##### This is about 600 words.

Go Local This Holiday to Build A DIY Economy

Tanitra graduated from UCLA with a Ph.D. degree in Musical Arts.  She teaches in an after school musical program in the Inglewood school district and gives private lessons to children. She wants to open a studio to reach more children with music lessons. She’s getting a loan from Pacific Asian Consortium in Employment (PACE), a microlender, to rent a studio space and buy books and furniture. (*Use your own example with a one/two liner on the business, one line/two lines what your organization is doing for business owner*).

Businesses like Tanitra’s (*business owner name*), local micro-business, need three basic things to start, grow and thrive:  connections to customers, small amounts of capital, business coaching and training. This holiday season, you can support and strengthen these businesses in two ways: shop local, and contribute support to the organizations that provide training and loans, like PACE. Your support will create a strong and diversified infrastructure of many small, locally-owned micro-businesses that will be the backbone for the new economy, a Do-It-Yourself economy.

The DIY’s are creating their own jobs and starting their own businesses and creating more stable and successful local economies.  Tanitra (*business owner name*) and the other 3.25 million micro-business owners in California make up 88% of California’s businesses.  *(If rural: In rural areas, micro-business owners are the only game in town.)* InCalifornia, micro-businesses created 720,000 jobs from 2003 to 2010, while big businesses lost 180,000. Self-employment is a labor market trend, growing by about 1 million a year; and according to the 2013 State of Independence Report, will make up 50% of the workforce by 2023.

The evidence for the importance of local businesses is mounting.

Anil Rupasingha of the Atlanta Federal Reserve found that “local entrepreneurship matters for local economic performance and smaller local businesses are more important than larger local businesses for local economic performance.”

Civic Economics has studied the costs and benefits to cities, both large and small, of locally-owned businesses versus larger chain stores. They find that overall, locally owned businesses generate more money for a community than chain stores, as the profits generated by the businesses stays within the local community instead of draining away up the chain.

An annual survey by the Institute for Local Self Reliance (ILSR) finds that “Buy Local First” campaigns cause independent businesses revenue to grow.

Other studies show that in cities where small, locally owned businesses account for a relatively large share of the economy, communities thrive because citizens are more connected to each other, more engaged and work together more to solve problems.

(And here in my town…– if you have examples)

As small businesses grow, local economies improve, helping to support schools, city services, and sustainable communities.  Every holiday dollar you spend locally, helps to create local jobs, which in turn supports another local business and then another. A dollar spent at a local small business circulates in a local economy two-to-three times more than a dollar spent at a national chain. Please note that a dollar spent online doesn’t help out your local economy at all!

The second part of the equation is to support the mission-driven organizations that coach and provide capital.

“Our member organizations provide entrepreneurs with small and micro-business financing such as loans and credit, and business management training,” said Claudia Viek, CEO of CAMEO, the statewide network of entrepreneurial training programs (think mini-MBA and microlenders (under $50,000). “Annually, they serve about 21,000 very small businesses that support or create 36,000 jobs in California. Those businesses support their communities and contribute to thriving neighborhoods.”

##### This holiday season, *Go Local!*

Citations if you need them:

InCalifornia, micro-businesses created 720,000 jobs from 2003 to 2010, while big businesses lost 180,000.

<http://www.microbiz.org/very-small-businesses-created-5-5-million-jobs/>

Self-employment is a labor market trend, growing by about 1 million a year; and according to 2013 State of Independence Report will make up 50% of the workforce in 2023. <http://www.mbopartners.com/state-of-independence/independent-workforce-index.html>

Atlanta Federal Reserve – that asks [Do Local Business Ownership and Size Matter for Local Economic Well-being?](http://www.microbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Local-Ownership-and-Ec-Well-Being.pdf)

[Ten Years of Studies](http://www.microbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/The%2BCivic%2BEconomics%2Bof%2BRetail.pdf) First published 2012

[Civic Economics](http://www.civiceconomics.com/).

[Institute for Local Self Reliance](http://www.ilsr.org/) (ILSR)

[Independent Businesses Benefit from “Buy Local First” Campaigns](http://www.ilsr.org/2013-independent-business-survey/)