



Committee Report

To: Warden Janice Jackson
Members of the Planning and Development Committee

From: Mark Paoli
Director of Planning and Development

Date: June 17, 2021

Re: Starter Company Plus Initiative Grant Recipients 2020

Staff Recommendation:

The “Starter Company Plus Initiative Grant Recipients 2020” report is for information.

Background:

The Business to Bruce program’s mandate is to inspire, attract, and support entrepreneurs. The program helps achieve this mandate through operating the Starter Company Plus Initiative, which provides free training, guidance, and mentorship to entrepreneurs to start their business in Bruce County, and the opportunity to earn a non-repayable grant of up to \$5,000. The grant funding is to be used towards the one-time start-up costs associated with starting a new business.

Starter Company Plus is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. The MEDJCT provides two areas of funding to Business to Bruce for Starter Company Plus - one to provide training, access to tools and learning resources, mentorship, etc.) and one to provide grant funding to entrepreneurs. The current 2019-2022 agreement between Business to Bruce and the MEDJCT provides funding for seven grants to be awarded to new business owners each fiscal year.

This past fiscal year (2020-2021) saw Business to Bruce award seven new entrepreneurs each with \$5,000 grants. The entrepreneurs were coached by the Business Development Coordinators, receiving assistance with business planning, sales forecasts, and cash flow statements, in addition to gaining access to free training, resources, and mentorship opportunities. With guidance from the Business Development Coordinators, the entrepreneurs were led through an analysis of their strengths and areas for improvement. This process helps to focus the necessary resources, training, and supports provided so that it is unique to the clients. Upon fulfilling the requirements listed in their individual learning plan, once they officially opened their business (started making sales), the entrepreneurs each received the \$5,000 grant funding.

Through this report we congratulate and recognize the Starter Company Plus recipients of the 2020-2021 Provincial fiscal year.

The 2020-2021 Starter Company Plus graduates were:

1. Amy Richards, [Divine Designs](#), Port Elgin
 - Designer Amy has developed a home-based business in Port Elgin to provide local businesses and residents with design services (ex. logos, visual graphics) and high-quality printing services (ex. cards, brochures, etc.).
2. Andrea Andrew, [Halo Health and Wellness](#), Lucknow
 - In addition to providing registered massage therapy for her clients, Andrea offers access to halotherapy, an infrared sauna, and Photobiomodulation. Halo Health and Wellness is occupying a commercial downtown space in Lucknow.
3. Shazad Ahmad, [Seahawk Water Sports](#), Wiarton
 - Shazad and his business partner Imran saw a need for kayak rentals in Georgian Bay and started Seahawk Water Sports. Based out of Wiarton, the business owners have goals to expand their rentals to include year-round equipment for all seasons and many hobbies.
4. Kara Kortegaard, [Ripley Physical Therapy and Wellness](#), Ripley
 - Kara, a registered occupational therapist, and her husband, Kyle, a physical therapist, worked together to start their business in Ripley. Providing a variety of physical therapy treatments, they have a growing client base in the area.
5. Len Covington, Colts Chainsaw Art the Cowboy Carver, Ripley
 - Len, the “cowboy carver” is a creative artist who uses chainsaws to make beautiful, detailed, authentic wood carvings for his clients. He intends to teach carving classes in the future.
6. Pablo Chavarria, [Costa Motor Powersports](#), Port Elgin
 - Pablo is a licensed marine, motorcycle, and ATV mechanic, who immigrated from Costa Rica and started his business, Costa Motor Powersports in Port Elgin. He provides his niche services to his adventuresome customers.
7. Rebecca Burns, [Bruce Village Chiropractic](#), Port Elgin
 - Bruce Village Chiropractic provides chiropractic treatments to all clients, with a focus target market of pregnant and postpartum persons. Promoting a safe and welcoming space for LGBT2SQ+ patients, Dr. Burns is currently operating out of a downtown Port Elgin location, and has long-term goals to build a healing ‘village’ (hub).

The Starter Company Plus Initiative is entering its third year of the current 2019-2022 agreement with the MEDJCT. Since 2019, a total of 14 entrepreneurs started 14 new businesses in Bruce County with the support of this initiative. The 2021-2022 fiscal year will provide another seven (7) entrepreneurs with supports and access to grant funding.

Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:

There are no financial, staffing, legal or IT considerations associated with this report.

The Starter Company Plus initiative is administered through an agreement with the Province of Ontario' Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. Bruce County receives \$35,000 funding per fiscal year to award in grants.

Interdepartmental Consultation:

None.

Link to Strategic Goals and Elements:**Goal #2: Leverage Technology**

Element C: Effective, understandable communication (web based and social media)

Goal #3: Find creative new ways to engage our public.

Element C: Make the County fully accessible to the people through access to information.

Element D: Expand Bruce County promotions in the schools.

Goal #7: Stimulate and reward innovation and economic development.

Element B: Develop a single tier information portal - connect with innovators and new businesses.

Element C: Create local small business incubation and innovation center for local economic development.

Element D: Vocally support all industry in Bruce County.

Element F: Try small and then go BIG - act on ideas and take calculated risks.

Report Author:

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Departmental Approval:

Mark Paoli
Director, Planning and Development

Approved for Submission:

Sandra Datars Bere
Chief Administrative Officer