Robert H. Nelson was appointed district director of SBA’s Massachusetts District Office on November 26, 2007. As district director, Mr. Nelson is responsible for the effective delivery of SBA’s financial and business development programs with a mission to counsel, assist and protect the interests of small businesses statewide in order to maintain and strengthen the economy.

Nelson and the Massachusetts District Office staff work to help entrepreneurs to start, grow and build their businesses through access to capital, government contracting and technical assistance. On the financial side, Mr. Nelson is responsible for increasing delivery of the popular 7(a) and 504 loan programs which help small businesses obtain debt capital.

Nelson is also responsible for SBA’s oversight of the Massachusetts Small Business Development Center’s statewide network, SCORE Chapters, and the Center for Women & Enterprise.

As Region I Administrator, Mike Vlacich oversees SBA programs, offices, and operations in the SBA’s New England region, serving Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

Mr. Vlacich is a respected New Hampshire public servant with extensive economic development, policy, and constituent service experience at the nonprofit, state, and federal government levels. He previously served as a Senior Advisor to U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen, and over the years has served in other leadership roles in her U.S. Senate and Governor’s offices.

He previously served as President and CEO of the New Hampshire College and University Council, State Director for U.S. Senator Maggie Hassan, Director of the New Hampshire Division of Economic Development, and Deputy Chief of Staff to New Hampshire Governor John Lynch. Mr. Vlacich is a first-generation American and the first in his family to attend college, graduating from the University of New Hampshire in 1995.

Robert H. Nelson
SBA Massachusetts District Director

Mike Vlacich
SBA New England Regional Administrator
SCORE Boston is a group of experienced business professionals who provide guidance to those desiring to start up a new small business or to assist existing small businesses in improving their profitability.

Our volunteers are real-world business professionals who donate thousands of hours to help existing and startup businesses succeed. We have experts in areas such as; accounting, finance, human resources, consulting, import/export, law, operations, production, retail, wholesale, manufacturing, sales, marketing, management, business plan preparation, strategic planning, and many other business disciplines.

We provide:

- Volunteer MENTORS who share their expertise across many industries
- Free, confidential business mentoring in person, via email or by video
- Free business TOOLS, templates, and tips here online
- Inexpensive or free business WORKSHOPS (locally) and webinars (online 24/7)

Paul Waldeck
SCORE Massachusetts District Director

RACE DIRECTOR, PHILANTHROPIST, MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER, ACCOMPLISHED ATHLETE. DAVE MCGILLIVRAY IS A PROFESSIONAL WITH A PURPOSE.

From his extraordinary 1978 run across the U.S. to benefit the Jimmy Fund and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute to serving as technical director then race director of the BAA Boston Marathon since the 1980s, McGillivray has helped organize more than 1,400 mass participatory events since founding DMSE Sports in 1981, while raising millions for worthy causes close to his heart. Visit: www.dmsesports.com

Special Welcoming Remarks by:

Ed Markey
U.S. Senator

Jake Auchincloss
U.S. Congressman

Mike Kennealy
MA Secretary of Housing and Economic Development
7:30 am – 8:30 am  Registration and Networking
9:00 am - 9:30 am Welcoming Remarks
National Anthem by Barbara Green
Robert H. Nelson, SBA Massachusetts District Director
Paul Waldeck, SCORE District Director
Mike Vlacich, SBA New England Regional Administrator
Ed Markey, U.S. Senator (Video Message)
Jake Auchincloss, U.S. Congressman
Mike Kennealy, MA Secretary of Housing and Econ. Dev.

9:30 am - 10:00 am Keynote Presentation by Dave McGillivray

10:00 am – 11:00 am Awards Presentation
SCORE Awards
District Director’s Award
SBDC Excellence and Innovation Center Award
Veteran Owned Business of the Year
Minority Owned Business of the Year
Woman Owned Business of the Year
Small Manufacturer of the Year
Microenterprise of the Year
Family Owned Business of the Year
Homebased Business of the Year
Financial Services Champion of the Year
Young Entrepreneur of the Year
Region Prime Contractor of the Year
Exporter of the Year
Small Business Person of the Year

11:00 am Program Concludes

Lisa L. Robinson, LMHC, LPC, MA, EDM, is a Columbia University graduate and the founder of Trust Therapeutics, LLC, a small and rapidly growing Behavioral Health company offering Telehealth services in Massachusetts.

Over nearly five years Ms. Robinson has worked hard with the support of her lead mentor, Tim Nelson, and a team of SCORE mentors to build a business that focuses on the betterment of both the client and employee, by validating their experiences and goals of the two most significant parties involved in the treatment process: the client and the employees.

www.trusttherapeutics.com
The NADA Cart is a local empaNADA startup founded by two friends, Stephanie Carteiro and Keneddy Lavour, with a passion for food and flavor. They make gourmet empanadas from scratch that are fried to order. Each 'NADA recipe is inspired by Latin American flavors with unique twists that are unforgettable. The empanadas can be ordered online at various pop-up events, or for catering. empaNADA recently agreed to provide their empanadas to the upcoming US Open Golf Championship!

Georgianna Parkin has been the State Director for the Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network since November 1999. She has over twenty-five years of experience administering Federal funds from agencies including SBA, DOD, NIH, NSF, NPS and NASA. The Massachusetts program includes six regional offices, a nationally recognized International Trade program as well as a statewide government procurement program and a government sales/technology initiative.

Ms. Parkin is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She served for ten years on the Americas SBDC Board of Directors and held the positions of Vice Chair and Secretary on the Executive Committee. In addition, she chaired the ASBDC Personnel Committee for numerous years as well as the search process to hire the Current CEO of the Association.

Ms. Parkin has won several leadership awards from SBA and the University and has been recognized and honored by the former President Pro Tempore of the Massachusetts Senate as an Unsung Heroine through the Massachusetts Commission on the status of Women. Office.

Other Board involvement has included Vice Chair of Board at the Western Mass Enterprise Fund (a local CDFI), and current board President of the Massachusetts Economic Development Council.

www.thenadacart.com  www.msbdc.org
Massachusetts Small Business Development Center’s Government Sales Advisory Program, is sponsored by the University Of Massachusetts Amherst Isenberg School of Management.

Program staff Daniel Lilly and Sandra Ledbetter earned the recognition for having met all performance goals this past year, including number of unique clients served, number of advising cases, contract preparation hours — and the facilitation of over $30 million in financing for clients, representing approximately 29% of total statewide financing secured in FY21.

Dan Lilly frequently participates in events that leverage his expertise with the Small Business Innovation Research program, including the “Exploring Innovation Coast-to-Coast” event last May held in collaboration with the SBA Houston District Office.

Sandra also supported the successful execution of the first ever Virtual Matchmaker event held last October in collaboration with the Office of Senator Elizabeth Warren.

The program supports small businesses with a wide range of targeted government marketing assistance, and provides assistance to high growth, innovative companies to submit winning proposals to obtain Federal research funding to commercialize their ideas.

WON Sports Inc. is an indoor/outdoor sports complex in Seekonk, MA offering rental space for year-round soccer, lacrosse, baseball, softball, field hockey, football, and other activities that hold tournaments, leagues, camps, and other special events.

Brian LaFauci, an Air Force Veteran of 12 years as part of the 143rd Airlift Wing in Quonset, RI — started a real estate company in 2006 with his partner Peter Lawrence, also an Army Veteran. In 2018, Brian and Peter purchased an existing indoor sports facility that underwent a million dollar renovation with assistance from the SBA and local resource partners.

The Veterans Business Outreach Center supported Brian’s initial business planning and development phase by providing guidance and direction. SCORE Mentors provided Brian with counseling to help prepare the business with solid financials before applying for growth capital and eventually receiving an SBA-guaranteed 7A loan in August of 2018. As an entrepreneur and lifelong learner, Brian continued expanding his network by joining the VETRN Streetwise MBA program as a participant and completed the program in December of 2020.

“I have always been a firm believer that the supports available to us as business owners are invaluable. They aid us in stepping outside of our daily ‘fog of war,’ said Won Sports President Brian LaFauci. “During COVID that never was more true and the SBA was instrumental in helping businesses like ours weather the storm. It is an honor to receive this recognition after what was a trying few years for every entrepreneur out there.”

www.msbdc.org/gov_sales.html

WON Sports Inc.
www.wonsportsinc.com
ARCpoint Labs experienced tremendous growth in revenue and demand for their services throughout the pandemic. The company provides risk mitigation through pre-employment drug and alcohol testing, background screening, workplace drug policy assistance, corporate wellness programs, and COVID-19 testing solutions for employers.

Gauri Bhalakia is the Founder and President, who after starting her first business out of her basement, then selling multilingual children’s books across the country–formed her second company in 2015 to become a franchisee of ARCpoint Labs.

Bhalakia started the business with support from an SBA 7A loan. The small business received a PPP forgivable loan in May 2020 and an SBA EIDL in June of 2020. Gauri also participated in the SBA Emerging Leaders Program, Worcester cohort in 2019.

“We as a business feel very honored to first be nominated and then to receive this award. We believe that our success is due to the exceptional and personalized service we provide to local businesses, our close relationship with our partners and the commitment of our employees,” said Gauri Bhalakia, President of ARCpoint Labs, Southboro.

ARCpoint Labs has grown revenue 112% (CAGR) since opening the Southboro office in 2016, with the number of employees doubling in 5 years. To meet the growing demand for the company’s services, Gauri opened her second location in March of this year at 324 Grove Street in Worcester.

www.arcpointlabs.com

Bisousweet Confections LLC demonstrated rapid growth in sales and net profit for four years straight. Founded out of Karen Collins’ home kitchen in 2005, Bisousweet is a gourmet wholesale bakery currently scaling and selling to small independent shops and large retail chains in 14 states across the country.

A self-taught pastry chef, Collins started the small business after a request by a local gourmet food shop asking her if she could make Passover desserts to sell in the store.

"Running this company has pushed me far beyond anything I ever thought I could, or would, do. Every day is a test of patience, optimism, and problem-solving," said Founder and Owner Karen Collins. “Without question, the people most deserving of this recognition are my co-workers. The Bisousweet Team is my family. I want to do well and be better for them, because they have done, and continue to do, extraordinary things for me. This company is everything because of them."

In 2010, Collins moved from her home kitchen into a 600 sq ft. commercial kitchen and hired her first employee. The company today employs 45 people and is expected to double in the next few years. Karen also supports several charitable causes such as the Pan MASS Challenge, Dana Farber and the Acton-Boxborough United Way. Collins also mentored female led business owners as part of the Cultivate Small Business program run by Commonwealth Kitchen and Santander Bank.

Collins has received two SBA loans through Cambridge Savings Bank, in addition to an EIDL for covid relief. Karen has also been a client of SCORE since 2018, who she shared has helped mentor her through an extraordinarily challenging time.

www.bisousweet.com
J&J Machine Company provides prototyping and small-lot production of precision machined components, working with metal, plastics, and other materials. Their network of local suppliers provides sheet metal, finishes, welding, and other services. J&J supports customers in the medical, aerospace, research, and commercial sectors.

Devin Brown purchased the J&J Machine Company in 2014. The acquisition was financed with an SBA 7(a) loan and an SBA-backed line of credit. Prior to becoming a business owner, Devin held management positions at the Turner Construction Company, Ernst & Young, Bio-Rad, and Biogen.

Co-nominees include Mary-Ellen Odone, Director of Finance & HR; Ron Fournier, Director of Quality; and Michael Harrington, Sales & Operations Engineer.

The team at J&J Machine received invaluable counseling services from Jill Beresford, Senior Business Advisor at the Massachusetts Small Business Development Center. With assistance from the experienced mentors at the SBDC, J&J Machine developed and successfully executed a turnaround plan and was growing and profitable by 2018 – enabling the company to fully repay their SBA 7(a) loan by 2019.

“We are honored by this recognition.” said President and Owner Devin Brown, “and we are grateful to our employees, customers, vendors, and partners who help us to succeed. We are especially grateful for the guidance we received from the SBA and the Massachusetts SBDC.”

Devin gives back to the community by mentoring students from the Assabet Valley Regional Technical High school in Marlborough. He also serves as President of the Belmont Rugby Association, a non-profit that supports the boys’ and girls’ rugby teams at the Belmont High School.

www.jjmachine.com

Findability Sciences is a global provider of enterprise Artificial Intelligence solutions, demonstrating exponential sales growth in sectors such as manufacturing, telecom, retail, professional services, financial services, and government.

Hailing from a small town in India, CEO and Founder Anand Mahurkar started Findability Sciences to empower enterprises to harness the power of AI to solve critical business challenges.

Findability.ai is an award-winning proprietary platform which combines machine learning, computer vision and natural language processing to help enterprises accelerate their use of AI, enabling customers to build their own data science capability. Financial Times recognized Findability Sciences as one of the fastest-growing companies in the U.S. in 2021.

“I am happy, humbled, and excited to receive this award on behalf of Findability Sciences,” said Founder & CEO Anand Mahurkar. “The win for Findability Sciences further showcases the power of AI and its ability to help organizations remain relevant and profitable as the technology arms race heats up. Also, I am so proud of the entire Findability Sciences team – a group of innovative and creative professionals who have been instrumental in fostering the success of our company.”

Known as an expert in Big Data and Contextual Data Technologies, Anand has built a well-respected 30-year career in the innovation and technology sector. He has served on the IBM Watson Ecosystem Partner Advisory Board and named a Big Data Hero for IBM Big Data Magazine in 2014. Mahurkar has also served as a member of the Forbes Technology Council – an invitation-only community of leading Tech Visionaries who contribute to thought leadership content in Forbes magazine.

www.findability.ai
Euro-American Worldwide Logistics is a life science logistics center, providing FDA-regulated storage, U.S. trade compliance and international shipping services to pharmaceutical, biotech, medical device and bio-manufacturing industries.

Since its founding in 1966, Euro-American Worldwide Logistics has since grown into a 20-person operation spanning two offices in Worcester and Boston. The company remains family owned and operated and is now in its third generation of leadership spanning five decades. Eric Busenburg took over as President of the company in 2018.

“Our generational success owes a debt of gratitude to the mutual support systems in place in Massachusetts. The SBA’s dependable assistance has helped Euro-American scale its services supporting the life science companies in the state. It’s a testament to the collaborative ecosystem which exists in the Commonwealth,” said Eric Busenburg, President of Euro-American Worldwide Logistics.

Through the years, Euro-American has continued receiving ongoing assistance from Julia Dvorko from the Massachusetts Export Center, aiding with regulatory compliance for both Euro-American and its’ clients. In 2019, Eric Busenburg completed the SBA’s Emerging Leaders program as part of a Worcester cohort.

Towles dedicates time and resources, giving back to the business community in several ways. She is a regular volunteer contributor to the American Medical Writers Association journal, AMWA regional and national conferences; as well as serving on the Executive Council to determine yearly programming and initiatives.

In 2021, the company participated in the Massachusetts Life Science Center Internship Challenge, bringing in an intern from a regional Master of Science program. In 2022, the company will expand their internship program with Project OnRamp, as well as the Department of Defense’s Skillbridge program to further contribute to the diversification and inclusion within the science and technology workforce.

Towles also graduated from the inaugural cohort of the Merck-Drexel Advanced Leadership Program for Diverse Suppliers – helping promote and uplift other woman-owned and disability-owned businesses.
Kathleen Kelly, Webster Bank last year in 2021 closed $20 million in SBA financing with a focus on women, veterans, minorities and the LGBTQ community.

“The Financial Services Champion of the Year award is presented annually to an economic development practitioner who goes above and beyond to serve the small business community,” said District Director Robert Nelson. “Kathleen Kelly has been a passionate and tireless mentor for small businesses, contributing both her SBA lending and financial expertise along with critical business acumen to ensure capital is accessible to all, including our most underserved entrepreneurs. Recognition as both the MA and New England Financial Services Champion is a significant testament to her commitment to supporting small businesses region wide.”

Kelly currently serves as a board member with Boston Local Development Corporation. She also works with technical assistance providers such as VETRN, Veterans Business Outreach Center and the Massachusetts Small Business Development Center.

“I am truly honored to be nominated and to receive this award for the state and region,” said Webster Bank Senior Vice President Kathleen Kelly. “There is a long list of people who help me be successful including the devoted SBA District office staff, who respond to all my calls despite the volume of calls coming at them and my MSBDC partners, my CDC partners, my SBA closing attorneys and the team at Webster bank - thank you.”

Kelly has also received recognition as Coleman’s SBA BDO Winner for 2019 and as the SBA MA Breakout 7(a) Lender of the Year Award for 2019.

DetraPel is an advanced materials company that manufactures protective coatings without any cancer-causing fluorochemicals. DetraPel offers revolutionary cleaners and disinfectants along with stain removers. All products are researched, developed, designed, manufactured, and distributed to retailers, industrial partners, and direct to consumers from DetraPel’s facility in Framingham, MA.

 Appearing on season 9 of ABC’s Shark Tank in 2017, David Zamarin started DetraPel in his parent’s garage in 2013 at the age of 15. Due to Zamarin’s deep conviction that cancerous PFAS chemicals were unnecessary in the production of protective chemical coatings, David spent years developing a solution by conducting research and development at independent labs — where David learned polymer chemistry while shadowing researchers at University of Pennsylvania. Zamarin graduated Magna Cum Laude from Babson College in 2019.

“There is no place for PFAS chemicals in American households,” said Founder & CEO David Zamarin. “That is why DetraPel places such an emphasis on removing these carcinogens commonly used in paper, food packaging, and textile products.”

After filming Shark Tank, Zamarin landed several contracts and the company leased its first 4,000 sq. ft. manufacturing facility in Holliston, MA. Shortly after settling in, DetraPel began outgrowing the space and soon needed to relocate operations to a Framingham facility in 2018. After less than two years, DetraPel outgrew their initial Framingham facility and moved into a new one.

DetraPel utilized Economic Injury Disaster Loan and Paycheck Protection Program covid relief funding to ensure business operations went uninterrupted.
U.S. Eco Products Corporation is a full service government contractor, logistics and fulfillment solutions provider certified as an 8A, HUBZone, Woman Owned (WOSB, EDWOSB, WBE) business, SDB, and AC/DBE. The company supplies cost-effective, sustainable products and services, including safety supplies, LED lighting, landscaping equipment, snow removal equipment, and other specialty supplies such as de-icing fluid for airplanes and runways.

Doreen Blades started U.S. Eco Products Corporation in 2009, initially supplying a green alternative to rock salt sold in retail stores and airports. The company began to grow their product line and services with the goal of helping clients in reducing harm to the environment.

Clients served by U.S. Eco Products Corporation include the General Services Administration, Architect of the Capital Office, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Federal Reserve Boston, and Logan International Airport.

In addition, U.S. Eco Products Corporation received outstanding feedback after supporting the 2021 Presidential Inauguration. The company provided emergency cleaning services daily and added sanitation services around The Capital complex to support a changing mission that helped deploy the National Guard. Doreen’s team worked diligently from January to March, managing projects, coordinating security, and delivering critical sanitation services that led to a successful event.

Blades has received several awards through the years including being named WEUSA Top WBE CEO in 2017; and WBENC WBE Star in 2016. Blades also completed the SBA Emerging Leaders program in 2016, reimagined now as T.H.R.I.V.E. (Train. Hope. Rise. Innovate. Venture. Elevate.). Blades has utilized services by MA Procurement Technical Assistance Center, MA Small Business Development Center, SCORE, and the Center for Women & Enterprise.

www.usecoproducts.com

The Protectowire Company earned the recognition for growing exports to over 100 countries worldwide. International sales currently represent 60% of total company sales. Protectowire is a global supplier of linear heat detectors for “special hazard” fire detection, which are used to protect assets and facilities in a variety of industries. Examples include petrochemical storage, conveyor belts, tunnels, vehicle systems, cold storage warehouses, and electrical equipment.

Protectowire was founded by Gerald and Sarah Holmes who tested, patented, and trademarked their fire detection system in 1938. In the 1960s, the company was gradually transferred to the Sullivan family. President and CEO, Andrew Sullivan, currently leads the company, which has been proudly manufacturing products in Massachusetts for over 80 years.

Protectowire has multiple full-time staff dedicated to managing export operations who also work closely with federal and state agencies. The Massachusetts Export Center’s Director, Paula Murphy and Regional Director, Julia Dvorko have been especially helpful in assisting Protectowire in successfully navigating international markets.

Protectowire has received SBA’s State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) grants to defray the costs of exploring international markets. Protectowire utilized their grants to exhibit at the Intersec Dubai trade show in 2019, 2020, and 2022. Additionally, STEP grant funds were used to acquire a European product registration to grow regional sales.

Andrew Sullivan is active in the local business community as a member of the Pembroke Chamber of Commerce, where he volunteers his time and expertise to further educate other businesses on the benefits of international trade.

www.protectowire.com
Greg Acerra, President of Fireking Baking Company earned top honors this year, demonstrating extraordinary staying power, growth in revenue, expansion of operations, and job creation. Based in Braintree, Fireking Baking Company opened in Hingham, MA over 25 years ago by providing baked goods to local restaurants. Originally a retail and wholesale operation, Fireking’s client base includes restaurants, event centers, function halls, universities, caterers, and supermarkets. Most notably, Fireking has been expanding its white labeled baked goods business nationwide.

Fireking was first approved for an SBA 504 in 2013 with the help of Barbara Arena at Granite State Development Corporation for the acquisition of the 101 Campanelli Drive location. This move quadrupled their space and increased operating efficiencies; Revenues also quadrupled, and profitability consistently improved. In 2018, Acerra then utilized the SBA 504 again to finance two projects, including the financing of additional equipment and leasehold improvements to the newly leased location at 185 Campanelli Drive.

"I am honored to be recognized as the SBA Business Person of the Year. I have been blessed to have some of the hardest working and dedicated employees in the business to whom this award truly recognizes," said Greg Acerra, President of Fireking Baking Company. “I would also like to thank Barbara Arena and her hard working team at Granite State Development, Bob Nelson and his staff at the SBA and Bob Terravecchia and his staff at Coastal Heritage Bank for having the confidence in my team – for without their support my business would never have had the opportunity to flourish.”

In 2022, Fireking was approved for its’ third SBA 504 loan, which will be used to purchase new equipment and create new product lines. The business currently has approximately 125 full-time employees and an additional 100 part-time temp workers. As the business continues to expand, Fireking anticipates the expansion could add up to 50 new jobs over the next two years.

www.firekingbaking.com
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