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Press Inquiries:  
Vanessa Coria  
757-340-7425

[vanessa@themeridiangroup.com](mailto:vanessa@themeridiangroup.com)

**Downtown Sykesville, Md. Wins National Main Street Title**  
*\$25K "America's Main Streets" cash prize to fund COVID-19 crisis recovery program*

**VIRGINIA BEACH, Va.**—June 2, 2020—[Independent We Stand](#) is pleased to recognize [Sykesville Main Street](#) in Sykesville, Md. as the \$25,000 winner of the 2020 "[America's Main Streets](#)" contest. A record-setting 1.5 million total votes were cast by the public nationwide in the fifth annual contest — a 52 percent increase in voting over last year. The COVID-19 pandemic drove voters to support small businesses that would benefit from winning the contest. Sykesville garnered unprecedented votes and its nonprofit [Downtown Sykesville Connection](#) (DSC) now plans to dedicate prize winnings to the DSC's nonprofit activities and programs for the sustainability of its 44 downtown small businesses.

"Winning this contest is about more than just adding another accolade to our already wonderful list of accomplishments as a Main Street program. It allows us to provide even more support to our local business community in a time of dire need," explains Julie Della-Maria, executive director of Downtown Sykesville Connection. "Along with an existing microgrant program with the Town of Sykesville, we plan to use our cash prize to help our members get through the coronavirus crisis."

Planned initiatives earmarked for the cash prize include:

- Creating and marketing virtual "shop small" events.
- Assisting with retrofitting Main Street for social distancing shopping by creating outdoor waiting/dining plazas.
- Organizing and coordinating themed shopping events to include scavenger hunts, shopping raffles and art strolls.
- Creating and producing printed advertisements, radio ads and video commercials for downtown Sykesville shops, boutiques and restaurants.

"The hands-on approach the DSC is planning to support its small businesses and, in turn, its community during the COVID-19 crisis is a testament to the importance and impact America's Main Streets can have," says Bill Brunelle, co-founder of Independent We Stand. "A strong Main Street has a direct impact on the success and survival of independent businesses. Downtown Sykesville Connection is doing all the right things."



Sykesville is a quaint small town, home to 4,400 residents with a vibrant downtown area rich in history, art displays and annual events programmed by the DSC. Located along the Patapsco River, the former railway hub celebrates and preserves its rich history through attractions like the S&P Railway model train displays and the Little Sykes Railway Park. Sykesville is also a state and nationally dedicated Main Street Community.

As part of its ongoing mission to promote small businesses, Independent We Stand created the “America’s Main Streets” contest to promote the important role main streets play in building economic success for their communities.

The 2020 top 10 semifinalists in alphabetical order are:

- [Chattahoochee Main Street](#), Chattahoochee, Fla.
- [Downtown Bedford](#), Bedford, Pa.
- [Emporia Main Street, Inc.](#), Emporia, Kan.
- [Historic Downtown Hope](#), Hope, Ark.
- [Historic Downtown Snohomish Association](#), Snohomish, Wash.
- [Main Street Homer](#), Homer, La.
- [NewTown Macon](#), Macon, Ga.
- [Osborne Main Street](#), Osborne, Kan.
- [Public Square](#), Columbia, Ky.
- [Sykesville Main Street](#), Sykesville, Md.

**Additional contest prizes include:**

- STIHL Equipment Certificate for \$1,000 worth of STIHL equipment good at any STIHL Dealer in the U.S.
- Do it Best Corp. \$500 shopping spree
- Free One Day Downtown Assessment from *Flip This Town*
- Nationwide Marketing Group \$500 shopping spree
- PPG Paints \$500 shopping spree
- Public relations and social media recognition
- A special plaque for the winner to proudly display

**Presenting Sponsor:**

[STIHL Inc.](#), America’s [number-one selling brand](#) of gasoline-powered handheld outdoor power equipment\*, is the founding sponsor of Independent We Stand and the presenting sponsor of “America’s Main Streets” contest. The company follows a unique distribution strategy in the handheld outdoor power equipment industry, choosing never to sell products at big box stores, but instead remain loyal to its 9,000+ authorized local STIHL Dealers nationwide.

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# AMERICA'S MAIN STREETS

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## About Independent We Stand

[Independent We Stand](#) is a nationwide movement of independent small business owners whose mission is to inspire other small business owners to better understand and celebrate their locally owned status while educating consumers about the importance and strong economic benefits of supporting them. The Independent We Stand movement is sponsored by [STIHL Inc.](#) [STIHL products](#) are sold through more than 9,000 [authorized local STIHL Dealers](#) from coast to coast – not big box stores. Associate sponsors include [Nationwide Marketing Group](#), [PPG Paints](#) and [Do it Best Corp.](#)

*\*"Number one selling brand" is based on syndicated Irwin Broh Research as well as independent consumer research of 2009-2019 U.S. sales and market share data for the gasoline-powered handheld outdoor power equipment category combined sales to consumers and commercial landscapers.*

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