



#### **MEDIA CONTACT**

Mark Thomas, Marketing & Public Relations Specialist  
Bristol Development Authority  
Phone: 860-584-6190

Justin Malley, Executive Director  
Bristol Development Authority  
Phone: 860-584-6185

## **BDA Launches Local Small Business Saturday Effort**

(November 17, 2017) – As the height of the holiday shopping season approaches, the Bristol Development Authority (BDA) is launching an effort to help local businesses take advantage of Small Business Saturday® (SBS) by encouraging residents and visitors to support locally-owned businesses by patronizing these retail outlets on Saturday, November 25<sup>th</sup>. The BDA partnered with American Express® to provide customized marketing materials for local business owners that promote their stores using the theme “Shop Small.”

“We are lucky in Bristol that there are over 2,200 businesses in the City, with many of those being locally or family-owned. These owners believe in Bristol and have dedicated their future to serving our city,” said Bristol Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu. “It’s our responsibility to try and help them in any way we can. When you help these companies, it also helps all of us who live, work, and raise our families here.”

SBS brings much needed attention to an often overlooked contributor to the U.S. economy. Bookended between mass retailers’ “Black Friday” madness and e-tailers’ “Cyber Monday” frenzy, Small Business Saturday was first conceived of by the credit card giant in 2009 in an effort to help small companies who were still mired in the recession. SBS officially launched in 2010 and is now supported by the Small Business Administration. The promotion has proved effective. In 2012, consumers spent an estimated \$5.5 billion at small retailers on Small Business Saturday. By 2016, that amount more than tripled to \$18.2 billion. The National Retail Federation reports there are some 3,793,621 retail establishments, and nearly 99% count as small businesses with less than 50 employees. Even though this is promoted nationally, it is having a big effect for local businesses.

“Owners of small retail shops may feel overwhelmed by the rapidly changing retail environment with competition on all sides and most especially from online ecommerce sites.” said BDA Executive Director Justin Malley. “Small business retailers have a competitive edge that none of these bigger, better capitalized and techno-powered retailers have - and that is personal service and expertise.”

Local Bristol business owners can download documents including tips on promoting through social media, a local Bristol Shop Small Logo, branded email headers, and point-of-sale materials. They can be downloaded at [www.bristolallheart.com/doing-business-in-bristol](http://www.bristolallheart.com/doing-business-in-bristol). In addition, the BDA is promoting SBS through several social media channels. On the BDA and All Heart Facebook pages, a contest will begin Saturday featuring prizes and gift certificates from Shannon’s Jewelers, Parkside Café, Biker’s Edge, Super Natural Deli, Bristol Adult Education, L&D Designs, and Sabaidee Thai Restaurant. To be entered to win, anyone can go to the BDA’s Facebook pages and either like or share the appropriate post. They can get an additional entry by sending a selfie of them in front of a local Bristol business when they are shopping on November 25<sup>th</sup>. The drawings will be held during the week of November 26<sup>th</sup>.

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***About the Bristol Development Authority.** The Bristol Development Authority (BDA) works to improve the physical, economic, and social environment of the Bristol community by serving as the primary governmental organization dedicated to promoting commercial development, to preserving and improving the City’s housing stock, and to securing and administering the resources required to carry out these goals. The BDA is overseen by an appointed nine-member Board of Commissioners which governs economic and community development policies for the City. For more information, log onto [www.bristolallheart.com](http://www.bristolallheart.com) or by email to [bda@bristolct.gov](mailto:bda@bristolct.gov).*