



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Women's Business Center at Community First Fund Hosts Free Seminar
Attendees will learn about opportunities to work with the state

(Lancaster ,PA)...The Women's Business Center at Community First Fund along with the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce and Industry is hosting "Doing Business with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania," Monday, September 22nd from 9 am to 12 pm. The seminar will be held at Community First Fund's Lancaster office located at 30 West Orange Street.

The seminar, held in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Department of General Services and the Bureau of Minority and Women's Business Opportunities, will cover the following topics: learning about state government needs and how it purchases goods and services, locating state business opportunities, exploring government programs to help small businesses, and finding out about certification for minority – and woman-owned businesses.

Community First Fund is a non-profit economic development organization that provides loan capital, business training, and one-on-one counseling to entrepreneurs of all sizes, affordable housing and commercial real estate developers, and community groups in under-served communities. Community First Fund's impact is felt throughout the 13 counties in central Pennsylvania that it serves as evidenced by the nearly 700 loans that the organization has disbursed since inception, totaling more than \$22 million.

Community First Fund is committed to developing creative ways to foster economic improvement in distressed communities. "Residents of under-served communities have ideas for viable businesses. For one reason or another, they may not have had the opportunity that would put them in a position to open their own business," said Dan Betancourt, President and CEO of Community First. "If we can help those individuals succeed, we help that person, their families and their neighborhoods. That's the work we want to accomplish."

The Women's Business Center and Community First Fund both have funds to provide loan capital to start-up and existing businesses. Additional funding to assist small minority- and women-owned contractors, who do not have access to lines of credit or other small business loans from traditional sources, is available from the newly created The Pennsylvania Business Opportunity Fund (BOF). Loans from the BOF are administered by Community First Fund which partnered with the Department of General Services and the Department of Community and Economic Development to create the program.

To register for this free seminar, contact Community First Fund at jfrey@commfirstfund.org or 717-393-2351. For more information on Community First Fund and its Women's Business Center, visit www.commfirstfund.org. Funding and technical assistance support for the Women's Business Center is partially provided by the U.S. Small Business Administration. Visit www.sba.gov for more information.

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