

## Case Study: Maggie Mountaineer Crafts

Tourism is the backbone of western North Carolina's economy. Though many people flock to the area to see the leaves change colors each fall, the area also has robust tourism activity during the spring and summer seasons. But as with many industries, COVID-19 changed all of that in 2020. [Maggie Mountaineer Crafts](#), located in rural Haywood County, faced unprecedented challenges as the pandemic halted nearly all travel activity. Maggie's offers tourists and locals an eclectic and authentic mix of items including delicious homemade fudge and handcrafted gifts. But though the store has many regular customers that live in the area, tourism is an important part of its revenues.



Co-owners and husband/wife team Susan and Brad Pendley received a bridge loan through CSBDF via the [North Carolina Rapid Recovery Program](#). The program is a multi-lender partnership supported by both the state government and leading philanthropic foundations. The loan helped the Pendley's during a perilous time. According to Brad, "We have been in business for over 70 years and we couldn't imagine the thought of closing. With the help of everybody on the Carolina Small

Business Development team we will now be OK." For the Pendleys, it wasn't just about capital - it was about CSBDF's holistic assistance approach. "What made this experience even more impactful was the team also helped us emotionally through this tough time," he says. "They were true angels in our time of need. I had so many sleepless nights and they would always answer my emails and texts no matter what time of day or night I sent them."

Maggie Mountaineer Crafts was helped by CSBDF Loan Underwriter Roxanne Bailey-Reed. "Working with the owners of Maggie's Mountaineers was an honor," Roxanne says. "They have an iconic storefront and are a tourism favorite in the region." Roxanne didn't just help the Pendleys receive a rapid recovery loan, she also helped them apply for the Small Business Administration's [emergency injury disaster loan](#) (EIDL) and a [paycheck protection program](#) (PPP) loan. "After sharing the advantage of the EIDL and PPP products I was able to help the owners design a short and long-term strategy for surviving the impact of COVID-19."

Roxanne checked in with the Pendleys frequently throughout the process. "I shared updates weekly with the company on timelines and expectations." Those updates included giving guidance on the EIDL application and how the Pendleys could work with their bank to expedite their PPP application. Asked about her experience in working with the business, Reed says "I was most honored that they trusted me to guide them through the strategy of how all of these



loans and grants would help protect them. They became family to me."

We think Maggie Mountaineer Craft is a case study in the power and effect of holistic and personalized small business assistance. We think stories like this illustrate what our empirical analysis has long shown. CSBDF's research has demonstrated small businesses are more likely to succeed when they have access to capital *and* are able to [build entrepreneurial social capital networks](#). The bridge loan Maggie's received from the Rapid Recovery program - and its partnership-based structure - is emblematic of [best practices in community development](#).

[The economic impacts of COVID-19 on the state's small businesses will be long-lasting](#). But as the Pendleys have shown, North Carolina's entrepreneurs have the will and drive to succeed even in the most challenging of circumstances.