



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 21, 2018

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**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES NEXT "ON THE ROAD" SMALL BUSINESS EXPO
AT 1871 theMart**

Expo offers free resources and workshops from nearly 40 agencies, insights from fashion designer and entrepreneur Maria Pinto

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the City of Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) today announced its Small Business Center 'On the Road' Expo on Thursday, June 21, 2018 at 1871 in the Merchandise Mart. The free Expo, designed to support small businesses and grow entrepreneurship throughout Chicago's neighborhoods, offers training workshops, networking opportunities, a vendor fair and features a keynote speech by fashion designer Maria Pinto. The Expo is part of Mayor Emanuel's efforts to help small businesses grow in every neighborhood as an engine of economic opportunity and ongoing development.

"Small businesses are the backbone of Chicago's economy, and we must support them by bringing resources and services they need to be successful," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "The Expo series, along with small business reforms that cut red tape and foster innovation, is part of our promise to grow economic opportunities in every corner of the City."

For the keynote speech, Chicago-based fashion designer Maria Pinto will share her insights into the perils and payoffs that come from launching your own business. Pinto's designs have been worn by women like Michelle Obama, Oprah Winfrey and Brooke Shields, and her keynote will examine how she overcomes the challenges of being a small business owner despite her company's popularity.

"The Expo is a great opportunity for entrepreneurs and aspiring business owners alike who may not be able to come to City Hall to stop by the evening Small Business 'On the Road' Expo and get a full complement of BACP services, support and resources," says BACP Commissioner Rosa Escareno. "We are proud to bring great stories of Chicago's entrepreneurs, like those of Maria Pinto who knows what it's like to pick yourself up and bounce back. The lessons she has learned will resonate with anyone who's trying to start or grow a business."

The Expo is part of the City's effort to support small business and create economic opportunity in every neighborhood in Chicago. Earlier this year, Mayor Emanuel announced a package of new reforms to reduce costs for businesses, simplify the licensing process, increase transparency, support start-up and innovative businesses, and reduce the burden of inspections for all businesses. The reform plan is designed to build on the Emanuel administration's efforts over the

past seven years to cut red tape, increase support resources for businesses, and encourage innovation and entrepreneurship in every part of the city. The plan will address some of the biggest issues for small businesses, including reducing the start-up licensing fee by half, creating a new permit for pop-up businesses, creating a business license issuance clock, extending the sidewalk cafe license to apply year-round, and creating a standardized checklist for business inspections.

The Expo is free and open to the public. Nearly 40 government and non-profit agencies essential to entrepreneurship will be on site to provide important services and resources, including the Chicago Department of Procurement Services, Illinois State Treasurer, SCORE, Internal Revenue Service, the Better Business Bureau and more. Also available to attendees free mini-makeovers from Mario Tricoci technicians and free professional headshots along with sales pitch training, consumer and financial help. Business consultants from the Small Business Center will be available to help attendees apply or renew a business license and make an appointment for additional counseling at City Hall. In addition, the Center for Economic Progress will provide a free tax clinic and The Community Law Project will provide a free legal clinic with representatives offering 20-minute consultations.

The Small Business Expo runs from 5:00 PM - 9:00 PM and offers new and existing business owners the opportunity to consult, network, gather information and receive expert advice on topics such as licensing, financing and business planning. There will also be free workshops on finding credit and branding following the keynote speech from 7:00 PM until 8:00 PM. The complete schedule is below.

5:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Visit with vendors, get expert advice, receive a mini makeover and free headshots

Keynote Speaker: 6:00 PM – 6:30PM

Chicago-based Fashion Designer and Entrepreneur Maria Pinto

Workshops: 7:00 PM -8:00 PM

Workshop 1: Roadmap to Business Financing”

Presented by: Fifth Third Bank and ACCION

This workshop addresses traditional and non-traditional credit sources and how to best prepare for when your company needs it most.

Workshop 2: It's Not Me, It's You

Presented by Vanessa Yeh, VP Brand Marketing and Communications, 1871

In this session, we'll discuss how businesses - big or small - can rethink and refocus their brand marketing efforts to put the buyer first and in doing so, create happier customers and better business outcomes.

Networking: 8:00 PM – 9:00 PM

A one-hour networking session on building and growing a business hosted by City Treasurer Kurt Summers

The June 21 Expo will be held at 1871 from 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM. 1871 is located on the 12th floor, Suite 1212 of theMart (Merchandise Mart) at 222 W. Merchandise Mart Plaza, Chicago. The 1871 location is home to 400+ early-stage, high growth digital startups and entrepreneurs.

The 2018 Small Business Center 'On the Road' Expo series remaining dates and locations are:

- Saturday September 8, 2018 from 10:00am – 2:00pm at Truman College, 1145 W. Wilson Ave., Chicago
- Saturday October 27 from 10:00am – 2:00pm at Malcolm X - 1900 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago

The Small Business Center 'On the Road' Expo is a series of five free Expos in different neighborhoods throughout Chicago. The series is a partnership between BACP, Fifth Third Bank and Western Union.

To register for an Expo or for more information, visit www.chismallbizexpo.com, call (312) 744-2086 or email BACPoutreach@cityofchicago.org. For more information about the City of Chicago's Small Business Center visit www.cityofchicago.org/sbc.

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