



**Leveling the
Playing Field
for Minority-Owned
Small Businesses**
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Unknown Penchant for Crafting Leads Colorado Woman to Success

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Similar to a child losing their precious toy, Katrina Boldry's loss of a 17-year-old dog leash was a new beginning for her, and surprisingly, many others around the world.

It all started because as a child Boldry owned every animal imaginable. She even had the perseverance to raise a guide dog, Poco. The sturdy, multipurpose leash for Poco broke after 17 years and there was no such quality product to replace it. Boldry's willpower kicked in, she decided to buy the tools needed to make a leash of her own. It was a success!

Boldry knew her skill could help others. In fact her market consisted of 20,000 service dogs nationwide. She pursued her talent and combined her affection for animals and passion for helping people to establish Bold Lead Designs in 2006. In the beginning, she sold to family and friends, then moved up to craft and pet shows, and eventually moved her business online where she now sells internationally to several countries including: Canada, UK, France, Spain, Norway, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and Croatia.

When she first started her business, Boldry knew she had unique skills to make the product but wanted to improve her knowledge. She completed a 13-week business success course through Colorado's Women's Business Center known as Mi Casa Resource Center. "Mi Casa has been an invaluable resource. As a solo entrepreneur, I would never have gotten the business off the ground so successfully without the guidance of the wonderful counselors at Mi Casa. They are compassionate and understand how complex starting a business can be, and helped me focus on the important details necessary to get started. They

have been there for me every time I have a technical question about business licenses, taxes, even how to start a e-mail campaign. They have a rich network of other professionals and services to recommend as well."

Boldry's business took flight with her strong dedication and the help of Mi Casa's success course. Within her first year, Bold Lead Designs marked growth and brand recognition and earned first-year profits. Since then sales have essentially doubled each year and are on track to double sales again in 2012.

Boldry's next challenge was taking her business to the next level and doing it right. She focused her efforts to make exactly what service-dog owners want and need. Along with her business efforts she volunteered with service dog groups and gained feedback from owners of service dogs and incorporated what they needed into her products.

The business owner was then asked to design a harness for balance and mobility. At first the project seemed impossible, but with her love and support for guide dogs she had the confidence to give it a shot. Boldry consulted with skilled animal surgeons and therapists to come up with the best design for stability and movement. The harnesses are now one of her bestselling products.

Katrina's unknown craftiness led to a rewarding career. Bold Lead Designs continues to succeed, grow, and fill the need for service dog equipment, all while being a local, handcrafted, woman-owned small business.