

RHODE ISLAND BUSINESS EMPOWERMENT NETWORK (RIBEN)

An innovative new coalition of RI's leading business support organizations announce their phenomenal, streamlined services for entrepreneurs and businesses of color, while celebrating women led businesses this month.

PROVIDENCE - A groundbreaking Coalition of Rhode Island based business organizations has come together to form a trusted, local network to increase services and shared resources for Black, Hispanic, Indigenous, Southeast Asian, and Women-led businesses. The strengthened ecosystem provides enhanced opportunities for growth and recovery through free and low-cost professional business assistance, streamlined processing to transformative resources, and training for all industries. The Coalition is equipped to empower entrepreneurs and small businesses of many races throughout the state of Rhode Island with the necessary tools to build sustainable, resilient, and high growth businesses and make positive impacts on their communities.

WHO: RIBEN Business Support Organizations include:

- The Center for Southeast Asians
- Center for Women and Enterprise
- Fuerza Laboral
- Hope & Main
- Multicultural Innovation Center
- Rhode Island Black Business Association
- Rhode Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Rhode Island Small Business Development
- Social Enterprise Greenhouse

WHAT: During this time of recovery with the state's focus on the Hospitality and Food industry, and the national commemoration of women's history month, RIBEN will highlight the resilience of its ethnic business accomplishments and celebrate with just a taste of the cultural richness of women-led businesses they have served. Please join us for a press conference to reveal how the coalition is helping businesses to grow and serve them through the advantage of a new and innovative streamlined service network.

WHERE: *Kin Southern Table + Bar*, 71 Washington St, Providence, RI 02903

WHEN: Wednesday, March 9, 11 a.m.

The coalition includes nearly 80 dedicated and experienced professionals committed to equity, access, and inclusion for sectors of the Rhode Island economy often overlooked by traditional programming. The coalition has over 100 years of collective experience working with small businesses, entrepreneurs, and communities. The members of the Coalition have been on the front lines of the State's effort to assist thousands of small and micro-business owners to maneuver through grant and loan applications and other programs released in urgent response to the devastating impacts of the pandemic. The collective work of the coalition was recognized and funded by the federal government through a multiyear million dollar Community Navigator Pilot Program from the SBA, with a quarter of million dollars from the RI Commerce Corporation network program and an innovative partnership with One Neighborhood Builders Business Support Center initiative.