

Prince George's Sentinel

By Sarah Hainesworth

Expand your market by thinking globally was just one of the tips small business owners learned July 31 at the Maryland is for Entrepreneurs event at Bowie State University.

The event was presented by the Maryland Small Business Development Center and featured special guest Rep. Steny Hoyer. Business owners were also able to network and learn strategies to make their business more profitable.

Russell C. Teter III, regional director of SBDC, led the program, and the event kicked off with a clip from the movie "Apollo 13." The clip was used to show how business owners must work with what they have to achieve their goals.

Teter explained the importance of marketing and managing to build profits. Teter highlighted tips such as implementing a referral system, using a testimonial list and addressing your weaknesses.

Author and businessman Ash Shukla kept the audience energized with the popular dance, "Wobble," and shared how he was able to become a successful businessman thanks to the SBDC. SBDC provides services such as one-on-one counseling, pricing strategies, international marketing resources and more.

Global Business Professional Andrew Kreinik highlighted the opportunity to market businesses or services on a global level. Kreinik stressed having knowledge of foreign customs. On global business ventures, Kreinik stated, "There are lots of resources."

Kreinik described one occasion where he was presented a business deal in Paris because, while there, he knew it was improper to drink wine with salad. He also described an occasion where a man lost a business deal in Japan because he showed the sole of his shoes, which is considered offensive. Researching your desired market will help you avoid potential pitfalls, he warned.

The event's headliner, Hoyer, voiced the importance of small business in Maryland.

"Small business in Maryland and around the country is absolutely critical because its small business that is the genesis for medium and large business," Hoyer said. "People who have an idea and are willing to take the risk to take that idea and commercialize it to make something that people can use and want to purchase, creates jobs and opportunities."

Hoyer also discussed his "Make it in America" initiative at the forum.

"Making it in America means making it on Main Street ... in your community," Hoyer said.

The goal of the initiative is to increase American manufacturing and create new jobs.

"I'm leading an effort to boost our economic competitors through strategic investments in education, innovation and infrastructure combined with reforms to our regulatory structures and to our tax structures," the congressman said.

Laws made possible through 'Make it in America,' such as the Small Business Jobs Act and the U.S. Manufacturing Enhancement Act, work in favor of business owners.

Hoyer ended his speech by noting that more "Make it in America" bills are on the way. If passed, they will assist small businesses with saving money and developing new products.