

products and services that were capable of export. So I think in the past, they haven't marketed properly or they didn't know about these trade missions. And the U.S. is our first and largest and logical trading partner.

MCMURDY: Well, who is participating in this particular event, then?

LEVER: There are about 125 different women business owners and representatives. Originally more than 400 applied to come on this trip, and these women represent all sectors across the country, almost every province is involved. And their businesses range from single consultant operations to major manufacturing operations.

MCMURDY: Well, how did you winnow out the applicants? How did you decide who would make the cut here?

LEVER: Well primarily, they had to be export-ready or almost export-ready, and they had to have a viable product and service that was suitable for the American market. Because remember, we are focusing on the American market. And primarily, the mid-Atlantic part of America. And they had to be quite established and ready to do business in the U.S.

MCMURDY: All right, Lori, over to you now. You're an entrepreneur with your own operation. What exactly are you expecting to get out of this trade trip?

LORI DONOVAN (Owner of First Step Inc.): Well, what was key for me in coming to this trade mission was the word export. My company, as Andrina's