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## Newsroom

### Press Releases



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, June 20, 2014

#### **NYC DEPARTMENT OF SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES, CITI, AND ETSY CONGRATULATE THE FIRST GRADUATING CLASS OF THE NYC CRAFT ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM**

*Program Has Provided 98 Under-employed, Low-Income Adults With Micro-Business Training to Help Sell Crafts Online For Supplemental Income; Next Quarter Will Include Course Offerings in Spanish.*

**New York** – The New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS), in partnership with Etsy and Citi, today congratulated the 53 graduates of the first cohort of the NYC Craft Entrepreneurship program. Since launching a pilot program in September 2013, a total of 98 New Yorkers have graduated from NYC Craft Entrepreneurship. With a contribution of \$155,000 from Citi Community Development, the program takes place on a quarterly basis in all five boroughs, and will be expanding this quarter to include courses taught in Spanish.

NYC Craft Entrepreneurship provides micro-business training to underemployed, low-income adults with existing artistic skills to help supplement their income and sell their product to new markets. The program utilizes Etsy's platform for selling creative goods as a real-world learning lab, and leverages SBS' expertise in helping small businesses start, operate, and grow, and connecting New Yorkers to jobs. The NYC Craft Entrepreneurship program is taught by experienced instructors who are also successful shop owners on Etsy. The curriculum covers topics such as entrepreneurship, branding and marketing, product photography, business strategy, and growth. In addition, the curriculum includes financial education and opportunities for coaching provided by the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs' Office of Financial Empowerment. After completing the program, participants are actively selling a variety of items including knitwear, jewelry, and clothing.

"The NYC Craft Entrepreneurship program provides an opportunity for New Yorkers in all five boroughs who have a passion and talent in a craft to become entrepreneurs and earn extra income by selling their products online," said Maria Torres-Springer, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Small Business Services. "I thank our partners, Etsy and Citi Community Development for their support, and I congratulate the graduates of our first cohort, who will continue to add to the City's diverse and innovative entrepreneurial community."

"As a former business owner, I know how challenging starting a business can be," said Julie Menin, Department of Consumer Affairs Commissioner. "I am proud that our Office of Financial Empowerment helped the graduates of the NYC Craft Entrepreneurship program gain important information about how to strengthen their financial knowledge as they grow their business."

"We wish all of the participants a well-earned congratulations. Etsy is so proud to work with SBS and Citi in order to bring entrepreneurship skills to a wider audience," said Dana Mauriello, Director of Human Scale Labs, Etsy. "It's been a pleasure to watch these students blossom into entrepreneurs."

"Citi is pleased to join the City of New York and Etsy in congratulating the NYC Craft Entrepreneurship program's first graduating class," said Eileen Auld, NY Tri-State Market Director of Citi Community Development. "We're looking forward to seeing the participants of this innovative program grow their businesses and build assets through this practical, multi-faceted curriculum."

"The [NYC Craft Entrepreneurship] program showed me that I can make money off of the creative work I am already doing," said Chaunita Waithe, founder of A Mama's Heart Creations and a graduate of the first cohort. "Before the program, I had no idea that there was a way to sell my handmade goods online. Through the courses, I learned how to price my items and how to do online marketing. Now I am excited to be selling my first pair of shoes."

Eligible applicants must have at least one handmade craft item ready to sell, commit to attending four weeknight classes and one Saturday class, reside in New York City, have never made any sales on Etsy.com, have a credit card and checking account (necessary for sales transactions) and have regular access to a computer with an internet connection.

Spanish courses will be offered in Brooklyn from August 5th to the 14th and in the Bronx from September 16th to the 25th. For more information, a schedule of courses, or the application for the next cohort, call 311 or visit [www.nyc.gov/workforce1](http://www.nyc.gov/workforce1).

#### **About the Department of Small Business Services**

The Department of Small Business Services (SBS) makes it easier for businesses in New York City to start, operate and expand by providing direct assistance to business owners, fostering neighborhood development in commercial districts, and linking employers to a skilled and qualified workforce. For more information on all of SBS' services, go to [www.nyc.gov/sbs](http://www.nyc.gov/sbs).


#### **About Etsy**

Etsy is a marketplace where people around the world connect to buy and sell unique goods. Our mission is to re-imagine commerce to build a more fulfilling and lasting world. Etsy is headquartered in Brooklyn, NY. Learn more at [www.etsy.com](http://www.etsy.com).

#### **About Citi**

Citi, the leading global bank, has approximately 200 million customer accounts and does business in more than 160 countries and jurisdictions. Citi provides consumers, corporations, governments and institutions with a broad range of financial products and services, including consumer banking and credit, corporate and investment banking, securities brokerage, transaction services, and wealth management. Additional information may be found at [www.citigroup.com](http://www.citigroup.com) | Twitter: @Citi | YouTube: [www.youtube.com/citi](http://www.youtube.com/citi) | Blog: <http://blog.citigroup.com> | Facebook: [www.facebook.com/citi](http://www.facebook.com/citi) | LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/company/citi](http://www.linkedin.com/company/citi)

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