



## **NEWS RELEASE | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**

Contact: Samantha Bagbey  
Project Manager  
O. 434.793.1753

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### **City hosts networking mixer for small-, women-, and/or minority-owned businesses**

The Danville Office of Economic Development & Tourism (DOEDT) hosted Puertas Abiertas, a networking mixer for small-, women-, and/or minority-owned (SWaM) businesses in the City of Danville on Saturday, July 26, at Ballou Park, Danville.

Translating to “Open Doors,” Puertas Abiertas aimed to connect SWaM businesses, offering opportunities to network, discover local resources, and engage with City employees to gain insights into growing their business. The event also included family-friendly activities, raffle giveaways, and a food truck.

Eighteen local resources were present, including the Danville Pittsylvania Chamber of Commerce, the YMCA of Danville, and the City of Danville Procurement office. Over 100 individuals were in attendance.

The mixer featured several guest speakers who shared insights on business development. Speakers included Corrie Bobe, DOEDT Director, Hur Eli Main Salgado, Executive Director of the Southern Virginia Latino Association (SOVALA), and Michel Zajur, CEO of the Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

The initiative was developed by interns from the DOEDT as part of Project Hispanic Horizons. This effort is designed to build the framework for strategies to help small businesses, with a primary focus on Hispanic businesses, who are not currently engaged within the local entrepreneur ecosystem, build capacity and recognize the procurement opportunities available throughout the City of Danville.

“This has been a great summer to experience working with Project Hispanic Horizons interns, Oscar Kemp, Tyrese Perkins, and Jackie Ruiz, and to connect with local Hispanic and Latino businesses,” said DOEDT Project Manager, Samantha Bagbey. “We are grateful for their work to ensure the voices of our Hispanic and Latino businesses are heard, designing a pathway for next

steps for all small, women, and minority owned businesses, and continuing to drive the mission of economic development and tourism.”

Learn more about upcoming training opportunities, workshops, and events at [discoverdanville.com](http://discoverdanville.com).

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#### **About the Office of Economic Development and Tourism**

The Danville Office of Economic Development & Tourism recruits and retains businesses for the Danville area. The office provides information on available sites and buildings, incentives and other financial resources and offers a website designed for the business community: [www.discoverdanville.com](http://www.discoverdanville.com).