

# Louisville, KY

## Mayor David L. Armstrong

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### ***Louisville Business Resource Center (LBRC)***

Louisville Mayor David Armstrong recognizes the important role that small businesses play in a city's social and economic vitality. Small businesses constitute 98 percent of all businesses in America and employ almost 60 percent of the workforce. For this reason, the City of Louisville has taken a lead role in the Louisville Business Resource Center (LBRC) - a one-stop shop for small business owners and entrepreneurs in need of information and assistance.

The LBRC is a joint venture between the City of Louisville, the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), the Greater Louisville Small Business Development Center (GLSBDC) and the US Small Business Administration (SBA). Each of the four organizations provides an area of expertise to small or start-up businesses. As a result of this collaboration, the center is able to provide a variety of services from a single point of entry.

The City of Louisville oversees the daily operations of the Louisville Business Resource Center. The city contributed \$250,000 in FY2000 for the center. Included in these funds was a study with the University of Louisville to evaluate the effectiveness of minority business programs in Louisville.

The partner organizations contribute in-kind services that directly reach the center's clients. All clients are given an initial consultation to determine their needs. SCORE provides volunteers available four hours every weekday to counsel small business owners. The Greater Louisville Small Business Development Center assists clients with their business plans and development. Business software, reference materials and training videos are among the tools available. A counselor from the SBA can discuss financial options and link clients with financing and federal contracts.

The LBRC's offices are located in the NIA Center - a hub for employment, job training, transportation and business development located in Louisville's West End, a historically African-American part of the city. The area was once home to many large manufacturing firms that have either closed or scaled back operations during the past decades. Small

businesses offer new jobs and opportunities in the wake of this exodus. The majority of target recipients of the center's services live in the West End.

Since its inception in 1998, an average of 250 new clients access the center's services per month. Nailah Jumoke is one of the beneficiaries of the LBRC. Ms. Jumoke owns and operates The Java House, a restaurant, coffeehouse and cultural center that recently relocated to a 136-year-old mansion in western Louisville. She received assistance in preparing her business plan and securing financing after visiting the LBRC. The Java House now plays a significant role in the community, offering poetry readings, community theater and educational programs for children in addition to food and drink. The Java House's success exemplifies the dynamic role of small businesses in rebuilding a community.



Mayor David L. Armstrong

***"Small businesses really are the backbone of any community, and Louisville is no exception. As I call for people to come back to the city - to live, to work, to play - it's important to recognize and renew our commitment and support of the small business owner."***

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Program has been running two years

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