

Organization Highlights

- Timeframe/years for the organization highlights: 2017
- Jobs created or retained: 2,553
- Businesses assisted: 107
- Individuals provided with financial counseling and literacy training: 833
- Total dollar amount loaned: \$40,267,052

Contact

Name: Hank Helton, Executive Vice President
 Email: hank.helton@pathwaylending.org
 Phone: 615-425-7171
 Website: www.pathwaylending.org

Pathway Lending’s mission is to provide lending solutions and educational services that supports the development, growth, and preservation of underserved small businesses, affordable housing, and sustainable communities throughout Tennessee and Alabama.

Pathway Lending serves minority communities and rural portions of Appalachia and the Delta Region with fewer connections to bank branches and business resources, limited home equity, and fewer resources from family and friends.

Pathway Lending’s Target Market includes African American owned businesses and those in CDFI Qualified Investment Areas. PL offers business loans from \$5,000 to \$5 million, plus technical assistance (TA) through programs like its Women’s Business Center (WBC) and Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC).

CDFI Keeps Local Tennessee Plant Operating

Kiefer Manufacturing is the largest private employer in Sneedville, Tennessee. After changing hands several times, Kiefer had been taken over by a major corporation in Iowa. But as sales and profits dropped, the owners began looking for a change. Hancock County in Tennessee is among the poorest counties in the nation, so keeping this business up and running was essential to the long-term health of the community.

When the Mayor of Hancock County learned the employer was planning on shuttering their local factory, he turned to the Greene family, a long-time fixture in the community with strong business experience, to see if they could keep the business up and running.

“It took us two years of looking at numbers, deciding what overhead we could cut and what we couldn’t if we bought the factory,” says David. “At the time, I knew we needed working capital upfront – told dad we won’t make it six months without a loan.” With seller financing in place, their accountant and the seller’s business analyst agreed that a loan was crucial to the new owners weathering the first six months.

The final step in securing their USDA and SBA-guaranteed loan was some environmental testing of the land used as collateral. At one time David’s dad operated a service station on the property, and tests revealed trace amounts of gasoline. “That shut the whole deal down,” says David. “Our loan fell through all because there’s gasoline at an old service company.”



Project Highlights

- Distressed/Persistent Poverty County
- Business Acquisition loan keeps largest private employer in county open
- 47 jobs impacted

A contact at the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TDEC) put the Greene family in touch with Pathway Lending, and within a month they had their working capital and were back to building trailers.

“As the business grows, accounts receivable grow, finished goods grow, work in process grows, and you face hiccups,” says David. “When Pathway stepped in, it couldn’t have been better timing. It’s been a blessing and got us back to rolling again... and that’s where we are today.”