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## **Small business financing expo at LaGuardia CC**

**BY PETE DAVIS**

Business growth and financing were the two main topics of conversation at the recent Queens Small Business Financing Exposition held at LaGuardia Community College.

“There is an enormous value to bringing a variety of lenders under one roof so people can meet and establish relationships directly,” said Brian Gurski, director of the Small Business Development Center at LaGuardia Community College who organized the event.

Representatives from Amalgamated Bank, Capital One Bank, Citibank, Flushing Bank, M&T Bank, State Bank of Long Island, Sterling National Bank and TD Bank attended the event on Thursday, July 15.

“The bankers who are here today are individuals who really care about getting out into the community and learning about what businesses need, what opportunities they are pursuing and so the value of the event is people get to learn about what banks need to lend money,” Gurski said.

Financial institutions from throughout the borough came armed with information to give to interested business owners, about what information banks need to give out loans.

“We are looking to provide sufficient information to those who are looking for realistic financing; to explain criteria that the bank requires in order to evaluate a request,” said Ron Dubin, Vice President and Regional Sales Manager at State Bank of Long Island.

In addition to the standard financial institutions, other groups that offer alternative lending opportunities like the Greater Jamaica Development Corporation (GJDC) also were in attendance.

“We serve this band of small businesses that are not quite bankable, and we can make a loan sometimes that a bank can’t make,” said Richard Werber, Director of Business Services Group at the GJDC. “We take every opportunity



that we can to get in touch with small businesses.”

During the day, attendees had the opportunity to attend two seminars – one on tapping the source for growth in regards to innovation in your business and the other on building a strong loan application.

The event was sponsored by the New York State Small Business Development Center at LaGuardia Community College, Queens Chamber of Commerce, Queens Borough President’s Office, U.S. Small Business Administration and LaGuardia Community College’s Continuing Education program.