



small businesses for a new economy

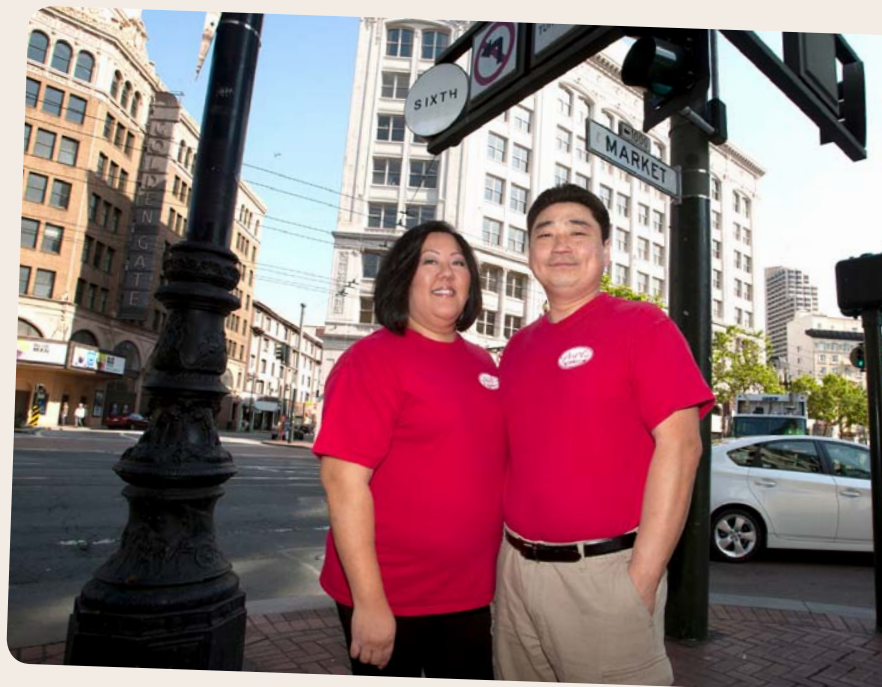
on the go

PEARL'S OWNER RETURNS TO *Stomping Grounds*

In a way, opening the newest Pearl's Deluxe Burgers on the corner of 6th and Market is like coming home for owner and San Francisco native Sylvia Park. "When we were kids, my aunt and uncle used to have a fish and chips shop on 6th Street. We'd have our birthday parties there, and then walk around the shops on Market Street on our own. It was where everyone used to go."

It's more than nostalgia driving Sylvia and her husband, Young Yi, to start a business on this corner. The Pearl's location in the Tenderloin/Nob Hill area had exceeded their expectations and changed their perspective. When considering another SF store location, Sylvia went on a walking tour of the Redevelopment area and "felt a vibrancy" in the community. "We'd like to make a small change in a positive direction, and we love feeding people."

Of course, there's a lot that needs to happen between deciding to open a business and actually opening for business. Sylvia and Young already operate two other Pearl's locations in the Bay Area, and depended on Urban Solutions Program Director Tracy Everwine and Project Manager Helene Sautou to help them get the 6th and Market location ready. Urban Solutions handled a complex lease negotiation and helped the owners secure loans and grants from the Mayor's Office and



INSIDE

- Shoes for your travels
- Mobile business training
- Solar panels in the Mission

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Urban Solutions strengthens underserved neighborhoods by supporting small businesses, job creation, diversity and sustainability. From our offices in the South of Market and Western Addition, we provide consulting programs and resources to help small businesses start, grow, and thrive.

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ALL PHOTOS BY CINDY CHEW

Redevelopment Agency.

On the construction end, Helene supervised the architecture plans by Asian Neighborhood Design, and the mechanical and engineering contractors. As an active advocate of the project, she expedited the construction permits and shortened a time-consuming process. Urban Solutions referred the owners to the South of Market Employment Center to hire from the neighborhood. Pearl's will create 20 jobs and has already added six employ-

ees to their Tenderloin location to begin training for the new restaurant. "These are quality jobs," said Young. "We pay above minimum wage and provide health insurance." Closer to the actual opening date, Urban Solutions will also help with marketing.

"They held our hand through the whole process, and are very knowledgeable about contractors and the city agencies," explains Sylvia.

Pearl's Deluxe Burgers opens summer 2011. *

Flip Slip CREATOR KICKS UP HER HEELS

Esther Flatto was tired of her feet hurting from wearing heels. She found herself leaving early from events because she just wanted to take off her shoes. Bringing along a comfortable pair of shoes was the only option, but then she had to lug a large purse with her everywhere.

"Why don't they have foldable shoes? ... Who is 'they'?" she asked herself. That question soon became, "Why not me?" This thought process snowballed into the invention and launch of her business, Flip Slip. A pair of Flip Slip shoes conveniently folds in half on itself to contain the dirty soles, and can fit into a small purse or pocket.

Esther used \$500 of her savings for a patent, the trademark and prototype shoe that she stitched together herself. Having a product to show people generated excitement, but she lacked the finances to move forward. Esther got connected with Urban Solutions' Helen Branham, Director of Small Business Services. Helen met individually with Esther to package her loan, and supply advice for business plan development, including the launch of the

Flip Slip website to test the market and product interest. Stated Helen simply, "I had confidence in her product." Through the ups and downs of the process, Esther said, "Helen never gave up on me. She saw my passion and was committed to helping me."

Urban Solutions recommended Esther to Youth Business America, the newest branch of an international organization that supports young entrepreneurs. Esther was invited to present Flip Slip, and was approved for a \$25,000 loan, one of the organization's first loans in the United States. Esther used some of the funds to travel to Guangzhou, China and meet a shoe manufacturer. "I'd been to China once before, 10 years ago. I never thought I'd go back there on business!" said Esther. She was able to fine-tune the design of her foldable shoe, and prepared to make the first order for shoes to be sold through her website. Since her original idea, other companies have begun selling foldable shoes, but Esther stated confidently, "I'm ready to compete with them." The Flip Slip is available for purchase at flipslip.com. *



MAKING YOUR BUSINESS *mobile*

After finishing culinary school in 2008, Fernay McPherson started Minnie Bell's Catering in San Francisco's Western Addition, her childhood community. Since then, she has built up her catering business through private parties, farmer's markets and events at the neighborhood community center.

"I wanted to have a catering business so I could concentrate on serving good food," said Fernay, who is participating in Urban Solutions' new mobile business training because she is also interested in operating her business in a new way with low startup costs.

mobile food

This summer, Urban Solutions launched its business development training, the Mobile Food and Artisan Marketplace Program, which piloted in the Fillmore/Western Addition. The program targets cooks, caterers, artists, and craftspeople to teach them business skills. From June through September, classes are offered covering business planning, financial management, marketing, product operations, and details about the permitting process. La Cocina, an incubator kitchen for aspiring low-income food entrepreneurs, is the project partner for the mobile food business training. The pilot program is funded by the San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development and Wells Fargo.

The Mobile Food and Artisan Marketplace Program will continue through 2012 as Urban Solutions' business consulting staff assist the businesses with their launch and financial sustainability, including securing loans. It also emphasizes the creation of jobs in a new economy, focusing on self-employment and small businesses that allow for entrepreneurs to sell their goods in different locations throughout the state.

"This program helps entrepreneurs see the full potential of having a mobile business they can set up anywhere," said Urban Solutions' Executive Director Jenny McNulty. "Whether it is a food truck or crafts at a street festival booth, these businesses are built on creativity."

"This new model promotes economic self-sufficiency and will demonstrate that even with limited income, people can apply their skills to create a sustainable business," McNulty said.

Through the training, businesses like Minnie Bell's Catering get exposure to all the different aspects of business. "This program is preparing me to be a complete business owner on the financial and food services sides of things," Fernay said. After completing the program and obtaining financing, Fernay plans to continue her catering business along with food truck service. *



BOLLYHOOD CAFÉ OWNER EXPLORES

rooftop solar

Iwould love to see solar panels everywhere in the Mission. People don't use their roofs for anything. A better city and better environment benefits everyone," declared Marco Senghor, a 15-year Mission businessman and resident.

However, owning and managing the Bollyhood Café along with his two popular restaurants, Bissap Baobab and Little Baobab, did not leave Marco any time to research going solar, so he contacted Urban Solutions.

Urban Solutions Green Business Program Manager Anthony Tsai performed an energy efficiency and solar feasibility audit at Bollyhood Café. He met with Marco to understand the energy needs for the business and tailored the project accordingly, performing the following services:

- Evaluated 12-month historical electricity and gas usage for the business
- Identified opportunities to reduce energy demand by improving operating efficiency
- Obtained 5 solar installation bids. Reviewed technical and financial aspects of bids.

The recommended solar system will save Bollyhood Café 20% in gas and electricity per year and has a short payback of 6 years. Furthermore, the Program found incentives and rebates that will pay for 78% of total system costs. "You need to have someone on your team, with the experience and expertise to help you see the long-term vision," explains Marco of the benefit of working with Anthony.

In addition to performing solar assessments, our green business staff can educate clients on green procedures for energy, water, waste, chemicals and purchasing, and create an action plan to meet checklist requirements to become a certified green business. *

HELP BUILD BETTER
NEIGHBORHOODS
BY SUPPORTING
SMALL BUSINESSES.
MAKE A DONATION.
URBANSOLUTIONSSF.ORG

Friday : Oct 14 : 4-8 p.m.



Art Walk

on Sixth St btw. Market & Howard

Join us for a celebration of art and culture. Small businesses and community centers along Sixth Street will host 75 artists in 25 locations. Urban Solutions is producing this event with community partners **Bindlestiff Studio**. Funded by the **SF Redevelopment Agency** and the **SF Arts Commission**, the event will be held in collaboration with the **Central Market Arts Festival**.
Sign up:

2BlocksOfArt.eventbrite.com

c y b e r
marketing

Thursday : Sept 15 : 1-5:30 p.m.

Yoshi's Theatre and other Fillmore St. sites

This free conference will bridge the digital divide, assisting small businesses with technology and social media. Participants will hear from speakers, and will also have the chance to work individually with marketing technology professionals on social media and other online business applications. Urban Solutions is pleased to partner with **Infin8 Sync** to produce this event. Register:

5:30-7 : RECEPTION
Sheba Lounge
(1419 Fillmore)

CyberMarketing2011.eventbrite.com