



What is the National Small Business Association?

NSBA is the nation's oldest small-business advocacy organization. The organization boasts members in each of the United States, British Virgin Islands, Guam, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands. Through its member organizations, NSBA reaches more than 150,000 small-business owners.

Small-business advocacy remains the driving force behind NSBA. The organization is mindful that the best advocates for small business are the owners themselves, who devote their lives to make their businesses, their employees, their communities, and their nation a better place.

What is NSBA's mission?

Driven by a 32-member board (comprised of volunteer small-business owners), NSBA works closely with members of Congress and its own members. Through publications, policy forums, conferences and action alerts, NSBA keeps its members updated on legislation that may help or hinder small business growth.

Throughout the year, NSBA members and staff testify on Capitol Hill about crucial issues such as health care reform, tax reform, burdensome regulations, barriers to capital, fair competition, paperwork reduction, procurement, product liability and other important topics.

NSBA also took a lead role in initiating the White House Conference on Small Business in 1980, 1986 and 1995.

Who are NSBA members?

NSBA's membership is as diverse as the small-business field. Members include carpenters, consultants, manufacturers, retailers, grocers, designers, investors, and concerned citizens who believe in the free enterprise system.

NSBA's members also include state and regional small-business affiliated groups, such as the Arizona Small Business Association in Phoenix, Council of Smaller Enterprises (COSE) in Cleveland, SMC Business Councils in Pittsburgh, and the Small Business Association of Michigan (SBAM) in Lansing.

What is NSBA's history?

NSBA began in 1937 to advocate for the interests of small businesses throughout the United States. The organization's origins date back to its founder, DeWitt Emery, a small business owner from the Midwest.

Emery was frustrated with the bureaucracy of Washington and the disregard displayed toward the needs of small businesses. In an attempt to make a difference, he brought together a group of proactive small business owners and formed the National Small Business Men's Association.

This group, which originally consisted of just 160 small businesses, now reaches more than 150,000 small businesses.

What are NSBA's priority issues and how are they determined?

NSBA gathers every two years during the Small Business Congress to learn about the latest issues and vote upon their top 10. NSBA subsequently publishes its Priority Issues booklet listing the results.

The next Small Business Congress is scheduled for Feb. 15-17, 2007, when priorities for the 110th Congress will be finalized.



- NSBA is the nation's oldest national small-business organization, serving small business since 1937.
- NSBA is nonpartisan.
- NSBA represents more than 150,000 small businesses through its membership and affiliate organizations.
- NSBA affiliates include: Arizona Small Business Association, Small Business Association of Michigan, Smaller Business Association of New England, Missouri Merchants and Manufacturers Association, SMC Business Councils, Council of Smaller Enterprises, and Small Business California.
- The Small Business Exporters Association and the Small Business Technology Council are councils of NSBA.
- NSBA initiated the White House Conference on Small Business in 1980, 1986, and 1995.
- NSBA's Board of Trustees is made up of 32 small-business owners. The current chair is Grafton "Cap" Willey IV of Providence, R.I.

Paul Hense Elected 2006 NSBA Chair

By Rob Yunich

Director of Communications

A June 1972 decision by Paul Hense ultimately became one of his greatest successes as a small-business owner. Nearly 34 years ago, Hense moved his fledgling business from Flint, Mich., to Grand Rapids, Mich.

"I started my business from a spare bedroom in a duplex," Hense reflects. "I didn't know anybody in Grand Rapids, but was able to establish myself there within a short time."

Hense, a certified public accountant (CPA), was elected to serve as the 2006 NSBA chair during the organization's annual membership meeting, held Nov. 11 at the Portofino Hotel and Yacht Club in Redondo Beach, Calif.

"I am very proud today of the fact that the office I own employs two other CPAs," Hense added. "I believe we have a material impact on the success of the people for whom we perform services."

Hense, in fact, has spent his entire life as a Michigan resident. He was born in Flint, graduated from the University of Detroit in 1965, and currently lives in Grand Rapids—the destination of his move on that fateful day in 1972, and the same year he passed the CPA exam.

The primary focus of Hense's firm is small business, personal tax, and financial advising.

"What makes us exceptional accountants for small business is the personal attention we give our clients," Hense says. "We also facilitate our clients' use of the data available to create a fundamentally-sound financial enterprise."

Last year as first vice chair, Hense served on the board with this predecessor, Malcolm Outlaw.

"Malcolm is a man of exception-

al talent. He has been successful in his own business. He has been a solid, dependable member of NSBA's board and has performed admirably in whatever role has been assigned to him or for which he has volunteered," Hense said. "I would like to thank him for giving me an opportunity to serve as chair of a strong and well-managed organization."

Hense is a long-time member of

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— Paul Hense

NSBA and has served myriad roles in the organization—including first vice chair, vice chair of advocacy, treasurer, chair of the tax committee, and vice chair of communications.

"NSBA has an exceptional history of strong leadership," Hense said. "I would like to continue that stewardship through my tenure as chair."

MICHIGAN MAN

As a lifelong resident of the Great Lakes State, Hense takes an extremely active role in community organizations. One of those groups, the Small Business Association of Michigan (SBAM), helped him find NSBA. At the time, he was serving as SBAM's chair and interacted with NSBA frequently, as SBAM is an NSBA affiliate. Hense was impressed with that he saw and joined NSBA.

"My involvement with NSBA comes from the belief that if you take out, you must contribute too," Hense said. "The small-business community has provided me with a living for more than 30 years. I owe my livelihood to everybody who works hard, assumes risk, asks for nothing, and must pay taxes."

The list of positions Hense holds or previously held is extremely

lengthy and impressive.

A sample: Hense previously served as president of the Small Business Management Association, was chair of SBAM's Political Action Committee for nearly 10 years, serves as a member of the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce Michigan Tax Restructuring Committee, and is a member of the Cheboygan Area Chambers of Commerce.

He also served as a delegate to two White House Conferences on Small Business as well as a Michigan version of the same event, and is vice president of

finance of the American Marketing Association of West Michigan.

Additionally, Hense serves as a monthly columnist for the *Grand Rapids Business Journal*, penning a piece called "Small Business Matters." He also is a regular guest on WGVU, a National Public Radio-member station for Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Mich.

Hense is married to his wife of 17 years, Chris. He has three children from a previous marriage—Debra, Mark, and Laura—and three grandchildren.

But even though Hense has so much going his way, he is not afraid to show gratitude towards NSBA—and help the organization gain new members, too.

"My involvement in NSBA has allowed me to meet amazing people from all over the country. Much of my success in the accounting business is attributable to the good advice and council from fellow NSBA members," Hense said. "You are only alone in your journey through the travails of being a self-sufficient person if you choose that path. NSBA has members anxious to share their expertise with you. All you have to do is join us." ★



Todd O. McCracken
President
National Small Business Association

Todd McCracken currently serves as president of National Small Business Association (NSBA), directing all activities of the advocacy-oriented association. Mr. McCracken became president of NSBA in 1997. Mr. McCracken started with the association in 1988, previously serving as vice president of government affairs.

Mr. McCracken is a registered lobbyist before the U.S. Congress, representing the organization in myriad settings. As director of its government affairs arm, Mr. McCracken plays a key role in developing NSBA's policies on issues and the strategies in implementing them. Since coming to the association, Mr. McCracken has testified before Congress numerous times about issues ranging from fundamental health care reform to tax code restructuring.

Mr. McCracken also is a frequent commentator in the media, having appeared on CNN, CNBC, Fox News Channel, MSNBC, and NBC Nightly News as well as in the *Financial Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, and myriad other publications.

As a non-partisan organization, NSBA works proactively with elected and administration officials to promote policies that support small business growth and development. NSBA is the nation's oldest small business organization. It was founded in 1937.

A native of New Mexico, Mr. McCracken is a graduate of Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas, with a B.A. in Economics.