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The New Era Newspaper (Omaha, Nebraska), March 9, 1923, page 3, column 4.

Great grandmother's death

Laura E. (Kimbrough) (Madison) Bell would move with her husband Elijah Bell and sons William Ezra and Carrie E. to Omaha, Nebraska after 1915 but before 1920. Laura's daughter Mahalla "Mae" Frances had already been living in Omaha since about 1910 with her husband William Jackson. On 3 March 1923, Laura E. (Kimbrough) (Madison) Bell would die in Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska having again out lived another husband this time Elijah Bell who died on 9 September 1922 in Omaha.

The words Aldeen (Jones) Davis wrote years later would almost echo the newspaper story telling of Laura's death. "... I went with my mother [Gladylor "Gladys" Jones] and grandmother [America Crittenden] to Omaha, Neb. to be with my great-grandmother [Laura E. Bell], who was dying. ..."

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IOWA'S TARGET SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAM

Writer
Jill Lippencott

Photo of
Jill Lippencott



Iowa's Targeted Small Business (TSB) program was established in 1986 to promote the growth and development of businesses that are majority owned by women, minorities, individuals with disabilities and service-disabled veterans across the state. The initial focus of the program was to make it easier for certified TSBs to do business with the State of Iowa. Additionally, businesses are eligible to receive micro-loans of up to \$30,000 to help them get started, or \$50,000 to help an existing business grow.

The program has been managed by a variety of different state agencies in its history. In 2016, based on feedback from business owners and small business resource providers, the TSB certification program was moved to the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA), and I became the manager. As the daughter of a small business owner myself, I understand the heart, soul,

sweat and tears that it takes to be successful, and I am passionate about helping others grow their businesses with the resources we make available through the TSB program.

It was important to me to listen to those who had experienced the program in the past. We toured the state and held listening sessions with business owners in the program to hear their ideas for making it better. As a result, we streamlined the application for certification, making it much less cumbersome and more user-friendly. We eliminated some of the certification requirements that were creating obstacles for applicants, including the fees for initial application and renewal. We also met with small business resource providers and made a commitment to become a more active participant in the state's small business community. Now, we help promote and support events, resources and workshops offered to small business owners by a variety of providers.

We also recognized throughout the evaluation process, that we needed to increase the value for small business owners participating in the program. We created a quarterly newsletter to promote and highlight TSBs and now also give them a broader audience on our social media platforms.



We hosted our own networking events in Council Bluffs, Cedar Rapids and Des Moines and participated in more small business resource events. In May 2018, we launched an online certification application, improved the TSB portal to allow immediate access to state bidding opportunities and we connected with procurement professionals at the state to help address some of the most common questions and concerns.

Two years post transition to IEDA, the program is starting to grow – both in number of certified TSBs and in the value and opportunities afforded to those participating in the program.

We hear stories of TSBs landing contracts with the state or utilizing their certifica-