

continued from page 1

SBA selects Multicraft International for Made in America after nomination by BankPlus

pi District Director, expanded on what Administrator Thomas said, “He’s referring also to the fact that the federal government did so well this past fiscal year in terms of buying from small businesses.”

Mallinson commented on the SBA having selected Multicraft International for Made in America by saying, “I thought it was a very good recognition for ourselves and our lender BankPlus. I honestly think that we’re the sort of company that has been plugging hard and doing everything we can, so it was nice to get a pat on the shoulder working with a big government organization that throughout all these things, has been unfailingly supportive and very professional in all our dealings with them. It is a nice connection.”

Multicraft International was nominated by BankPlus through Leigha McLendon, Senior Vice President and Director of Guaranteed Lending, and Janet Jones, Senior Vice President, Commercial Lending Group.

“When BankPlus learned of the ‘Made in America Initiative’ by SBA to support small business manufacturers, our local Mississippi District Office was accepting nominations. Multicraft International quickly came to mind, as they are not only a valued BankPlus customer, but also a great example of how SBA’s various funding programs can benefit small businesses and turn their visions into realities,” said McLendon.

“Multicraft is not only a solid workforce in Pelahatchie providing 100+ jobs, but they are a strong pillar in the community. It was our privilege to nominate Multicraft International, and we are thankful they were selected by SBA for this well-deserved, national recognition.”

When asked why Multicraft International was ultimately selected, Stewart said, “We looked in the system, and we looked at all this information, but, over the course of many years, Multicraft International has made an economic impact in Mississippi and, in my opinion, has taken advantage of the multiple SBA lending programs that help the other programs expand and grow busi-

nesses.”

“They utilized lots of SBA’s lending programs over time, and that includes our 7A Guaranty Loan Program - our flagship program where we work in conjunction with a whole host of in- and out-of-state banking lending institutions - and we partnered together to provide loans to credit-worthy eligible small businesses. He also has loans under our international trade arena, and he took advantage of the Pandemic Paycheck Protection, our COVID title loan program. He’s also taken advantage of the CAPLine Program and something



Multicraft International Ventures building

Photo by Pelahatchie News

we call the America’s Recovery Capital (ARC) Loan Program. He’s taken advantage of all of these opportunities, smartly, because they got the funding. All of these loans are in good standing, or they are paid in full. On top of that, Multicraft International came highly recommended by one of our top SBA of Mississippi lenders which, of course, is BankPlus,” said Stewart.

Multicraft International was also featured in the Mississippi Manufacturers Associations (MMA) “Made in Mississippi” spot, and Mallinson reports being very glad to be featured as one of the manufacturers in Mississippi.

“I was chairman of the board with the MMA prior to this. I’m still on the board. It’s a very important organization to promote all aspects of manufacturing within the state. It’s really appreciated. We have a brand, and we like to promote it, and this helped us do that.”

In the past, making and selling products in America has been thought of as too expensive, and Multicraft International discussed how they have worked hard to overcome this challenging line of thought.

“The biggest challenge is the perception of economic advantage by going over-seas, and there’s a theory called total cost of ownership (TCO) that when you look at what it costs to buy something, you look at not just the price on the purchase order but the cost of freight, the cost of carrying more inventory, the cost of longer lead times,

products and raise the domestic content threshold is considered by Stewart and Mallinson as important for the manufacturing industry and employment.

“We have been in this business a long time, and global sourcing practices have changed considerably in 40 years. America’s productivity is very strong, and strategically for companies to have an American company with the communication and the connection and the confidence to know that your supply line is going to be assured is very important. It’s good for the country. It’s good for employment, and it’s good for self-sufficiency to be able to have more American content,” said Mallinson.

Stewart continued the conversation, “In terms of President Biden’s Build America initiative - the SBA has an office within the whole threshold called the Office of Advocacy, and what they do is they have statisticians add up their economy and such. Right now, there are approximately 265,000 small businesses in our state. And that represents 99.3% of all businesses. Of that, there are about 1,600 small businesses in our state that are manufacturing employers, and they employ over 43,000 employees on their payroll. So, that’s pretty significant - build America, buy America can enhance that in our state.”

When asked what it might take for other small businesses to support the Made in America mission, Mallinson said, “it takes passion, and it takes a never-give-up attitude and relying on the fact that there are very good people all around you who can and will help if you ask them. People are very supportive, and the SBA is one agency that fits in the same realm as that.”

Mallinson hopes that the Made in America spot and recognition will help with growth and other important initiatives that Multicraft International is hoping to implement in the future. Multicraft International products are shipped worldwide to Australia, Brazil, Argentina, India and Italy, but mostly North America.

For more information on the SBA, visit sba.gov. For more information on Multicraft International, visit multicraft.com.

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