



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
**GOVERNOR DANIEL P. MALLOY**

**GOVERNOR MALLOY TOURS GROWING NUTRIGENOMICS  
STARTUP IN HARTFORD**

*ThinkitDrinkit Exceeds Job Creation Targets After Receiving State Support  
through EXP, STEP UP*

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Dannel P. Malloy today toured the Hartford headquarters of ThinkitDrinkit, a recipient of state assistance through the Small Business Express Program (EXP) and the Subsidized Training and Employment Program (STEP UP) which have helped the startup company grow steadily over the last year and hire more than 20 new employees.

“We are investing in our entrepreneurial community to spur the development of promising new products and technologies, and accelerate the growth of groundbreaking companies and industries that will help Connecticut thrive economically,” said Governor Malloy. “As startups like ThinkitDrinkit grow and expand, they become the proving grounds for innovative ideas and the training grounds for future entrepreneurs, providing quality well-paying jobs with good benefits for Connecticut residents. That’s why we are highlighting ThinkitDrinkit, a company that has exceeded its job creation target and demonstrated that our programs are doing exactly what they were designed to do – give small businesses access to capital to expand and create jobs.”

In February, ThinkitDrinkit received an investment of \$225,000 through EXP to use as working capital and committed to creating 5 jobs. The company has since exceeded its job creation target by hiring 22 new employees, including seven previously unemployed veterans through STEP UP’s Unemployed Armed Forces Member program. Over the past year, ThinkitDrinkit has completed the initial phase of its corporate and brand development, launched a website and social media campaign, established its corporate offices at Hartford’s historic Colt Gateway complex and plans on opening its first retail operation in the center of Storrs in Mansfield early next year.

“ThinkitDrinkit is proud to be a part of Connecticut’s growing focus on genetic research by bringing affordable population-based health solutions to the retail market,” noted ThinkitDrinkit co-founder Wayne Gryk.

ThinkitDrinkit manufactures and distributes nutritional supplements for beverages that can be customized to address individual health needs. The company has also developed a nutrigenomics platform, and offers a line of health beverages that customers tailor to their individual demands based on gender, health, life stage, and performance goals. The company's core values and offerings are based on nutrigenomics, which is the science of understanding how nutrients interact with our genes and impact our health.

"EXP was specifically created to help companies like ThinkitDrinkit — a small operation with great plans, smart people, and big aspirations," said DECD Commissioner Catherine Smith. "The state is proud to support ThinkitDrinkit's expansion because it illustrates how the small companies of Connecticut are driving innovation in their respective fields, and in turn, fueling job growth and economic recovery for the entire state."

EXP was created as part of bipartisan Jobs Bill, passed during the 2011 special session on jobs, to encourage business expansion and job growth. The program, administered by the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), offers loans and matching grants to Connecticut companies with not more than 100 employees at the time of application. To date, EXP has provided nearly \$128 million to help 957 small businesses hire or retain more than 13,200 employees and fund capital investments.

"STEP UP is achieving what it was intended to do — getting unemployed people in Connecticut back to work in jobs that offer careers and helping companies to grow," said DOL Commissioner Sharon M. Palmer. "In addition to the new employees at ThinkitDrinkit, nearly 570 other Connecticut companies have taken part in the program and have hired more than 2,100 employees, which is good news for our economy and our workforce."

Administered by the state Department of Labor (DOL), STEP UP was also approved in 2011 as part of the bipartisan Jobs Bill and offers several hiring incentives to companies of 100 or fewer employees. The armed forces component of STEP UP, added in 2012 and expanded in 2013, focuses on assisting Connecticut employers with hiring and training unemployed veterans. Business and industry may qualify for these incentives regardless of their size.

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