

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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\$2,375,000 in Small Business Survival Grants Awarded

NORTHWEST LOWER, MI – Through the Michigan Strategic Fund and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), \$2,375,000 in Michigan Small Business Survival Grant Program dollars is being provided to many Northwest Michigan small businesses that experienced a significant financial hardship due to the COVID-19 emergency “gatherings and face mask order” issued by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in December 2020.

“The Michigan Small Business Survival Program is providing significant support to small businesses helping to get them through this critical time and on the path to economic recovery,” said Josh Hundt, Chief Business Development Officer and Executive Vice President at the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. “We are thankful for the efforts of Networks Northwest and other northern Michigan economic development organizations, who worked swiftly and diligently to deliver these vital financial resources within their region and create a path toward economic recovery for small businesses in Michigan.”

The Northwest Small Business Survival Grant 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 nearly 800 applications for grants up to \$20,000. The Collaborative was able to award grants to 181 small businesses and nonprofits across Northwest Michigan with an average amount of \$13,122.

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

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Networks Northwest and Northwest Michigan Works! are supported by the State of Michigan and are proud partners of the American Job Center Network. Projects may be funded with the authorized and appropriate use of federal funds. Contact Networks Northwest for additional information. Equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and service are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Individuals with speech or hearing impairments may call the Michigan Relay Center by dialing 711.

“Every organization has been impacted in one way or another by COVID-19 in the last 10 months,” said Matt McCauley, CEO of Networks Northwest. “However, some businesses have been harder hit than others, specifically those who had to limit their operations based on most recent DHHS orders. These dollars are a much needed boost for some of our area’s employers, but the need by our business community still exceeds what any one program can provide. I look forward to the near term where businesses can hopefully resume regular operations and begin to recover, rebuild, and thrive again.”

To see the full list of businesses in Northwest Michigan that received Survival Grants, visit nwm.org/grants.

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 emailing 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 web site, networksnorthwest.org

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