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SAGE Dining Services® and Innovation Works Help Small Businesses Succeed at Baltimore’s Historic Lexington Market

BALTIMORE, MD — In partnership with Innovation Works, SAGE Dining Services® has provided resources, training, and mentorship to food vendors in the newly renovated historic Lexington Market in downtown Baltimore.

In addition to financial support, SAGE lent its expertise on food service management to Lexington Market’s merchants. SAGE created and led a training curriculum to help the market’s businesses succeed. Topics included writing menus, food purchasing, pricing and portioning items, and scheduling. SAGE senior executives also provided one-on-one mentorship on procurement, financial management, and marketing the market’s vendors.

Maryland-based SAGE has provided dining services to private schools and independent colleges across North America since 1990. SAGE Co-Founders Tina and Paco Rodriguez started the company from a bedroom in their Baltimore home and currently serve schools in 36 states, Washington, D.C., and British Columbia, Canada. In Maryland, SAGE serves Archbishop Spalding High School, Bishop McNamara High School, Boys Latin School, Calvert Hall College, Garrison Forest School, German International School, Indian Creek School, Landon School, Loyola Blakefield, McDonogh School, Notre Dame of Maryland High School, Our Lady of Good Counsel High School, Roland Park Country School, Saint Andrew’s Episcopal School, Saint James School, Saint Mary’s Ryken High School, Saint Mary’s Seminary, and Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart.

“SAGE is so proud to be a part of this project that supports small businesses,” said Tina Rodriguez, SAGE Co-Founder, Chief Financial Officer, and General Counsel, who also serves as vice chair on Innovation Works’ board. “We hope our mentorship and training will help foster new business opportunities, as well as continue to develop communities in and around Baltimore.”

“Infusing SAGE’s food industry expertise into this project through augmented curriculum videos and templates, as well as industry-specific mentorship, has helped us truly meet the market-based entrepreneurs where they are and provide them with applicable tools and wisdom to set them up for success in this next chapter of Lexington Market’s history,” Innovation Works Director of Operations & Culture Sally Ratrie said.

Since 1782, Lexington Market has served as a hub for fresh, local food and neighborhood traditions. Merchants include everything from artisan coffee, classic fried chicken, and Jamaican fare to Faidley’s Seafood, an award-winning business that has been family-owned since 1886. After its recent revitalization, the market’s new 60,000-square-foot building has space for almost 50 vendors. It’s also home to a cutting-edge assistance program that will help new and current merchants with all facets of business, from crafting an idea and acquiring capital to the actual opening of the business and what comes next.

About SAGE Dining Services®

SAGE Dining Services' unparalleled expertise in nutrition, sustainability, and culinary trends produces exceptional dining experiences that delight the senses, inspire minds, and foster community. Learn more at SAGEDINING.COM.

About Innovation Works

Innovation Works is an innovative, collaborative resource network that connects neighborhoods, entrepreneurs, social innovation assets, and investors to build sustainable neighborhood economies in Baltimore. Learn more at IWBMORE.ORG.

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