

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Contact: Annie Olds
Regional Director, Northwest MI-SBDC
231-929-5091
annie.olds@networksnorthwest.org

Business Development Certificate Relaunched

NORTHWEST LOWER, MI – Together in partnership, the teams at the Northwest Michigan Small Business Development Center (MI-SBDC) and Northwestern Michigan College’s Extended Educational Services (EES) are breathing new life into an important program and relaunching the Business Development Certificate. The certificate program is geared toward entrepreneurs ready to take the plunge into business ownership, or those who have recently already started their business but realized quickly that there are a lot of moving parts with which they could use guidance. This partnership was made possible by way of CARES Act funds that were awarded to the Northwest MI-SBDC as a means of program development for small business owners either in the name of training, hiring contractors to add consulting capacity, or hiring service vendors to support small business owners in this trying year.

“There was no shortage of pop-up learning opportunities that presented themselves in the wake of Covid-19 and we wanted to reposition a valuable program that will provide early-stage entrepreneurs the foundational information that they need to remain successful for the long haul,” said Annie Olds, Northwest MI-SBDC Regional Director at Networks Northwest. “We’ve not seen a prolonged slowdown in the demand for or desire of individuals to become small business owners despite the tumultuous times all small business owners have been confronted with in 2020; however, the entrepreneurial ecosystem in which these early-stage or immature companies are operating has become much trickier to navigate and we know that education and appropriate resources for these business owners are critical.”

The Business Development Certificate is a continuing education opportunity for busy business owners looking to brush up their skills in financial management, marketing, customer service, and general business start-up. Successful completion of the certificate program requires eight core classes and four elective classes that business owners can select. Based on the electives chosen, participants can expect to receive roughly forty hours of education ranging in total cost of \$700-1,200 that will equip them with the knowledge and resources needed to confidently begin an exciting business endeavor. Financial assistance is available for eligible business owners. To apply for or let your interest be known in obtaining NMC’s Business Development Certificate, contact Elizabeth at NMC Extended Educational Services at (231) 995-1705.

(MORE)

"The atmosphere of collaboration this year is tremendous; and it's leading to great partnerships in the greater Grand Traverse area," said Laura Matchett, Director of Extended Educational Services with NMC. "Extended Education is pleased to be working with the Northwest MI-SBDC on this important certificate program. Our small businesses are so much of what make this area unique and special. In the midst of this pandemic, it is imperative to NMC that we collaborate within our community to produce programming that supports and encourages area businesses and aspiring business owners to keep their visions and hopes thriving by providing practical instruction and resources."

Upcoming winter courses (that count toward certificate requirements) include:

- Biz Start 101
- Essentials of Customer Service
- Cybersecurity: Small Business, Big Threat
- Get Found on Google Search and Maps
- Accounting & Finance for Non-Financial Managers
- Introduction to QuickBooks/QuickBooks Pro 2020

For more information on the certificate and its requirements, visit our website nmc.edu/biz-dev. Classes will be facilitated by NMC EES faculty and staff, MI-SBDC Business Consultants, as well as many other regional partners.

About Michigan SBDC

The Michigan Small Business Development Center (MI-SBDC) provides expert assistance at no cost to entrepreneurs looking to start or grow a business. The Northwest Michigan Regional Center is hosted by Networks Northwest and serves the ten-county region including Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford counties. For more information, go to nwm.org/sbdc.

The Michigan SBDC State Lead Center is located at Grand Valley State University, Seidman College of Business, in Grand Rapids. Michigan small business owners may access the Michigan SBDC services by contacting 616-331-7480 or SDBCMichigan.org.

NOTE to Media: Images are oftentimes available upon request by e-mailing Dan Boss at dan.boss@networksnorthwest.org and stating preferences for resolution, file format, and file size. 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 website, networksnorthwest.org

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