



## PRESS OFFICE

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## SBA Connecticut Announces Small Business Week Award Winners

**CONNECTICUT** – The SBA Connecticut District Office announces Small Business Week 2022 Award Winners – topping the list is our **Small Business Person of the Year – Viron Rondos of Viron Rondo Osteria**. “We are extremely excited to honor a truly amazing line up of small business owners and champion this year” said Catherine Marx SBA’s Connecticut District Director. “It is important to recognize these outstanding entrepreneurs in Connecticut as they are the job creators, innovators, and the fabric of our local communities.” The prerequisite for nomination includes small business owners that have received assistance through SBA Resource Partners (SCORE, Small Business Development Centers, Women’s Business Centers, Veteran Business Outreach Centers) and/or use of SBA-backed loan programs, and COVID relief. “For the past two years Connecticut small businesses confronted the uncertainty, disruptions, and hardships on an unprecedented scale. Yet, they have overcome challenges and achieved hard-won successes, innovating and creating to find new ways to serve customers, support workers and sustain our communities. National Small Business Week is an opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge their triumphs.”

“The SBA Connecticut 2022 Small Business Week Award winners are great examples of businesses that are helping to build a better America through Entrepreneurship,” said Mike Vlacich, SBA New England Regional Administrator. “These business owners demonstrate the resiliency and tenacity of entrepreneurs across Connecticut and our nation. They have proven their staying power, they create jobs, have shown response to adversity during unimaginable setbacks and they give back to their communities through their businesses and on their own time. I congratulate them on their achievements and on the part they are playing in powering our nation’s historic economic comeback.”

### 2022 SBA Connecticut Small Business Week Awardees:

- Small Business Person of the Year – **Viron Rondos, Viron Rondo Osteria**, Cheshire
- Family-Owned Small Business of the Year – **Charlie J. Negaro, Atticus Book Store**, New Haven
- Financial Champion - **Derek Ezovski, ORMS**, West Hartford
- Manufacturer of the Year – **Mary Ruth Shields, United Sewing & Design**, Hartford
- Microenterprise of the Year - **Alexandra Lazowski, Bare Life**, West Hartford
- Minority-Owned Small Business of the Year – **Lisa Chatman, Kiddie Tech University**, West Haven
- Veteran-Owned Small Business of the Year - **William Pastyrnak, Counter Weight Brewing Co.**, Cheshire
- Woman-Owned Small Business of the Year - **Candace Freedenberg, Untapped Potential**, Hartford
- New England Regional Women’s Business Center of Excellence – **Women’s Business Development Council - Central CT**, New Haven



- Exporter of the Year – *To be announced at a future date*

These Connecticut entrepreneurs will be highlighted during visits and at a private reception in May during National Small Business Week (May 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>).

For more than 50 years, the U.S. Small Business Administration has celebrated National Small Business Week (NSBW), to recognize the contributions of America’s entrepreneurs. SBA Administrator Isabella Guzman invites all to attend and register for this year’s [2022 National Small Business Week Virtual Summit](#) from May 2 to May 5, 2022. For more information and a complete list of events during National Small Business Week please visit our website: [www.sba.gov/nsbw](http://www.sba.gov/nsbw).

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#### **About the U.S. Small Business Administration**

The U.S. Small Business Administration makes the American dream of business ownership a reality. As the only go-to resource and voice for small businesses backed by the strength of the federal government, the SBA empowers entrepreneurs and small business owners with the resources and support they need to start, grow or expand their businesses, or recover from a declared disaster. It delivers services through an extensive network of SBA field offices and partnerships with public and private organizations. To learn more, visit [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).



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