

# SelfInformed

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Member Spotlight

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## HELP YOUR BUSINESS BY *Helping Your Community*

There are many ways that you can help your business by helping your community. Getting involved in your community generates leads, brings in new business, creates networking opportunities and benefits a small business owner in many ways. Businesses that positively impact the community create strong connections with their target audience, build trust and loyalty among customers, better promote their brand and public image, forge

beneficial partnerships and alliances, and are highly valued by the community for their good will. In an era where customers value businesses with ties to an inspiring purpose and mission, there has never been a better time to get involved with the local community. By using the following suggestions from The National Association for the Self-Employed (NASE) as a guide, your small business can make an even bigger positive impact on its local community.

## Partner with a Local Charity Organization

When businesses partner with local charity organizations, they create a link that further promotes and raises awareness about both companies. Local customers are more likely to choose to work with businesses that have positive ties within their community over larger, well-established brands. This is a huge advantage for a small business or micro business owner that is growing a business. A local charity is likely to have the biggest business impact because charitable donations will be most visible to consumers in the area. Many charitable organizations will promote its business partners at events and through marketing materials because they understand that a return on the investment is important for the company.

Businesses should feature their involvement with the charitable organization on their website and social media platforms for even more outreach. Local news outlets are more likely to pick up stories that have positive ties to the community, so businesses should send out a press release announcing the partnership as well. The partnership is an easy, cost-efficient way to amplify your company's marketing campaign and promote its initiative to a new target audience. Charity organizations that are well-established within the community can really boost your company's marketing efforts for less money and in less time than most small businesses can do on their own, which is a true benefit when building a business.

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## Stay Active in Your Community

Staying active in the community allows businesses to generate more leads, build new business partnerships, and attract high-quality employees to potentially work for the company. Aside from partnering with a charity, there are many opportunities for small businesses to support and sponsor multiple non-profit events. Many charities provide opportunities for sponsoring golf tournaments and other fun events that not only raise money for great causes, but also provide networking opportunities for companies.

It is important to actively seek out events and opportunities in the community to promote your company's brand and reach new audiences. New connections can quickly lead to an increase in revenue for an entrepreneur. They also provide a great way for a small business or micro business to create a positive company culture that their employees want to be involved in. Not only can businesses choose which events and causes they want to be involved in, they can include employees in the decision making to improve employee morale. Your company will generate a positive public image that others will want to support, partner with, and be a part of.





### Sponsor Sports Leagues

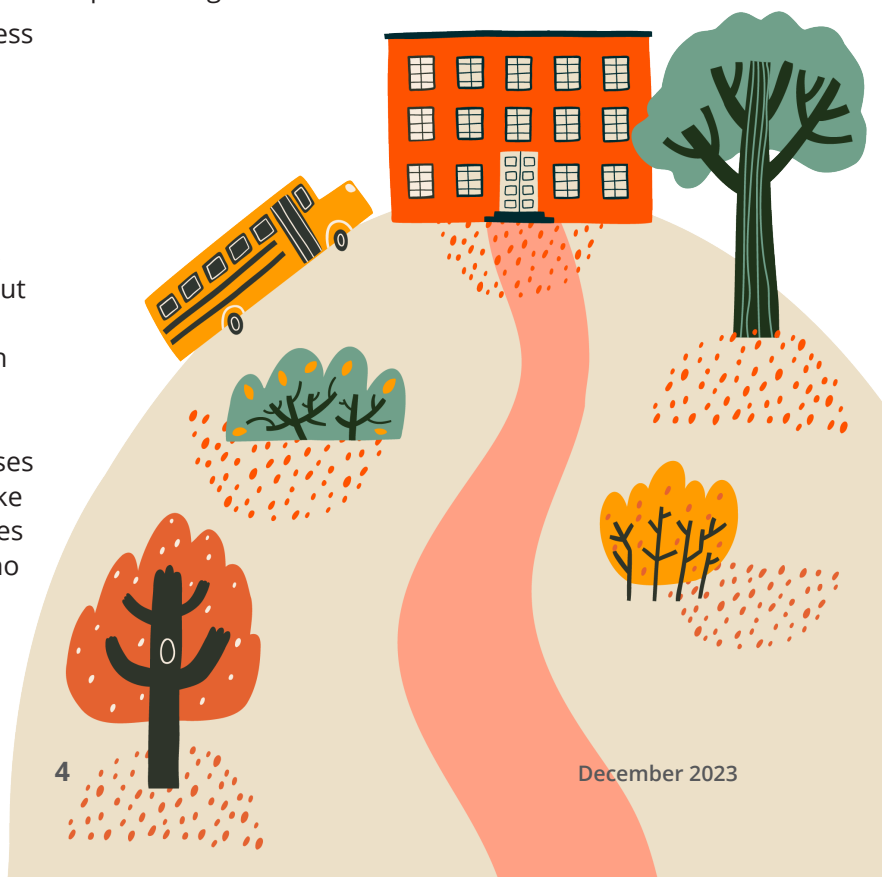
A great way for businesses to build brand awareness, increase visibility, and create trust and loyalty among customers is to sponsor sports leagues. Sports leagues have some of the most loyal fanbases within a community because of how effective they are at creating a strong brand. By sponsoring a sports league in your community, you can take advantage of the great branding power and marketing techniques that sports leagues are known for to a large audience. Promote your company by integrating your brand in creative ways like with a logo on the scoreboard, jersey, giveaways and in other ways that are visible to fans. Many families attend sporting events so a family business could see even more of a return in investment when sponsoring a sports league.

As an added bonus, your company's ties with a local sports league will showcase the positive impact it wants to have on the community and create positive brand recognition. Sports leagues not only bring fanbases joy and entertainment, but fans develop strong emotional bonds with their hometown teams and the brands associated with it. Your company's association with a local sports league gives it credibility and helps build trust within the community in ways that large businesses have a harder time acquiring. Companies that take advantage of forming ties with local sports leagues will see an increase in new customer interest in no time, while supporting a great cause.

### Host an Event for Your Customers, Partners and The Community

There are many reasons to host an event for your customers, partners, and the community. When starting a business, it can serve as a way to introduce yourself and build your brand to new clients. You can also host an annual event to show your appreciation as a business owner to your clients and customers, which also helps build loyalty and trust in your brand. If you open the event to the community, it is an opportunity to form new business alliances and partnerships, and possibly recruit new talent to work for you. Fundraising events allow you to raise money for your company and the charities it supports.

Companies can give back to their customers and partners by hosting an event with food, drinks, music, fundraising initiatives, and more for a night full of enjoyment. It is also a great way for you and your employees to get to know its customers and partners on a new level and possibly discover new ways you can better serve them. Events that your company hosts for the community can bring you in contact with businesses that complement your company's mission and new customers. If your company has a venue that serves the community such as a restaurant, that is even more of a reason to host an event and showcase it to the community. Overall, it will strengthen your community as a networking opportunity and shine your brand in a positive light.



## Start Making a Positive Impact on Your Community Today

Aside from the positive impact that your company's mission achieves, it can make an even bigger impact through community involvement. By partnering with a charity, sponsoring a sports team, hosting an event, or simply staying active in the community, you will create hype around your company. Actively connecting with your clients, partners, and potential customers on a personal level will increase their connection and engagement with your brand for potential lifelong benefits. When you have a reputation as a contributive member of the local community through business endeavors, you will become known for your positive impact, and you and your business will reap the many benefits!



## See the Latest Press Releases from NASE



### New Retirement Savings Opportunities Are Big Win for Self-Employed & Gig Economy Workers

Dec 13, 2023

With record surges in small business start-ups over the last few years, including a substantial increase in older American's seeking a second career in retirement, NASE applauded a suite of new approaches to retirement.

[READ FULL STORY →](#)



### NASE Celebrates IRS Announcement Delaying 1099-K Reporting Requirement for 2023 Tax Season

Nov 27, 2023

As a major advocate for bipartisan legislation in Congress, NASE applauds the IRS announcement delaying the reporting requirement for third-party platform payments for the 2023 tax returns.

[READ FULL STORY →](#)

[READ ALL PRESS RELEASES](#)

# Your Business Could be Featured in our Monthly e-Newsletter!

*We want to hear from you!*

Each month NASE publishes a new Member Spotlight in our e-Newsletter called SelfInformed, a national newsletter sent to over 50,000 members across the country with the latest news about the self-employed and micro-business community. As part of this national e-Newsletter, we want to shine a spotlight on those members, regardless of where they live, who are operating successful businesses that are growing and thriving.

**GET FEATURED**



## ANNOUNCEMENT



## Dependent Scholarship Applications Opens January 1<sup>st</sup>

*Multiple College Scholarships of \$3,000 are Awarded Each Year*

This program is open to legal dependents of NASE Members, ages 16–24. To apply, students need to be high school students or college undergraduates planning to enroll in college for the upcoming fall semester. The application period is January 1<sup>st</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>.

**APPLY NOW**

New!



# Member Benefits

Visit [NASE.org](https://www.nase.org) to learn more about the following benefits!

## Silver Membership

NASE Silver Members receive MetLife Accident Insurance to help offset costs that may not be covered under existing medical plans. MetLife — \$10,000 Term Life, Assist America, Roadside Reimbursement and more.

SEE  
MORE

**\$240** Annually or **\$21.95** Monthly

NASE Silver Members receive **MetLife Accident Insurance** to help offset costs that may not be covered under existing medical plans.

The accident insurance provides you with a lump-sum payment after an accident to use as you see fit. It can help with **out-of-pocket expenses** such as deductibles, copays, transportation to medical centers, childcare and more. Accident insurance through the NASE may include benefits for: Injuries, Medical service, treatments, Hospitalization, lodging and it's guaranteed acceptance.

Your Silver Membership also includes MetLife — \$10,000 Term Life, Assist America, Roadside Reimbursement, Legal Club Business Plan and more.

*This membership is NOT available to residents of the following states: Alaska, Florida, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Utah, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia.*



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### Emergency help for you and your family when traveling more than 100 miles from home.

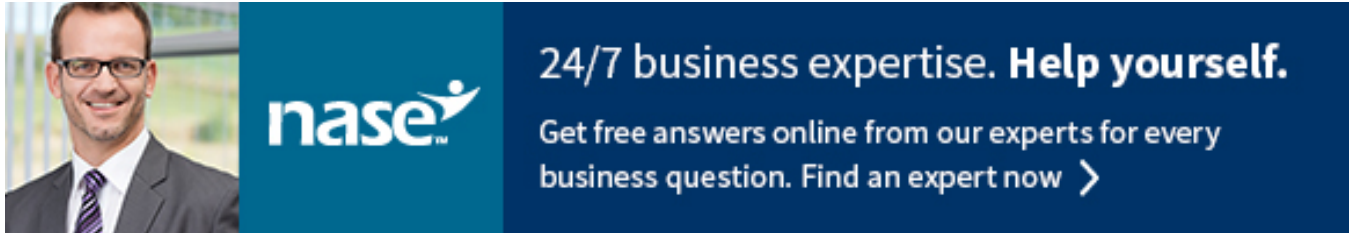
Most of us travel without being prepared for a medical or other emergency or knowing how to find and obtain treatment from qualified physicians and medical facilities. That's what makes **Assist America's Global Emergency Services** so important.

**New!**



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Visit [NASE.org](https://www.nase.org) to learn more about the following benefits!



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To help you grow your business, we offer the following experts. Taxes, Business Strategy, Business Law, Marketing 101, Health Care Reform, Finance/Accounting, Marketing/Advertising, Real Estate, Information Technology, B2B Leads, Social Media, Retirement, Sales Tax and Database Management.



## **Business Insurance for your Small Business Needs!**

- Cyber Liability Insurance
- Professional Liability Insurance
- Cyber Liability Insurance
- Data Breach Risk & Compliance Assessment Report
- Cybersecurity Compliance & Certification

**Click Here to Get Started**



## **SMALL BUSINESS GROWTH GRANTS** are Sponsored by Dell Technologies

To View the Dell Sponsored Growth Grants

**Click Here**

To access these benefits, visit [www.Dell.com/NASE](https://www.Dell.com/NASE) or call **(855) 900-5548** to speak with a Small Business Advisor. For any additional questions around your Dell benefits email NASE's Account Executive at [Kelsey\\_Sewalson@Dell.com](mailto:Kelsey_Sewalson@Dell.com)



# Liberated Self-Employment



After spending 16+ years steeped in a career of talent development, strategic planning, and training design and delivery in the education and nonprofit sectors, I launched Liberated Development as a personal, professional, and organizational development company that facilitates the growth of leaders, teams, and dreams. Liberated Development is a black woman-owned and operated boutique leadership development firm founded in 2019, in Washington, D.C. I envision a world where workplaces are composed of leaders who consciously and intentionally build cultures that make space for the unique identities and contributions of each individual to thrive. Liberated Development has given me a channel to work toward this vision by creating **coaching, facilitation, and strategic advising** experiences where clients deconstruct the leadership and workplaces models dictated by dominant culture, and recreate dynamic practices that center relationships and wellness and are rooted in liberation.

Throughout my career, even before I started Liberated Development, my roles and areas of impact have consistently focused on organizational culture and development, with a unique concentration on the influence of identity, wellness, and race. Our clients are leaders at organizations that are actively pursuing DEI initiatives. They are ready to explore what it means to operate from a place that challenges dominant cultural norms and are committed to embodying a way of being that is centered on liberation and agency — for themselves and their teams.

## When and why did you join the NASE?

I joined NASE in 2021, right after Liberated Development turned two years old. It is often said that the second year can be a critical juncture for small businesses. Reaching the second year is an accomplishment in itself but it's also when an overwhelming sensation started to set in for me. There was so much to manage and finding time to

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work ON the business (i.e., the right infrastructure in place for myself and, by this time, sub-contractors), as well as still working in and for the business (i.e., producing for clients) became a lot to manage. I had established a more solid foundation for growth, understood my revenue streams, etc., and understood that I needed a resource to help me obtain more structure in places where it was lacking. How could I minimize costs, learn from the journey of others, and put things in place that brought more ease — versus stress — into what I was building. From benefits packages to community building with like-minded people grappling with the same decision points, I saw NASE as a place to support some of the necessary shifts needed at this juncture. While I have a pretty solid business sense, I also know that there is so much that I don't know. NASE felt like a place to help me fill in the gap in many ways — either through direct resources or by indirectly illuminating things I didn't know.

### **What inspired you to enter the field you are in?**

After serving on numerous leadership and management teams that sought to “solve” for culture challenges — like retention and morale — through a predetermined and very limited lens, I began to see the most lasting and impactful results in spaces where we expanded our notions of leadership and took an approach that simultaneously centered individuals and liberation.

By illuminating barriers and boundaries in thinking, I began to create space for teams and leaders to think outside of the traditional boxes of how we're “supposed” to lead and how a workplace team is “supposed” to operate, to see what's possible. I was motivated as I saw the impact my work was having — both in my places of full-time employment at the time, and also when I'd have the occasional client here and there. At that time I was still balancing it with full-time work. I began to see that it was possible to do this full-time. To not only make a more intentional impact, but to also have more power to create the kind of life and lifestyle that I wanted. I understood that I possessed a skill that could be turned into a business and thanks to seeing other entrepreneurs in my immediate community, I was inspired to try!



### **When and why did you start your business?**

I started my business at a time in my life when I was craving a life that felt more attuned with the power, freedom and work-life balance that I wanted. After having the same conversation with multiple leaders at various levels across different organizations, it became clear to me that there was a very present and widespread need for those in leadership to truly have a space to explore their innate leadership in an intentional way. I could do it in a way that also provided me with the options and flexibility that I desired in my life in a way that no other company was going to give to me.

We all have been taught how to lead. That actually wasn't true leadership, but more so followership of what we were told leadership was. I also watched as this form of leadership oftentimes made the emerging Black leaders on the teams all but invisible to the leaders and executives I was working with. I watched as they led in a way that silenced others. At the time, I had done a lot of formal and informal unpacking, unlearning, and relearning of this that had led me to a leadership and culture practice that felt liberating to me, which I realized, more and more, was rare.

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

So as I began to share, consult, and advise more in one-off situations, I started to become more intentional about it. I started to lead myself. This is really how the business started. And my motivation continues to be my clients". Every time they shed a piece of the universal "leadership script" and assume more power over how they lead, I am reminded of why Liberated Development exists.

### How do you market your business?

Word-of-mouth and referrals continue to be our strongest marketing tool, as an active prompt in our client engagement process. However, we also send a regular community newsletter as well as use LinkedIn and Instagram. We also build strategic alliances that allow us to cross-promote and/or leverage platforms outside of our immediate audience.



### What challenges have you faced in your business? How have you overcome them?

- 1. Decision fatigue:** Small business owners are often faced with a multitude of decisions to make on a daily basis. From strategic choices to operational details, decision fatigue can set in, making it challenging to maintain focus and make sound judgments. Developing effective decision-making processes and seeking input from trusted advisors has helped alleviate *some* of this challenge for me. I also pay attention to what can be outsourced, giving me more room to focus on bigger, more consequential decisions.
- 2. Work-life integration:** Achieving work-life balance is a common goal, but for small business owners, it can be more about work-life integration. The lines between personal and professional life can blur, and finding a healthy integration that allows for time off while still addressing business demands can be a complex and ongoing challenge. For me, it was about separating myself from the business. For some people, it may not be an issue. But for me, it is important to keep my identity as Danielle. While, yes, this business is something that I created, it isn't me. I work hard not to have my entire identity as a person wrapped up in Liberated Development's identity as a business. That's important to me because if this business ever goes away, I don't want Danielle to no longer be connected to Danielle.
- 3. Managing growth and scaling:** While growth is often viewed as a positive outcome, rapid or unexpected growth can pose challenges of its own. Increased demand is a privileged challenge to tackle as a small shop and if not careful it's a demand that we can try to meet at the expense of our own wellness. I've had to be really intentional about what growth means to me and Liberated Development, and not make "growth" synonymous with "more."
- 4. Success to me means sustainable:** So I try to actively do a cost benefit analysis where I am looking at all costs of business decisions. That included the cost of my own wellness and capacity. And then saying "no" or "not now" when I need to.

**Do you have any employees?**

I am my only full time employee. However, we now have a team of 9 co-creators (or “subcontractors”), with expertise expanding law, research, somatic practice, policy, administration and education. These individuals come in as co-facilitators, advisors and/or coaches — depending on the client’s need and my capacity — and have been brought on as a direct response to understanding capacity balance and ensuring that the best minds and breadth of knowledge is available to clients.

**What’s your schedule like, what’s a typical day for you?**

I set aside some time in the morning to meet my needs first. Water and coffee is a must! I talk to my mom, walk my dog, and when I’m really in a groove I journal a bit. I then get acquainted with my day and organize myself. If I’m not facilitating a session, I try to reserve my mornings for creative work: designing sessions, writing proposals or recommendations, reviewing strategies. My brain is best in the morning so I try to capitalize on that when I can. Afternoons are my meeting times. This can be anything from new client inquiries to planning meetings or coaching with existing clients. I try my best not to schedule back-to-back meetings, so that I have time to move, breathe, get water or capture notes. This sounds like a small thing, but it makes a huge difference in how I feel at the end of the day. I always end each day looking at the next day to make sure I don’t need to make any shifts or do any last-minute prep for what’s ahead.

**What’s the best thing about being self-employed?**

Being able to control my energy. As a self-employed individual, one of the greatest joys for me is the ability to control the energy around me by selecting who I work with. This freedom allows me to avoid being compelled to work with individuals who consistently stress me out or fail to appreciate my value. It empowers me to prioritize working with people who positively serve me and contribute to a healthier and more fulfilling work environment.

**What’s the best compliment you’ve ever received from a client?**

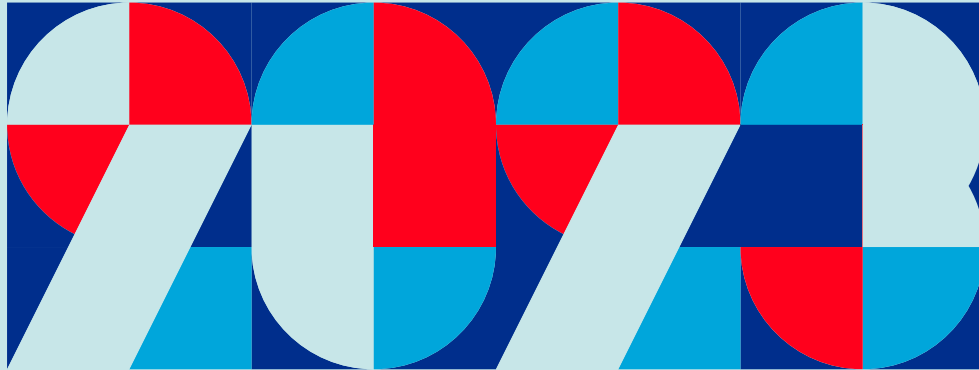
It sounds cliché, but anytime a client renews a contract or recommends me to a colleague or friend of theirs, I see that as the ultimate compliment. When a client chooses to work with Liberated Development again and again, it indicates that they are not only satisfied with our services, but they also believe in the value we provide. Of course, there are times when contracts need to end because I’ve exhausted what I’m able to provide in the current context, or the client’s needs have changed. But when the opportunity is there, building a long-term working relationship with a client is a testament to the mutual trust, respect, and positive experiences shared over time. Moreover, when clients recommend me to others in their network, it conveys that what they experienced with me was so impactful that they want to pass it along. I’m always deeply grateful when that happens.

**What’s the most important piece of advice you would give to someone starting their own business?**

Create systems early and before you need them. If you are starting off solo, it’s easy not to have a system for something since it’s all in your head and you’re the only one doing it, but that will make your life so much harder than it has to be. The more you can automate and/or create a system for your work, the more time (and stress) you will save yourself later. This also makes it easier to be prepared for help when you get to the point of needing it. There are so many apps that can create SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) for you — use them before you need them.

**Which NASE member benefit is most important to you?**

Access to the experts! When I’m looking for a business solution and have absolutely no idea where to start... I can start with NASE! From IT to healthcare. Being self-employed is equal parts beautiful and intimidating to me. NASE gives me a place (and actual people/experts) to go for the intimidating parts, and that makes a world of difference and reminds me that I’m not alone in having to figure it all out.



# YEAR IN REVIEW

## Self-Employed and Small Business Community

2023 has been a year of significant accomplishments for small businesses in the United States, thanks to bipartisan action by Congress and the Biden Harris Administration:

- **Record number of applications to start businesses:** In 2023, Americans have filed a record 14.6 million applications to start businesses. This is a sign that the historic investment in small businesses is driving confidence and optimism from entrepreneurs and generating more resilient and competitive markets.
- **Increased lending and investments in small businesses:** Data from the Federal Reserve's Survey of Consumer Finances shows that between 2019 and 2022, the share of families owning a business increased by 9%.
- **\$50 million in American Rescue Plan funds:** The U.S. Department of the Treasury is announcing awards of more than \$50 million to 20 states to provide legal, financial, and other advisory services that are expected to help more than 10,000 small businesses owned by individuals from traditionally underserved communities secure loans and investments to grow and expand. These awards are being provided through the State Small Business Credit Initiative's

(SSBCI) Technical Assistance Grant Program – part of the American Rescue Plan's historic support for underserved small businesses that is providing capital, building ecosystems of opportunity and entrepreneurship, and creating new jobs and economic opportunity.

- **\$50 billion to small businesses:** The Small Business Administration (SBA) delivered \$50 billion to small businesses in Fiscal Year 2023.

These accomplishments are a testament to Congress and the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to supporting small businesses and creating a more equitable economy. By investing in small businesses, Congress and the Administration is helping to create jobs, build wealth, and promote economic growth in communities across the country.

In conclusion, 2023 has been a year of significant accomplishments for the self-employed and small businesses in the United States.

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