

Commentary/Op-Ed - December 2017

# Op-Ed: Making Small Business a Bigger Part of the Workforce Equation

The nation's workforce training and job placement programs have long focused on large businesses. But with small businesses driving economic growth and job creation in cities nationwide, it's time for smaller employers to become a larger part of the workforce equation.

by Jonathan Bowles and Jeanique Riche-Druses

Small companies have created two-thirds of the nation's net new jobs over the past 20 years. This entrepreneurial boom is generating economic opportunity in cities across the nation and strengthening communities through more inclusive growth. But despite these evident successes, many small businesses struggle to find and retain the employees they need in order to grow. At the same time, workforce development providers still make the bulk of their job placements with large companies, despite the opportunity presented by a nation of entrepreneurs. Making the connection between workforce programs and small business will require an effort at all levels of government, with rewards that will ripple throughout the economy.

In this *Next City* op-ed, Center for an Urban Future Executive Director Jonathan Bowles and Vice President of Global Philanthropy at JPMorgan Chase & Co. Jeanique Riche-Druses argue that it's time for smaller employers to become a larger part of the workforce equation.

Read the op-ed here.

This op-ed is a continuation of the Center for an Urban Future's extensive research on workforce development and the issues facing small business including the studies, *Making the Connection: Aligning Small Businesses and the Workforce Development System* and *Scale Up New York: Creating Middle Class Jobs by Growing New York City's Small Businesses*

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