

News Release

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More than \$4.3M in Small Business Restart Program Dollars for COVID-19 Economic Recovery Efforts

NORTHWEST LOWER, MI – Through the CARES Act and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), over \$4.3 million in Michigan Small Business Restart Program dollars is being provided to many Northwest Michigan small businesses as they continue to work to recover from the COVID-19.

“Over the past six months, small business owners who have spent their entire lives building their businesses have made incredible sacrifices to protect their communities and our brave frontline workers from COVID-19. I know it hasn’t been easy, which is why we’re working around the clock to provide support for our small business owners. The Michigan Small Business Restart Program is providing much-needed relief to those small businesses and nonprofits hardest hit by the impact of COVID-19 as they work to recover from the pandemic,” said Governor Gretchen Whitmer. “This program puts federal funding to work for Michigan’s small businesses and builds on additional COVID-19 business relief efforts offered by the MEDC to create a strong foundation for Michigan’s long-term economic recovery.”

The Northwest Small Business Restart Fund Collaborative consisting of Networks Northwest, Northern Lakes Economic Alliance, Northwest Michigan Works!, Northwest Small Business Development Center, Traverse Connect, Alliance for Economic Success, and Manistee Area Chamber of Commerce reviewed over 1,000 applications for grants up to \$20,000. The Collaborative was able to award grants to 304 small businesses and nonprofits across Northwest Michigan. Over 42% of the dollars went to women, minority, or veteran owned companies. A complete list of awardees in the region and state can be found at: nwm.org/grants

An objective review of all applications included criteria set forth by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, including size of business, COVID-19 impact, and previous profitability. The local scoring teams also considered the historical/cultural significance of some organizations as well as ensuring all counties in the region had awarded businesses.

“I am very proud of the collaborative, yet sobering work of this group of economic development agencies and professionals from throughout the region,” said Matt McCauley, CEO of Networks Northwest. “We are each tremendous advocates for our communities and know that these dollars will be meaningful to many area employers. We will continue to be an advocate for area companies impacted by this severe economic disruption and fully anticipate more resources to assist in the future as a result.”

For more information on resources for businesses affected by COVID-19, please visit michiganbusiness.org/COVID19

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NOTE to Media: Images are oftentimes available upon request by e-mailing Dan Boss at dan.boss@networksnorthwest.org and stating preferences for resolution (300 dpi?), file format (.tif? .jpg?) and file size (1MB or less?). Or, phone (231) 929-5047. Check our online Media Room at: networksnorthwest.org/media

Founded in 1974, Networks Northwest facilitates and manages various programs and services for the 10 county region. These programs include Northwest Michigan Works, Small Business Development Center, Procurement Technical Assistance Center, various business services, and many different regional planning initiatives in response to our communities’ requests and needs. You will see the broad spectrum of workforce, business and community services Networks Northwest offers if you visit our web site, networksnorthwest.org

Networks Northwest's member counties are: Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford.