

August 14, 2009

(PITTSBURGH, PA) -- More than 90 entrepreneurs from across western Pennsylvania attended U.S. Congressman Jason Altmire's (PA-04) small business "Access to Capital" workshop at La Roche College today. This workshop provided local entrepreneurs with helpful information about how to remain competitive in America's current economy.

**"Small businesses employ more western Pennsylvanians than any other type of enterprise," Altmire said. "I held this workshop because I want to connect local entrepreneurs with resources that can help them remain competitive in this economy. Supporting western Pennsylvania's small businesses is key to strengthening our region's economy."**

The workshop featured four different speakers: Carl Knoblock, with the Small Business Administration's Pittsburgh District Office; Donna Riling, with the Pennsylvania Department of Banking; Dick Fitzgerald, with SCORE - Small Businesses Counselors; and Ray Vargo, with the University of Pittsburgh Small Business Development Center. Each speaker discussed different resources that can help small businesses succeed in an economic downturn.

Specifically, Knoblock discussed several new Small Business Administration (SBA) initiatives that were launched as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), which was signed into law last February. Riling discussed how small businesses can utilize loans and tax credits issued by the state of Pennsylvania and various local agencies. Fitzgerald discussed how small businesses can work with community banks to obtain loans. Vargo shared advice on steps businesses can take to maximize their cash flow and enhance their competitiveness during a recession.