



Serving San Luis Obispo County & Santa Maria Valley

SCORE San Luis Obispo Monthly Newsletter | November 2023 | [sanluisobispo.score.org](http://sanluisobispo.score.org)

Dear Readers,

November 11<sup>th</sup> is Veterans Day. So, this month we at SCORE give a special salute to our client Veterans and thank them for their service. You can read more below on the programs and resources SCORE has available specifically for our Veteran business owners.

November is also Native American Heritage Month, which is recognized as a way to call attention to the culture, traditions, and achievements of the nation's original inhabitants and of their descendants. SCORE's [Minority Small Business Program](#) is a great resource for Native American-owned businesses to utilize.

Last but not least, November 4<sup>th</sup> is "Use Your Common Sense Day". Of course, as small business owners, you've learned this lesson, sometimes the hard way! Keeping yourself grounded each day in business is paramount, especially as we approach the busy holiday season. And remember, often the simplest solution is the right one.

Taking advantage of SCORE's many free resources is a great common-sense solution when seeking business advice. Our always-free [mentors](#), [workshops](#) and [online blog](#) are a great place to start when looking to start or expand your business.

Joe Whitaker  
*Marketing Chair, SCORE San Luis Obispo*



## Spotlight on: SCORE Client of the Month



**Bobby and Kezia Cleath  
& Tim and Allie Cleath**  
*Founders, Owners and Operators  
Rhapsody in View Boutique Hotel*



Bobby and Kezia met while swing dancing, and quickly bonded over a shared love of the dance, good food, and hospitality. Growing up, Bobby's parents frequently had guests—planned and unexpected—that would be welcomed with generosity of spirit and food. There was always space to fit one more person, and the delicious meals made by Bobby's mother, Allie, were often followed by the sharing of stories or music. Kezia, who already enjoyed baking and cooking, eagerly learned from Allie's expertise, and soon was making her own renditions of several of Allie's famous desserts. Bobby's father, Tim, is musically gifted, and would frequently share his warm bass voice with visiting family and friends. He and Bobby performed with the local opera company, Central Coast Gilbert and Sullivan, and Kezia quickly joined.

After they got married, Kezia and Bobby dreamed about what their future together would look like together. In line with the Cleath family tradition of hospitality; they were drawn to the idea of a small, family owned and operated business where they could share their food and their time with people, and provide a welcoming space where people could gather and feel rejuvenated. Not sure exactly what they were looking for, yet, Kezia spent every spare minute after work searching for plots of land and drawing up basic building designs. Eventually they found the perfect place right off the freeway in North Morro Bay, a mere ten minute walk from the beach. The location was away from the hustle and bustle of the Embarcadero, but was just a short bike ride away.

Tim and Allie were supportive of their idea, and together, the four of them dreamed up a small, thoughtfully-designed boutique hotel that was as sustainable and allergy-friendly as they could make it. The building has integrated solar, with the plan to add EV chargers later, and Bobby made special efforts to ensure that the rooms had excellent insulation and soundproofing. As a nod to their beginning, and the musical hobby they share with

Tim, Bobby and Kezia decided to give the hotel a 20's-30s music inspired twist, but with a modern design.

As the dream evolved, they decided that they wanted the building to include a full commercial kitchen, so that not only would the guests be able to enjoy a freshly made breakfast, but Bobby and Kezia could also eventually serve their community by offering local coffee, and house-made baked goods to locals. They designed the dining room with the potential to have events like small weddings, family reunions, and business retreats. The building was designed to help it blend into the neighborhood, while still hinting at the modern, art deco-influenced interior. Each of the spacious, comfortable, and beautifully themed guest rooms has a private balcony or patio, with views of the Pacific Ocean and Morro Rock.

Although the dream began with the Cleath family, it would not have been made possible without the amazing support of numerous family and friends, the knowledge shared by other local hoteliers and others who have worked in the hospitality industry, and, of course, the knowledge and guidance provided by their SCORE mentors Brad Spahr and Joe Whitaker.

### Learn more about Rhapsody in View Boutique Hotel



*Photos courtesy of Mark Nakamura.*

## What Every Business Owner Should Know



### Checklist: Simple Steps for Building a Website

Are you interested in building a website but don't know where to start? Download this simple checklist to help you plan, build, manage, and promote your small business website. Here are the essential steps that are included in this checklist:

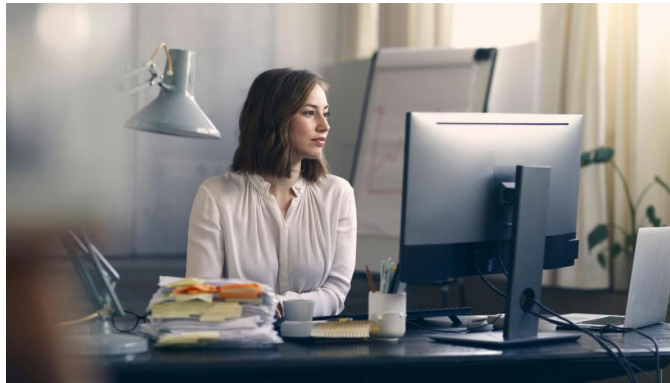
- Step 1: Planning Your Website Discover the critical decisions to make before you build a website. Topics covered include target audience, domain name, hosting and website-building options.
- Step 2: Defining Your Website Requirements Help ensure a successful launch of your website by defining important design and function elements. Topics covered

- include website design style, essential elements and optional special features.
- Step 3: Maintaining and Marketing Your Website This step will help you determine a budget and schedule for your ongoing website needs. Topics include website management, marketing and web analytics.

Review this checklist before you build and launch your website; you'll be better prepared to create a key piece of your marketing foundation.

READ MORE SCORE BLOG POSTS

## Resources for Veteran-Owned Businesses



November 11th is Veterans Day, so we feel it is the perfect opportunity to highlight some of the many resources SCORE offers specifically for Veterans looking to start or expand their business. Click on the links below to learn more:

- [11 Essential Resources for Veteran Entrepreneurs](#)
- [Win Customers: Turn Military Speak into Civilian Speak](#)
- [3 Questions to Ask Before Starting a Veteran-Owned Business](#)

Have additional questions? Our always-free mentors are here to assist you on your business endeavors. We salute our Veterans and are thankful for your service, and look forward to assisting you with whatever your entrepreneur goals may be.

Learn More about SCORE Mentors

## What Our Clients Have Recently Shared

At SCORE San Luis Obispo, we are thankful to have a talented team of mentors assisting those looking to start or grow their business! Below you'll find some of the feedback we've received from our SCORE Clients in July & August 2023.

*"Good fit - very knowledgeable, and professional. Communication was great and understanding of actions to take before the next meeting are clear. The mentors are great. The time spent was effective and I am looking forward to the next meeting."*

– B.B. (Mentors: John Baillie and Holly Gillan)



*“They really listen & are supporting me. We’re making great progress...still working toward my goal though.” – J.H (Mentors: Thorv Hesselund and Steve Medina (Ventura Chapter))  
“They were patient, kind, inquisitive and knowledgeable. Great resource for every American.”*

*– L.F. (Mentors: Brad Spahr and Kenneth Riener)*

*“I am in absolute awe at the overall response and mentorship I have received from SCORE. I heard within 48 hours of my initial message. From there the local representative determined that she would reach out to the national network as my needs were specific to insurance. Low and behold, I was put in touch with Bill Pope, a retired insurance specialist and agency owner. He helped me evaluate various quotes I was given in order to make the best choices for my start-up business. His mentorship has so far been invaluable in this area. I look forward to continuing learning from Bill as I move through the various stages of growth with my start-up business. Thank you, Bill Pope, Maclynn Brinton and SCORE!”*

*– T.K. (Mentors: Maclynn Brinton and Bill Pope (San Diego))*

Looking for business support? Our always-free mentoring program is a great place to start. [Learn more here.](#)

## November SCORE Workshops



### **Beyond ChatGPT: Generative AI for Business**

***November 1st, 2023 | 10:30am - 12:00pm***

Are you curious about how Artificial Intelligence (AI) might help your business? Join Damon Young for this live, interactive webinar where he discusses how Generative AI will transform companies and industries. Some of his topics will include:

- What is Generative AI?
- Why is this considered a revolution in technology?
- How is it resetting the landscape of every business today?
- How can companies leverage this latest wave of innovation?

*Instructor: Damon Young*

*As a system integrator who began his career at Andersen Consulting, a management consultant with the restructuring firm Alvarez & Marsal, and a former Senior Vice-President at City National Bank, Damon Young has been transforming businesses and industries for nearly 30 years. A native of Baltimore, MD who’s made Southern California his home since 1999, Damon has led the software development of industry resetting products at Amazon.com and Hulu.com and has been a successful enterprise software sales leader from companies as small as software startups & incubators, and as large as Microsoft. Leading Polywise Partners, his focus is on helping businesses of all sizes who are often overlooked by the big tech and consulting firms, so that they, too, can ride the latest technology waves to greater growth and success.*

**LEARN MORE & REGISTER**



## Government Contracting: What You Need to Know

November 6th, 2023 | 2:00pm - 3:30pm

Have you ever thought about contracting with the government? Government contracting includes contracts with the Federal Government, the State of California, LA County, City of Los Angeles, City of Long Beach and Unified School Districts.

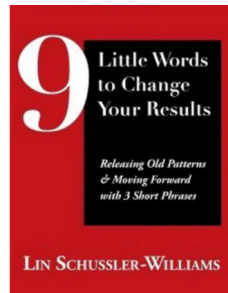
This workshop will provide useful information on the steps you need to take to become a government contractor. We'll also speak of the advantages Veterans, women, minorities and small businesses have.

*Presenter: Bill Miley*

*Bill Miley has worked for companies supporting the US Government and other government entities for more than 30 years. He will share his experience with the workshop participants and provide a general introduction to government procurement.*

*The entities of the US Government, State of California, Los Angeles County, City of Los Angeles, City of Long Beach and the Unified School Districts of Los Angeles and Long Beach will be covered. You should attend if your business strategy includes government procurement as an element of your business growth plan.*

LEARN MORE & REGISTER



## 9 Little Words to Change Your Results

November 9th, 2023 | 5:00pm - 6:30pm

Based on her nationally recognized book, 9 Little Words to Change Your Results, Lin Schussler-Williams is bringing us another workshop, this time designed to help us get out of our own way and get to the results we want to see.

Come learn to add this tool to your toolbox from the author herself. It is widely used by entrepreneurs, athletes, salespeople, leaders, and parents!

*Instructor: Lin Schussler-Williams*

*As a Certified Reset-it Teacher, speaker, and author, Lin teaches a thinking technology that changes perspectives and increases results.*

*For over 20 years, Lin has worked with individuals and groups, helping them accelerate their results, and create richer, more fulfilling lives. Lin is excited to have recently become one the first certified Reset-it Teachers in the world, with a mission to help individuals learn to reset their programs and conditioning that holds them back or keeps them stuck.*

*Lin is a recognized speaker on topics from sales and networking success to creating lives of balance and prosperity.*

LEARN MORE & REGISTER



## Amazon 101: Assessment, Implementation and Store Management

*November 14th, 2023 | 10:00am - 11:00am*

In 2022, US online retail sales, excluding travel, surpassed \$1 trillion last year “for the first time in history”. Amazon's share of the total was 37.8%. Second place was occupied by the e-commerce site of retail chain Walmart, with a 6.3 percent market share, followed in third place by Apple, with 3.9 percent. In this workshop we will discuss the basics as it relates to if and how to set up your own Amazon Store. The topics covered include:

- Assessment - Can your product compete and can you make a profit?
- Implementation - What are the basic steps to set up an Amazon Store?
- Management - What goes into keeping the Store competitive?

*Presenter: John Richardson*

*John has over 20 years of in-depth experience delivering eCommerce solutions as Amazon Seller Central Manager, Ad and Marketing Management, Product Manager, Director of Web Strategy, SVP of Applications Development and CTO.*

*John is the founder of Amazon Stores 4 You that delivers Amazon account services to small companies. John's ecommerce experience spans a wide variety of Retail (B2B, B2C) product sectors including Food, Beverage, Sporting Goods, Nutrition, Home Products, Pet and Beauty Supplies.*

*John also has extensive experience with email marketing, Google Analytics, CMS's (WordPress, Squarespace, Shopify and WIX) and Learning Management Systems.*

*John has worked with many start ups, managed technologies at several mid-sized companies and been an SVP at 3 Fortune 250 companies.*

*For the past 14 years he has been a SCORE Mentor and also donates his time to the CADA Mentor Program which is a school-based program for vulnerable 3rd-8th grade students who need academic, emotional, and/or social support.*

LEARN MORE & REGISTER



## Hiring 101: How, When and Why to Hire Employees

*November 16th, 2023 | 10:30am - 11:30am*

The hiring process can feel daunting for business owners, especially in today's economy. There are so many factors to consider - where to search for candidates, how to interview them, what criteria to look for, how to onboard them, how to classify them, etc. The truth is, it's going to look very different for each business owner, depending on how far along you are in your business, what your needs are, the resources you have available to pay and train new hires, your risk appetite, and so on.

This class will provide you with the knowledge and fundamental principles of hiring so you can make personnel decisions with confidence and ease.

What You Will Learn:

The How:

- What to include in a job description and application
- How to conduct a proper interview and background check
- Where and how to search for potential candidates
- How to classify new hires (W2 vs. 1099)

The When:

- How to determine when you're at the "breaking point" in your business where it's unprofitable to NOT hire someone
- Understanding when it's time for you as the business owner to "level up" and start delegating tasks

The Why:

- How to clarify the need that a potential hire is going to fulfill
- How to conduct a cost/benefit analysis of hiring someone for a particular role
- Understanding your risk appetite for hiring potential candidates

Resources:

- Websites, tools, and reference materials to help guide you in the hiring process

*About Anais Babajanian:*

*Anais Babajanian is a business and career coach with 10+ years of experience in accounting and operations. Prior to becoming a coach, she ran and grew an insurance agency based in Houston, TX and sold it in 2021 when she moved to Los Angeles. She has extensive experience in the hiring and training process, as she believes that proper onboarding and retention of personnel is the most essential component in building a solid foundation for a thriving business. She has helped many business owners overcome the overwhelm and frustration associated with hiring so they can focus on growing their businesses.*

**LEARN MORE & REGISTER**



**[How to Begin Your Business](#)**  
***November 16th, 2023 | 5:00pm - 6:30pm***

READY? SET. GO! Starting a business of your own is exciting but we bet you have lots of questions. If you are thinking of starting a business, or have just started one, this workshop is a perfect fit. Topics covered will include the fundamentals of getting started, business operation basics, business plans, and how to use and understand financial reports.

**LEARN MORE & REGISTER**





## **Marketing Your Unique Business**

***November 30th, 2023 | 5:00pm - 6:30pm***

What every new business owner must learn and every existing business owner better know! Everyone's business is unique! And every business has a USP! Do you know yours? Learn how to identify your Unique Selling Position(s), the key component of any successful business, and how to apply your USP, using ALL your marketing tools.

LEARN MORE & REGISTER

## **SCORE Partner Workshops**



### **Workshops from MCSC (Mission Community Services Corporation) & Women's Business Center**

MCSC offers weekly workshops on a wide variety of subjects. In addition to providing a networking platform among attendees, classes are designed to increase understanding of important and current business topics and trends. Workshops are free of charge and open to the public.

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

### **Additional SCORE Workshops Available from our Regional Partners!**

Looking for additional workshops? Our SCORE partners in Ventura and Santa Barbara also have free workshops available to assist your business!

- [Los Angeles](#)
- [Long Beach/South Bay](#)
- [Santa Barbara](#)
- [Ventura](#)

Articles from SCORE



[Finding the Best Ways to Survey Your Customers](#)



[Centers of Influence: The Cornerstone of Networking](#)



[How to Establish Better Accounts Payable \(AP\) Practices](#)

Read More Articles from SCORE

## Thank You to our Sponsors

Due to the charitable contributions of the following sponsors and donors, we are able to provide all of our services at no charge. Thank you!

### Sponsors:

- [U.S. Bank](#)
- [Bank of America](#)
- [PG&E Foundation](#)
- [Small Business Administration](#)
- [Santa Maria Valley Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Chevron](#)
- [City of Morro Bay](#)
- [City of San Luis Obispo](#)
- [City of Santa Maria](#)
- [City of Grover Beach](#)
- [City of Pismo Beach](#)
- [County of San Luis Obispo](#)

### Donors:

- [SESLOC](#)
- Madonna Enterprises
- Advantage Answering