

**SMALL
NATION**

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| CASE STUDY |

FIGHTING FOR SMALL TOWNS

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WASHINGTON D.C.

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Sometimes it feels as if big cities and big business get all the attention from the powers that be when it comes to policy and programming. The needs of small towns just haven't always been in the governmental ear, and that's a real problem... for everyone. The Small Nation team knows that in order to be heard, you have to be present. So that's just what they've decided to do.

WORKING BIG FROM A SMALL TOWN

All across the country, smart people in small towns have started their successful businesses with no more than a great idea and the fearless drive to push their vision toward a reality. The grit and determination it takes to make a small business succeed is no joke. Some struggle to raise capital. Others have to overcome geographic or technological barriers to effectively market and be seen. Skilled workers are hard to come by. Big business can come to town and push out the small guy in a very short period of time when taxes are high, profit margins run slim and traffic is diverted elsewhere. Even within close, supportive municipalities or states with progressive small business programming, challenges exist every day.

It's not all doom and gloom though. Many of the challenges small businesses and small towns face could be eased with the proper attention of government. Small voices, speaking one at a time from small towns can seem like a whisper to large agencies and institutions. Simply being heard is the hurdle.

In the seven years of work they've done to help to revive their own small town of Bellefontaine, Ohio, the Small Nation team has had the privilege of talking with small business owners every single day. They have learned exactly what is important to both the business owners and the municipalities for success. Rather than sit at home on the sidelines and wish for change, they have dedicated time to

developing relationships at all levels of government that will amplify the voice of small businesses and small towns.

With their presence in these places, the Small Nation team is able to have the important conversations with the people who can truly implement change. By speaking the needs of small towns and on behalf of small business, they're using their platform to help fight the good fight for small towns everywhere.

CONNECTIONS THAT CREATE CHANGE

Small Nation Founder Jason Duff has spent his career making connections that further the visibility and the needs of small towns and small businesses. Through his passion for helping communities develop and grow their "entrepreneurial ecosystem," Jason has become involved in numerous organizations that work toward the success of small business. He is a member of the Small Business Council for U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council as well as other entrepreneurial organizations that have allowed him to become a voice for those who have had a hard time being heard.

As part of President Obama's National Entrepreneurship Month in November 2011, Jason was asked to speak at the White House along with some of country's brightest young entrepreneurs at the Empact100 Recognition Event. The organization Empact, in partnership with the Kauffman Foundation, Startup America Partnership, Opportunity In-



| SMALL BUSINESS. BIG IMPACT. |

Small towns and small town entrepreneurs face challenges. The Small Nation team has stepped up to fight for small towns in person where it



matters most. **How?** By creating relationships. Learn more about some of the businesses they champion at smallnationstrong.com/success.





The Small Nation team and colleagues with Karen Kerrigan of the Small Business Entrepreneurship Council in Bellefontaine.

ternational, and Global Entrepreneurship Week, recognized the top 100 entrepreneurs age 30 or younger, the jobs they create and their desire to give back by spreading entrepreneurship in their communities and across the world.

In the spring of 2018, Small Nation and their colleague Britany Saxton, owner of Bellefontaine's Six Hundred Downtown Pizzeria were invited to speak in the Rose Garden at The White House beside President Donald Trump on the impact of tax cuts on her business. This Small Nation team was one of a small group of individuals from around the country that were asked to speak about how Tax Cuts for American Workers had an impact on small businesses.

In early 2020, the Small Nation team met with representatives from the JobsOhio program to discuss their ideas about how to curb the workforce issues that small towns have been struggling with in recent years. Small Nation's "Hometown Opportunity" web platform has become a model for workforce attraction and retention in small towns.

The Small Nation team remains in close and consistent contact with Karen Kerrigan, president & CEO of the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council. Kerrigan regularly testifies before the U.S. Congress on the key issues impacting entrepreneurs, investment and the economy, and has been appointed to numerous federal advisory boards including the National Women's Business Council, the U.S.-Iraq Business Dialog, the U.S. Treasury's Taxpayer Advisory Panel, and the National Advisory Committee for Labor Provisions

of U.S. Free Trade Agreements. Kerrigan regularly engages with the President's cabinet and key advisors, and has spoken or led roundtables at several White House economic summits, scores of events hosted by the Small Business Administration, U.S. Treasury Department, Securities and Exchange Commission and other federal government agencies and departments.

Kerrigan chairs the newly formed Small Business Roundtable, a coalition of leading small business and entrepreneurship organizations dedicated to advancing policy, securing access and promoting inclusion to benefit the businesses at the heart of the American economy. She has written hundreds of Op-Eds and newspaper columns, and regularly appears on national television and talk radio programs. Kerrigan regularly appears on Fox Business to provide analysis and commentary on the latest economic data, what's driving the markets, and the outlook for the economy, entrepreneurship and small business growth.

SHOWING UP

The Small Nation team truly believes that speaking out for small towns is important to their continued success, and that through relationships, doors can open that may not have been visible before. They will continue to show up for small businesses, in person and in spirit. Because when the needs of small towns are brought to light with a unified voice, change can most certainly happen.

SMALL NATION develops places, spaces and dreams for small towns and small town entrepreneurs across the country.

**SMALL
NATION**

We're here to show the world that small town and small business success is not only possible, but profitable. For everyone.

www.smallnationstrong.com