

TAKING ACTION

WWW.METROACTION.ORG

MARCH 2008



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MetroAction is a non-profit community development organization dedicated to providing financing and business development assistance to businesses throughout northeastern Pennsylvania.

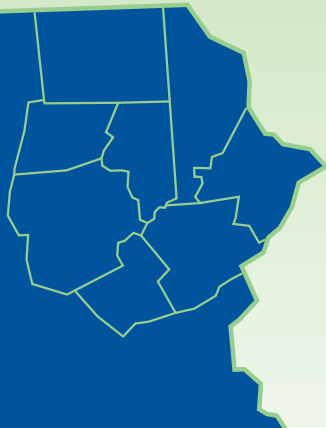
Formed in 1977 to revitalize the local community, MetroAction is now a leading Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) that has provided more than \$2.5 million to help build small businesses throughout eight counties in northeastern Pennsylvania.

Since 1997, MetroAction has been providing loans and business development assistance to small businesses. MetroAction finances small businesses that, for many reasons, may not qualify for traditional bank financing.

Many of the entrepreneurs that utilize our programs lack start-up capital and cannot save money fast enough to acquire the funding they need to finance their business. MetroAction is an alternative, yet successful and comprehensive, resource for financing and business development assistance.

Serving:

- Carbon
- Lackawanna
- Luzerne
- Monroe
- Pike
- Susquehanna
- Wayne
- Wyoming



HONORING SMALL BUSINESS SUCCESS IN NORTHEASTERN PA

Do you know a business that represents the very best of our local entrepreneurial spirit?



Barry Kaplan accepts the 2007 Lackawanna County Small Business of the Year Award. Standing Left to Right: Jeff Rubel, Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce; Barry Kaplan, Everything Natural; Steve Ackmann, Fidelity Deposit & Discount Bank.

said Christina Hitchcock, MetroAction Business Development Administrator. "We encourage organizations or individuals to take part in this program by nominating an outstanding local small business owner for this prominent award."

Nominees will be judged on business growth and performance, sound business strategies, customer service, employee relations, business challenges, innovation and community involvement. Nominees must be a for-profit business located in Lackawanna County, have fewer than 250 employees and be a member in good standing of The Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce at the time of application and at the time the award is presented.

Anyone can nominate a business and you can nominate more than one business. Self-nominations are also accepted. Award nominations must be received by 4:00 PM on April 18. MetroAction staff will contact the nominee and provide them with the application package (due on April 23). If you would like to nominate a small business for this prestigious award, contact Christina Hitchcock at (570) 342-7711 or chitchcock@metroaction.org. To view complete award details, visit www.MetroAction.org.

The recipient of the 2008 Fidelity Deposit and Discount Bank Small Business of the Year Award will be announced at MetroAction's Small Business Award Luncheon on May 22 at the Hilton Scranton and Conference Center.

Nominate a deserving small business today! 

MetroAction is seeking nominations for the 2008 Fidelity Deposit and Discount Bank Small Business of the Year Award. For the past 26 years, this award has honored small businesses that clearly demonstrate how hard work and determination pay off.

"Small businesses are the backbone of northeastern Pennsylvania's economy,"

SMALL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Small Business Spotlight Awarded to Telespond Senior Services

MetroAction, The Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, First Liberty Bank and Trust and The Northeast Pennsylvania Business Journal announce that Telespond Senior Services has received the March 2008 Small Business Spotlight Award.



Desiree Ranella, MetroAction, Richard Cresinski, Executive Director, Telespond Senior Services, Lee Walter, Vice President, First Liberty Bank and Trust, Kenneth Reinheimer, Board President, Telespond Senior Services.

The Small Business Spotlight is an award given by MetroAction recognizing local businesses for their contributions to our community. The Small Business Spotlight Committee chose Telespond Senior Services for their dedication to making northeastern Pennsylvania a better place to live and work.

Telespond Senior Services was founded in 1974 as a private non-profit organization assisting Lackawanna County's older adults and their caregivers. The goal of the organization is to respond to the needs, and promote the well-being of older adults through advocacy, education, relief, and supportive services. These services further the development of a model longterm care service delivery system in Lackawanna County.

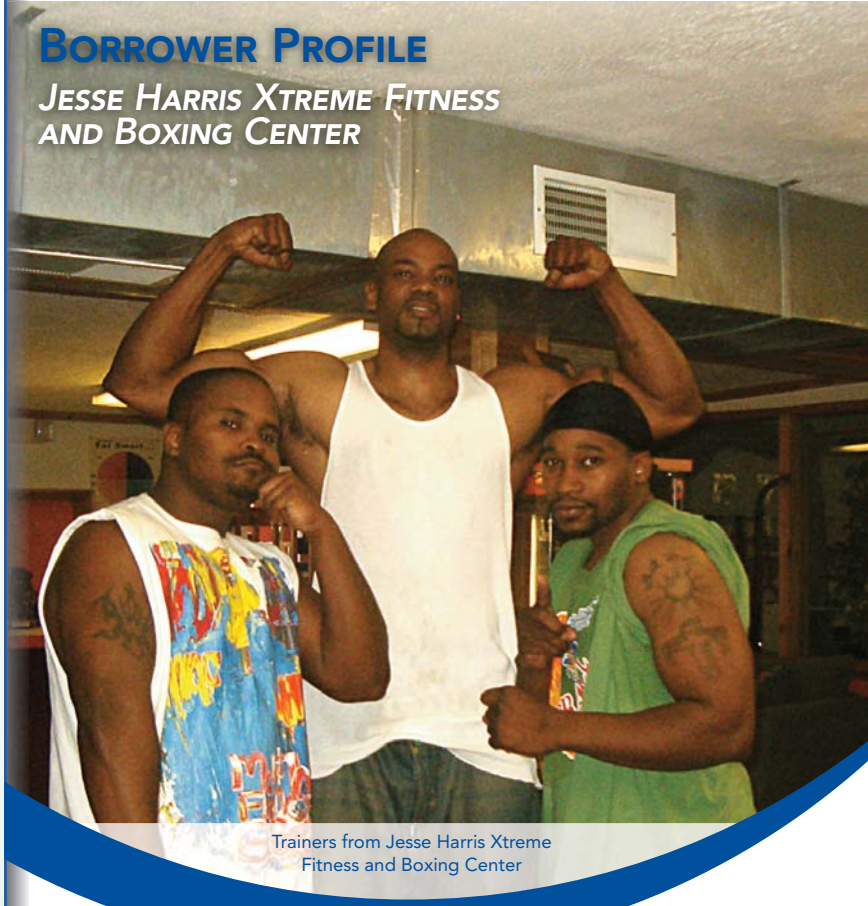
Telespond Senior Services staff believes in the betterment of service provision in our community and participates in many Lackawanna County organizations such as: Voluntary Action Center Council, Lackawanna County Coalition for Aging Services, Senior Networking Alliance, and Persons with Disabilities.

A member agency of the United Way of Lackawanna County, Telespond Senior Services has received numerous awards for staff participation in annual campaigns and employees have participated in the United Way Speakers' Bureau. Telespond Senior Services is also a recipient of the Chamber's Pride & Progress Award.

For more information on Telespond Senior Services call (570) 961-1950. 

BORROWER PROFILE

JESSE HARRIS XTREME FITNESS AND BOXING CENTER



Trainers from Jesse Harris Xtreme Fitness and Boxing Center


MetroAction is proud to announce that the Jesse Harris Xtreme Fitness and Boxing Center, located in Stroudsburg, received financing through MetroAction's Microloan program.

Owner Jesse Harris is a retired professional kick boxer and boxer with over 20 years of experience. In 2007, Jesse was named Fighter of the Year for the Universal Martial Arts Association Hall of Fame and has been inducted into the Hall of Fame for Boxing in the World Karate Union and the Hall of Fame of the International Association of Martial Arts.

An active member of the community, Mr. Harris has started several youth, adult and elderly fitness training programs. For instance, individualized programs are available for special needs children and at-risk teens to teach self-defense, self-esteem, and self-discipline.

Jesse Harris Xtreme Fitness and Boxing Center opened in 2004 and has trained over 200 athletes. The center also offers cardio workouts, bodybuilding classes, personal training, weight training, a daycare service, and tanning services for its members.

Jesse Harris Xtreme Fitness and Boxing Center currently employs 15 people and will create additional jobs with the expansion of its facility.

For more information on the Jesse Harris Xtreme Fitness and Boxing Center, please call (570) 421-7611 or visit them on Business Route 209 in Stroudsburg. 

MICROGRANT PROGRAM

IMPROVING LOCAL CHILDCARE

Since launching the MetroAction MicroGrant program in 2005, several childcare agencies have used the funding to improve the quality of daycare that is provided to children.




Kris Bossert, owner of Stepping Stones Play and Learning Center, accepts MicroGrant funding from MetroAction staff member Desiree Ranella.

Stepping Stones Play and Learning Center in Gouldsboro received grant funding in November 2007. The center, operated by Kris Bossert, applied for funding to improve parental involvement with the children by conducting field trips and outings with the children and their parents. This project received a MicroGrant because it was not only unique, but also because it addressed enrichment, an essential part of children's care.

Stepping Stones did not waste any time implementing its newly developed program. The center's staff has indicated that the interaction between parents and their children

has improved. The field trips provide supplemental activities that fall outside of traditional operating hours, allowing working families to participate in social events with the children and staff. This project has helped improve communication channels, build family relationships and allows parents the opportunity to become active partners in the development of the types of programs their children will experience.

MetroAction awards \$5,000 in MicroGrants annually to childcare providers throughout its eight county service area. MetroAction's MicroGrant program, funded by The Opportunity Finance Network, aims to increase the supply of quality, affordable childcare available to northeastern Pennsylvania.

MetroAction is currently accepting applications for the next round of MicroGrants, which will be awarded in May. Interested childcare facilities should contact Desiree Ranella at (570) 342-7711 for more information. 

BOARD OF DIRECTOR PROFILE




Natalie Pettinato O'Hara is continuing a legacy of excellence in the construction business. Born in Scranton, Ms. O'Hara is the third generation to serve as Principal for her family business, PACE Construction Managers.

Natalie is a graduate of Lehigh University in Bethlehem and earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering and an E.I.T Certification.

Ms. O'Hara initially began her career at Turner Construction Company in New Jersey. In 1995, Natalie returned to Scranton to work for PACE Construction Managers, Inc. where she worked in various capacities including Staff Estimator, Chief Estimator, Project Coordinator and Project Manager. In 2005, Ms. O'Hara was named Principal of the firm.

"The most rewarding part of what I do is witnessing the contribution our work makes to the community. The new Clubhouse and Party Deck at PNC Field, the Medallion Parking Garage, the pool house at Nay Aug, the County Courthouse renovations, and the new Lackawanna County 911 Center are all vibrant signs of the momentum our community has and the great things we have to offer here," stated Ms. O'Hara.

Natalie is an active member of the Greater Scranton community where she serves on several Boards and committees.

Ms. O'Hara resides in Dunmore with husband Michael, son Michael and dog Scarlett. 

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TENANT PROFILE

McNally and Sons, LLC.

SLIBCO and the Scranton Enterprise Center welcome McNally and Sons, LLC as a tenant of the facility.

McNally and Sons was formed in late 2007 by William McNally and his father, Frank McNally. This partnership combines over four decades of experience in the textile and apparel industries. The firm will focus on involvement in high-growth industries in northeastern Pennsylvania. McNally and Sons' tactic will be to develop strategic partnerships within the high-performance materials sector. Capitalizing on their broad based global network created over the last forty years, the aforementioned sector will provide various goods and services to the industrial, medical, military and consumer markets.

The firm's secondary goals rest in management/sales consulting, developing import/export relationships and manufacturing new technologies. "We are committed to remaining in this area for the same reasons so many organizations have demonstrated an interest in northeastern Pennsylvania. We believe in the geographic potential across all business metrics; from human capital, to the educational/research infrastructure in place, to the commitment of the state and local authorities for growth related initiatives in support of business," stated William McNally.

For more information on McNally and Sons, contact William McNally at (570) 330-9000. 



UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Diversity Entrepreneur Forum: Steps to Successful Business Ventures

Date: March 12, 2008
Cost: \$25

This forum provides minority entrepreneurs with valuable resources needed to operate a successful business in northeastern Pennsylvania. Learn how to network. Listen to success stories. Ask a panel of experts the questions that will help you succeed.

Small Business Institute

Date: Wednesdays, March 26-May 14, 2008
Cost: \$299

The Small Business Institute (SBI) is an 8-week training program focusing on the four main components of operating a successful small business – success planning, market planning, cash flow planning and operations planning. SBI is a collaborative effort of MetroAction and the University of Scranton Small Business Development Center.

March Lunch 'n Learn: A Quick Look at QuickBooks

Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2008
Cost: Seminar \$35, Bag Lunch \$10

Have you ever wondered if QuickBooks accounting software would make your life easier? Learn the pros and cons of using this popular software program.

How to Prosper in the New Energy Future

Date: Tuesday, April 22, 2008
Cost: FREE

This presentation will review new federal and state energy legislation, utility deregulation, and the advances in technology that will provide new commercial opportunities for northeastern Pennsylvania businesses.

April Lunch 'n Learn: Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOP's): Are They An Option For Your Business?

Date: Wednesday, April 23, 2008
Cost: Seminar \$35, Bag Lunch \$10

Is your business eligible to establish and ESOP? What are the tax advantages? How do you set up an ESOP? Learn the pros and cons of this unique business ownership plan.