



## **For Immediate Release**

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# **Women-Owned Business Panel Discussion**

*Wayne County Economic Development, Macedon Public Library, and  
Wayne County Business Council co-host online event*

**Lyons, NY – January 24, 2022** – Women business owners are not as rare these days as they were in the past. According to U.S. Census data, as of 2012, there were 725,709 women-owned businesses in New York State, many of them small businesses, and in that same year, data showed 1,837 women-owned businesses were located in Wayne County. Despite the growth in this category over the years, there are still some unique challenges, as well as some unique opportunities, that are present for women when starting a business.

The Wayne County woman-owned business panel discussion event will take place online via Zoom on February 17th from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. The panel discussion will feature three local women business owners and two women representing government agencies with resources for women business owners. Discussion will focus on overcoming obstacles, creating a network of support, locating resources and available funding, using different marketing strategies, and sharing experiences from each panelist's professional journey. Registration is required and is available at [www.wedcny.com](http://www.wedcny.com).

Wayne County Office of Economic Development, Macedon Public Library, and Wayne County Business Council are co-hosting the event. Katie Bronson, Deputy Director of the County office, recognized a recent trend in women-owned enterprise startups. She has extensive experience with business development and offers more local resources to county business owners. Diana Lagenor, Vice President of the Business Council Board of Directors, is familiar with some of these issues after owning her own business in Newark for 30 years. Lagenor will be the moderator for the panel. Stacey Wicksall, Macedon Library Director, who will be the online monitor for the Zoom

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event, was recently named a 2021 Library All-Star by the Rochester Regional Library Council (RRLC). All three saw the need to encourage women entrepreneurship knowing that many other women in the county could use support for their existing businesses or new business ideas.

The event will feature five panelists, three local women business owners in the county and two women who represent government resources for women-owned businesses. Local business owners include Julie DiLella, owner-partner of Empire Wrecking Company in the Town of Ontario and managing member of two property holding companies; Trish Kuntz, owner of The Purple Painted Lady retail store and art festival plus her new venture, Fig Hollow Barn, all in Palmyra; and Melinda Kelsey, owner of Kitten Around Cat Boarding facility in Macedon. Resource providers are Virginia Smith, U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Buffalo District Office, Rochester Branch Manager who facilitates training, counseling, and financial assistance options for the local small business community; and Dalsie Andrade, Director of Business Development at the NYS Division of Minority and Women's Business Development (DMWBD), who assists business owners with the Women and Minority Business Enterprise certification, also known as WMBE.

“We look forward to hearing the real life stories of business development from all these successful business owners,” Bronson stated. “And we hope this will encourage others to utilize available resources to take the next step with their business idea.” The public will be able to observe, listen, and interact with panelists via the chat feature on Zoom.

The Wayne County Economic Development and Planning department performs multiple functions including implementation of local economic development initiatives, County planning board reviews, and management of land use and other planning studies. Staff members also provide services to the County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) and the Wayne Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) which offer several loan funds and can provide benefits to companies locating or expanding in Wayne County that meet certain qualifying criteria. More information about these programs is available online at <https://web.co.wayne.ny.us>. Contact the office directly at 315-946-5919 or email [wedcny@co.wayne.ny.us](mailto:wedcny@co.wayne.ny.us).

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