 246 (e)(2) was amended into the bill at the end of session to address employers' concern that although they generally provide at least three days of paid time off or paid sick leave each year to their employees, the accrual method may not be on an hourly basis.

A majority of employers allow employees to accrue paid leave on a pay period basis, as it is easier to administer, especially for a large workforce, than tracking each individual employee's hours worked.

Section 246 (e) reflects such employer policies by stating that an employer does not have to provide sick leave in addition to what they already offer if the employer policy either:

- mirrors the accrual, carry over and use requirements set forth in AB 1522; or
- provides employees with at least three days or 24 hours of paid sick leave each year, regardless of the actual accrual rate.

Interpreting this section otherwise would essentially render Section 246 (e)(1) meaningless. Section 246 would not provide two options for an employer policy if the intent and requirement was that any employer policy had to match the specific accrual method set forth in AB 1522.

Moreover, Section 246 (e)(2) is not just limited to "front loading" policies, as such policies are separately recognized in the bill under Labor Code Section 246 (d). Section 246 (d) references subdivision (e) to acknowledge that an employer must have a policy for front loading,

not to limit Section 246 (e)(2) to only a front loading policy.

Nothing in 246(e)(2) requires that an employer provide the three days or 24 hours at the beginning of the year; it just requires that an employer provide an employee with three days or 24 hours of paid time off or paid leave each year.

#### Flexibility

These three options provide an employer with the necessary flexibility to determine which method of offering paid sick leave fits best with the employer's specific workforce and environment. Employers have until July 1, 2015 to determine which option to utilize.

Under any of the three options, however, the employer must allow an employee to use the accrued paid sick leave or paid time off for the same purposes and under the same conditions as set forth in AB 1522. Any employer policy should reference these purposes and conditions.

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Please call Caren Spilsbury  
for more information on how to become a  
Norwalk Chamber Member!  
(562) 864-7785

## BUSINESS CORNER

### 10 Tips from SBDC Entrepreneurs

As 2015 begins, we included some of the best tips SBDC entrepreneurs shared with us on their business lessons learned. We invite you to read the tips below and check out their sites for more information on their products and services.

1. Start on the Right Foot. The SBDC helped these partners select a legal structure, explained the benefits of each type, why and how to file a DBA, get a seller's permit and obtain business licenses. "The SBDC saved us so much money compared to what we would have had to pay a law firm."

**Stacie Schmitz and Tim Varnell, It's a Deal Casino Rentals, Redondo Beach**

2. Be Realistic with your Projections: "When you're doing projections, it's important to be realistic. The SBDC helped me do more in-depth analysis on the closest business model, look into the growth potential of the solar industry, and [estimate] what market share we could realistically expect to gain in the near future." This client was the first funding cycle winner of \$100k from Innovation Fund So Cal.

**Max Aram, PickMySolar.com, Los Angeles**

3. Financing Takes Planning: The SBDC helped this first-time tech startup founder develop a compelling pitch deck, create realistic four year financial projections, assess a firstround financing and plan for future rounds. "My SBDC advisor at the Bixel Exchange had a very good idea of what angels expect to see in your business plan, your projections, and how it ties in to your overall story. Our advisor helped us convey our knowledge of the market as well as articulate our understanding of the competition. Our advisor has given us a long term view, both for ourselves and for the investors we'll approach at a later date." Six weeks into working with the Bixel Exchange, Frenzy raised \$60k in financing.

**James Chang, Frenzy, Los Angeles**

4. Use the Right Tools: The SBDC encouraged this client to transition from books on ledgers to QuickBooks, "This helped us tremendously with controlling costs and analyzing the business. Our SBDC advisor also showed us the cost ratios we should be looking at, how to control the cost of goods and what was realistic in terms of pricing."

**Gene Holman, Cappy's Dry Rub, Woodland Hills**

5. There's Hiring Help: The SBDC connected this client with the Foothill Workforce Investment Board (FWIB), a program that matches employers with employees who are seeking to learn new job skills and overcome disadvantages. "The fact that FWIB pays a portion of a new employee's wages during their initial four months was a bonus. That has been a tremendous help because when a new employee has to learn 300 cheeses and the meats and wines that pair with them, a lot of labor is lost to training."

**Leah Park Fierro, MilkfarmLA, Los Angeles**

6. Understand and Monitor Your Cash Flow: This SBDC client began to receive requests from out-of-state customers. As interstate retail involves calculating different rates of sales tax this client said, "although it's complicated, my advisor spent hours with me teaching me not only how to put in every single entry in QuickBooks, but also the big picture of being able to analyze your business' profit and loss. My advisor showed me that without a tool like QuickBooks, you won't really understand the nitty-gritty of your business. If I had hired someone to do the accounting, I never would have learned that." This client generated more than \$150k during the first four months of opening; 15% of sales came from her website.

**Dayna Mance, Prism Boutique, Long Beach**

7. Improve Your Ops: One of the SBDC's advisors, a Six Sigma process improvement expert, worked with this client to design a new workflow plan that would: increase the company's manufacturing capacity, improve efficiencies, reduce costs in research and development and the prototype-build department. The SBDC connected this client with a business student who put all the company's work procedures in writing. "In the auto industry, you need documentation. Now we've moved our processes out of being 'tribal knowledge' to being much more documented and structured." This client received more than \$32M in investments in 2013.

**Wolfgang Bullmer, Transonic Combustion, Camarillo**

8. Engage with Customers: This client developed a client base through offering facials as a hobby; the SBDC encouraged her to build on that clientele by adding email marketing and social media to her marketing. "I learned how to do email marketing with Constant Contact – now I send out monthly specials. The social

media marketing program helped put us on the map and build awareness of our services in just a few months." Further, this client is working on developing reciprocal relationships with medical practitioners interested in integrated wellness treatment options for patients. Six months after launching, Y. Belleza Wellness met its financial projections and was on track to double sales.

**Mayra Cortes, Y.Belleza Wellness, Alhambra**

9. Know your Niche: This client sought help after acquiring a Vietnamese market; the SBDC helped this client advertise effectively and expand his product line to include different ethnic foods. "The SBDC advised me how to reach customers from these different ethnic groups." Now, this client advertises in local magazines, newspapers and on Peruvian TV. The SBDC also advised this client on how to import food from Peru, which gave this client the freedom to sell his food under his own label, and collect a higher margin.

**Celfio Goni, Inca Gourmet and Saigon Market, Lawndale**

10. Price your Products to Compete in Markets Abroad without Sacrificing Profit: The international team in the LA SBDC Network helped this client reassess her international pricing strategy to keep more of her profits, develop a plan for international expansion, find international distributors and vet international contracts. During a session, this client assessed her cost of goods and realized the product price was too low. "That was a tremendous eye-opener, the CITD helped us a lot with pricing – they came to our office and worked with us so that our pricing and branding adequately reflected a luxury good- which helped the company boost profits." The CITD helped Laguna Candles secure a three year international order with one of South Korea's largest candle retailers.

**Sharie Hendricks, Laguna Candles, Laguna Beach**

*The SBDC is a group of successful small business owners helping fellow entrepreneurs start, sustain, and grow their business through low-cost workshops and free one-on-one consulting in business planning, finance, marketing, and various other specialty areas (Spanish speaking consultants available). To make an appointment call: (562) 938-5100, or email: sbdcinfo@lbcc.edu*