



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

Kennedy Lays Groundwork for his WNY Small Business Advisory Board

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY February 10, 2011

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Kennedy names his business liaison, requests resumes for individuals interested in advisory board

BUFFALO, N.Y. – In his pursuit for common ground solutions that will help grow jobs in Western New York, Senator Timothy M. Kennedy, D-58th District, is building the Western New York Small Business Advisory Board to turn small business owners' first-hand expertise into new initiatives to encourage business expansion throughout the region.

Senator Kennedy is recruiting a diverse group of business owners to share their experiences and help develop new job creation programs as part of his small business advisory board. The board will meet with the Senator on a monthly basis to advise him on the challenges and opportunities facing small businesses in Western New York. Business owners interested in serving on the advisory board should send their resumes to kennedy@nysenate.gov.

“No one knows small business like the business owners themselves,” Senator Kennedy said. “That’s why I’m launching the Western New York Small Business Advisory Board. It will give me the opportunity to work directly with business owners to design new initiatives to foster small business growth and spark job creation. As the ranking member of the Senate's Economic Development Committee, I'll ensure that Western New York has a voice in critical economic policy discussions. With the support of the Small Business Advisory Board, I'll be voicing the concerns of Western New York's small business owners in those policy debates.”

During his campaign for State Senate, Kennedy named David Sullivan, president of Buffalo-based manufacturing company Industrial Support Incorporated, and Michael Lucarelli, executive chef and owner of Lucarelli’s Banquet Center, co-chairmen of the business advisory board. Now, Kennedy is looking to fill out the remainder of the board.

Senator Kennedy also announced the hiring of a small business liaison to help connect businesses to the tools and resources they need to empower their growth. In her role as the senator’s director of special projects, Shannon Bloomquist will take on the title of small business liaison. She will serve as a direct access point between business and Senator Kennedy’s office, and she will also join the Senator in convening meetings of the Small Business Advisory Board.

Bloomquist was formerly the program manager for Junior Achievement of WNY, or JA, a non-profit organization that prepares young people to succeed in a global economy by

teaching skills in entrepreneurship and business development. While at JA, Bloomquist was selected to be a judge for the North American JA Company of the Year Competition, and she organized the first-ever JA of WNY Business Plan Challenge.

“Bureaucratic red tape in Albany has been a serious obstacle to economic growth, becoming a hindrance to the expansion of many Western New York businesses. That needs to change. Government must become a partner to progress,” Senator Kennedy said. “By designating one staff member specifically as a business liaison, we can help simplify the process and cut through the red tape to help facilitate new job creation. I am confident that with her work ethic and experience, Shannon Bloomquist will be very successful as our office’s small business liaison.”

Business owners looking for help cutting through government bureaucracy can contact Bloomquist at bloomqui@nysenate.gov or by calling Senator Kennedy’s office at (518)455-2426.

Shannon Bloomquist Biography

Shannon Bloomquist served as the program manager for Junior Achievement of WNY from 2007 to 2010. Junior Achievement, or JA, is a global non-profit organization that inspires and prepares young people to succeed in a global economy by teaching them the skills of entrepreneurship.

In 2009, Bloomquist was selected to be a judge for the North American JA Company of the Year Competition, where she evaluated student-run small businesses on their creativity, business acumen, financial success and entrepreneurial spirit. Bloomquist then went on to organize the first-ever JA of WNY Business Plan Challenge in January 2010.

Bloomquist also served as JA of WNY's Job Shadow Coordinator, placing thousands of students in local companies for one-day workshops and long-term internships. Bloomquist also served on the local committee for National Entrepreneurship Week, organizing lectures and workshops for young entrepreneurs in the community.

Prior to her work at Junior Achievement, Bloomquist served as the Manager of Human Resources for Sears Holdings in Amherst, N.Y. Bloomquist is a graduate of Niagara University. She has volunteered in JA classrooms all over WNY for the past eight years, helping students learn the skills necessary to succeed in business and in life.