

Small-business Savvy: Celebrate Small Business Week

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Get out the noise makers. Put on your party hats. Order a cake. It's time to celebrate the backbone of our economy, the small business.

Small Business Week 2016, May 1 through May 7 is a celebration of small businesses across the country. Small businesses mean jobs, dollars and economic growth.

According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, in 2014, North Dakota had nearly 70,000 small businesses. These businesses employ nearly 195,000 people. This represents three-fifths of the workforce and 96 percent of all employers.

North Dakota, in 2013, had the fifth highest level of self-employment, or small-business owners, at 11.8 percent.

Across the U.S., more than one-half of Americans own or work for a small business. And the small businesses create two out of every three jobs each year.

These numbers, though, only represent a portion of what the small business means in many of our communities. Small-business owners support local events and causes. The owners and employees are the workers at many of these events.

You also will find small-business owners serving in elected positions and on voluntary boards and committees.

And their contributions go on. They bring us needed goods and services to our communities. Instead of us having to travel long distances, we can instead stop in our local store for what we need. And if they don't have it, they often can get it quickly.

Starting a business is a dream of many. The theme of this year's celebration is "Dream Big, Start Small." Building community must include developing your small-business sector.

So get that cake and invite your small-business owners to a party. Thank them for what they do. Share their story through the news and online. It's a story that needs to be shared.

And send your stories to me at glenn.muske@ndsu.edu. I will try to share some on our website, <https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/smallbusiness>, and through our monthly newsletter.

Let me close with my thanks to our small-business owners.

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