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PROGRAM



Powered by The Advancement Foundation

The 8th Annual GRADUATION & AWARDS CEREMONY



Check Out Our Latest Efforts to IGNITE Next Level Business Growth



Virginia Innovation Collective is Focused on Key Factors that Impact Economic Growth and Prosperity for our Region

1. Increase gross domestic product (value of all goods and services produced within the US in a year).

Strategy: Identify new and existing value added products, promote innovations, and grow manufacturing.



2. Increase businesses access to capital resources to grow companies.



Strategy: Accelerate business growth through training, industry expertise, preparation, documented proof of concept, attract investment, and access to lending.

3. Increase business spending through confident business growth models.

Strategy: Scale companies by limiting barriers to commercialization, manufacturing, and distribution support.

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The Boutique & Men's Room Uptown is a small town store with a big city heart. Bringing affordable and brand named fashions to our hometown. Specializing in small quality quantities to create a unique look for everyone. Find us on Facebook or Instagram @theboutiqueuptown & @themensroomuptown or on our websites.



The Lovely Exchange, LLC aims to create genuine connection with each individual client by weaving their personal or professional journey through life's transitions into the transformative work of interior decorating as well as content writing. These services not only provide well-crafted stories or well-decorated spaces to be seen with the eyes, but more importantly, to be felt with the heart.

“The Gauntlet was an incredible experience that challenged me to grow my business and allowed me to meet other like-minded hard-working entrepreneurs in the region.”
Duncan Monroe, Monicker Printing



Treehouse Tavern is a new restaurant and bar opening on Bent Mountain in Roanoke, Virginia. The family owned restaurant will cater to the immediate local community, the extended Roanoke area, and tourists traveling through the Blue Ridge. Our menu will feature traditional bar and grill fare along with wood-fired pizza, fresh BBQ, and seasonal features.



Unique Styles & Designs Floral Boutique is located in uptown Martinsville operating as Unique Styles & Designs Floral Boutique. The boutique is a full-service flower shop that offers a variety of florals as well as offer event and floral designs for weddings, baby showers, corporate events, and more.



Wood WoRx Wellness is focused on helping our community look, feel, and be better by offering aesthetic services, IV vitamin therapies, and nutritional counseling. Paula Wood, a Nurse Practitioner, and her husband Shane have created a new business located in the historic district of Martinsville, VA.

Dear Friends

The launch of the GAUNTLET program 8 years ago was motivated by the fact that entrepreneurship is a key driver of economic development for communities and a source of wealth for citizens. Yet, because entrepreneurship is driven by access to resources (Hurst, 2004) many early entrepreneurs and innovations are left with no clear pathway for business growth.

The GAUNTLET has provided over 800 entrepreneurs with comprehensive business development training, a network of 200+ mentors, the comradery of fellow innovators, and access to over \$1.8 million in extraordinary resources.

The program provides numerous opportunities for resources agencies, higher education, and corporations to exercise their collaborative muscle to create mutual wins for communities across the Roanoke Valley, Shenandoah Valley, and Southside.

Since the GAUNTLET classes began in February, our confident graduates have purchased \$760,000 in commercial real estate. Over the next 24 months, they will spend \$502,000 in leasing commercial property, they will create 263 new full time jobs and create revenues of \$3,382,324.

At the end of the day, our communities are far better for having fostered diverse business development. Whether scalable high growth companies or Main Street enterprises, the vibrant quality of life, a robust and sustainable economy are all outcomes of this investment in business development.

Addressing the top needs of entrepreneurs is extremely manageable when coordinated into pathways for learning, for exchanging experiences, and leveraging what each of you can bring to the table to help them. Take a look at the European folk story “Stone Soup.”

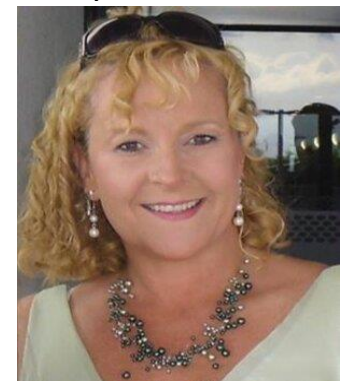
This year over \$450,000 in grants, in-kind services, and expertise has been provided to the GAUNTLET participants. Moreover, numerous connections, synergistic partnerships, and collaborations have been brought to bear for the sake of business growth.

The GAUNTLET Business Program and Competition™ is powered by the Advancement Foundation, a nonprofit founded in 2007, which serves as a catalyst to attract our region’s assets but it is the commitment of partner agencies, economic developers, sponsors, donors, grantors, GAUNTLET alumni, mentors, and regional innovators that make this all possible. Thank you!

Best Regards,

Annette

Annette Patterson, President
The Advancement Foundation



Thank you to our partnering localities and organizations!



“Please keep this program going for the long-haul. This is moving the needle for the entire Commonwealth of Virginia. You are literally making a difference in thousands of lives by doing what you do. We are forever grateful!”
 Josh Blanca, Backspace Coffee



Sweet Bakeology goodies are all made from scratch with as many locally sourced products as possible. I bake wedding cakes, birthday cakes, all occasion cakes, dessert type items, and snack type items. As well as provide gluten-free options and sugar-free/keto options.



Sycamore Station & Sycamore School is a location focused on building a sustainable community in Roanoke County. We do this by connecting people to environmentally-friendly food and retail offerings alongside a non-profit nature center, Sycamore School, that focuses on sparking wonder and inspiration through education about the natural environment.



The Barrow Center

The Barrow Center is a non-profit organization that will specifically serve special needs children. We will provide daycare, respite care, and in house therapies for special needs children. This center will give back to our community by not only providing a much needed resource by reducing lost wages, travel time, and providing the opportunity for parents to return to work knowing their child is cared for safely by experienced staff.



The Beeve: Soda and Souvenirs is going to be a soda, ice cream, and gift shop in downtown Buena Vista. We hope to fill the need in the community for a fun, energetic environment with sweet treats and fun gifts. Our goal is to bring new life into the community as well as foster pride and love for the City of Buena Vista through area-specific merchandise and gifts designed by local artists.



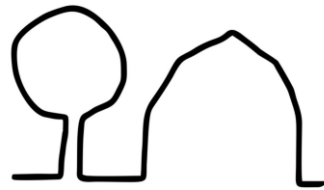
The Bigelow Leadership Group, LLC is a woman-owned, small business in Goochland County that serves to help people unlock their potential. The Bigelow Leadership Group is a leadership development firm that provides leadership training and coaching services to organizations and professionals.



Sarah Madeline Art creates paintings and products focused on faith, family, and Christ to help bring more light, joy, and hope into the homes of others. We offer art through a range of products and services such as commissions, original paintings, prints, stickers, greeting cards, apparel, and more. With almost three years in business, Sarah Madeline Art aims to bring light, joy, inspiration, and hope to others through art and creative expression.



Scenic Ridge Farm, LLC is a local farm-to-table specializing in pasture-raised Berkshire Pork. Our goal is to bridge a connection from farmer to consumer, reconnecting people with their food sources. In addition to pasture-raised Berkshire pork, we offer grass-fed beef and free-range eggs.



Slainte Ranch, LLC is an event venue where every detail matters. Fabulously planned...Remembered Always. We are budget friendly high quality event center.



Smoked Greens is a private social club, where members can freely co since their own personal cannabis in a safe, social environment. Tiphaney Helm and Shaunita Edwards hope to bring a necessity to the cannibals community that's enjoyable and relaxing, while building lasting relationships within the community sharing the arts, community engagement, and cannabis education.



Space Rabbit Coffee is a coffee business in southwest Virginia. We roast our own coffee in the New River Valley. We currently operate as a mobile coffee trailer only, serving Roanoke and the NRV, but our plan is to also open a drive-thru-only location this summer. We focus on a creative and customizable menu and top-notch customer service.

Dear Entrepreneurs, Mentors, Sponsors, and Friends,

More than 150 entrepreneurs made the bold step this year to realize their dreams, and we thank you for empowering this drive toward economic growth by being a part of this 8th Annual GAUNTLET Awards Ceremony.

The Advancement Foundation's (TAF) vision to accelerate economic prosperity and equality for diverse entrepreneurs across diverse communities is fueled by this annual business program and competition – Virginia's largest! This vision calls us to create bold opportunities that ignited innovation and strategic investment in business development. TAF is grateful to key partners who share our vision for thriving communities such as our lead sponsor State Farm who has committed to grow the program with both critical financial support and the incredible volunteerism of its agents across the region.

The 2022 GAUNTLET class participants made a true commitment to explore their business concept and their own fortitude as we continue to navigate the global COVID pandemic. They attended classes, conducted customer discovery interviews, and learned to make the case for their business concepts. Likewise, more than 250 mentor network, faculty members, community leaders, resource agencies, institutions of higher education, chambers, SBDC, SCORE, and more than 60 corporation/individual donors joined forces for the heavy lift of providing awards, teaching business concepts, and sharing knowledge and honest feedback to ensure the GAUNTLET program's success.

We are grateful to each of you for your commitment to the GAUNTLET program. We look forward to recognizing the hard work and dedication of our GAUNTLET 2022 Alumni.

Becky

Becky Freemal, Board Chair
The Advancement Foundation





Botetourt / Roanoke Networking Event



IMPACT of GAUNTLET 2022

- 153 Entrepreneurs Enrolled
- 68 Businesses Advanced to the Competition
- 263 Full Time Jobs (24 months)
- 243 Part Time Jobs (24 months)
- \$ 502,900 New Leases secured (24 months)
- \$ 760,000 New Real Estate Purchased
- \$ 450,000 Direct benefits to entrepreneurs; Mentors, In-kind and Capital investment
- \$3,382,324 Projected Revenues (18 months)



Oya Construction, LLC is the only local company that focuses on properly installing sediment control measures to keep sites in compliance with regulations while keeping neighbors happy. Storm-water runoff is the largest source of water pollution, with construction site runoff being a big contributor.



Perfectly Polished Mobile Nail Service is Botetourt County's first mobile nail service. We provide manicures and pedicures in the comfort of your own home. We have a beautifully diverse clientele and have been blessed to work with clients ranging in ages from 5 to 101. Katie, the owner and licensed nail technician, is a lifelong resident of Botetourt County.



Renewal Brewing is a brewpub opening in uptown Martinsville with amazing craft beer, hand-tossed pizza, and fun live entertainment. We will be welcoming customers for a pint and a bite with a highly trained staff and friendly atmosphere.



Rudy's Girl Media is a multimedia content development company based in Martinsville, Virginia. She received a bachelor's degree from Guilford College, a master's degree from Cornell University, and a decade of hands-on entertainment industry experience in New York and Los Angeles. Natalie's local productions include two short films *Sell* (2019) and *Stolen Crowns* (2020) and a web-based reality series about rural entrepreneurship called *Hometown Hustle* (2021).



Rylor & Co. Designs was established as a small family business. The name of the company is derived from combining Ryan and Taylor's names. The company component of their name involves the family and friends who help make their dream a reality. We design and manufacture handmade wooden home décor products. We perform custom designs and strive to make customer service one of our top priorities.



Made in Martinsville is a gallery, gift, and general store, showcasing the best products from our local artists, makers, and producers. Forrest has spent over three decades working for small businesses in a variety of industries, holding job titles including: bookkeeper, accountant, operations manager, and general manager.



Max Meadows Lavender Farm, LLC in Halifax County, Virginia provides the perfect spot for our family owned lavender business. Breathe deeply, relax, and unwind with all of our small batch, hand crafted bath and body products made on our farm. Spend the day enjoying the farm and flowers, letting nature soothe your soul.



Meches Beauty is a bilingual beauty salon located in uptown Martinsville, Virginia. We specialize in the natural and artificial enhancements of lashes and brows. Our goal is to help enhance our clients natural beauty and boost self esteem.

“I enjoyed the diversity of presenters and the knowledge they shared. It was really cool to hear from entrepreneurs from different industries. I really appreciate all the entrepreneurs who invested time from their busy schedules to be mentors or speakers, or provide extra credit workshops. They really helped make this a robust program. THANK YOU also to the Advancement Foundation staff for all the hard work you do on the back end to make this program happen.”

Brittany Bonner, Buffalo Mountain Adventures, LLC



OT Berries and Blooms is a unique business that combines access to healthy food, outdoor recreation, and professional occupational therapy to its clients. We seek to provide a relaxing outdoor atmosphere encouraging learning, blueberry picking, wildflower cutting, and a multitude of sensory and self-regulation therapies for OT clients.

Meet Our Network of Mentors, Advisors, Judges & Faculty!

Thank you to these individuals who share their time and expertise to entrepreneurs.

Kathleen All	David Crosier	Jamie Goodin	Angie Lewis	Annetter Patterson	Marshall Stanely
Heather Alto	Andrew Crofts	Andrew Gore	Bob Lewis	Patrick Patterson	Scott Steele
Stephen Ambruzs	Bill Custer	Kelly Green	Jill Loope	Missy Paxton	Eric Stelter
Noel Anderson	Debbie Custer	Bradley Greenway	Mark Lucas	Jason Peters	Brad Stephens
Luke April	Steve Dalton	Marie Greer	Rachel Lucas	Pete Peters	Stacy Stevens
Drew Arney	Jenefer Davies	Janice Gregory	Teresa Lyons	Bill Philips	Sabrina Stone
Mott Atherholt	Nate Day	Alicia Grubb	Greg Madsen	Julie Phillips	Wayne Strickland
Martha Atherholt	Kathy Deacon	Siobhan Haines	Marcia Major	Carrie Poff	JD Sutphin
Linda Bailey	Kelly Dean	Chris Hamm	Andre Majors	John Powell	Howard Swank
Pam Bailey	Dawn Dehart	Teresa Hammond	Leo Malcahy	Leo Priddy	Lindsey Swank
Steve Baker	Jimmy Delgado	Bruce Harrison	Pat Malone	Jim Privetera	Lynn Swann
Bill Baldwin	Tamara Dennis	Holly Hart	Cameka Manns	Dave Prosser	Amanda Tackett
Ingrid Barber	Ramon A. Diaz Toledo	Jonathan Hart	Richard Mansell	Spencer Pugh	Tom Tanner
Chasity Barbour	Cheryl Dillon	Laurie Hart	Gene Maranno	Whitney Pugh	Jonathan Tarris
Dustin Bays	Willia Dixon	Laurie Hartwell	Joe Martin	John Rainone	Aaron Taylor
Amanda Bell	Elda Downey	David Hawkins	Pam Martin	Laura Rainone	Philip Thompkins
Beth Bell	Tina Dressler	Mark Henderson	Steve Martin	Kristina Ramsey	Barry Thompson
Bobby Berkstresser	Allyson Davoll Cartwright	Patrick Henderson	Anna Matheny	Sam Rasoul	Bryan Thompson
Traci Bildo	Kimberly Eakin	Teffany Henderson	Bruce Mayer	Sandy Ratliff	Matt Thompson
Chelsey Blake	Scott Easter	Chris Henson	John Mays	Steve Redden	Rachel Thompson
Cody Blankenship	Marj Easterling	Brent Hershey	Ed McArdle	Kevin Reeder	Bryan Thornhill
Austin Bousman	Alan Eberle	Getra Hines Selph	Scot McCarthy	Kristen Reimer	David Tickner
Bob Broyden	Mountain Edge	Melinda Hinkle	Mark McCaskill	Jesse Reynolds	Timothy Tinger
Lisa Broyden	Jennifer Eddy	Alexis Perry Hodnett	Lauren McCaughrin	Lisa Richards	Philip Tompkins
Jennifer Broyden	Peter Edwards	Emory Holmggaard	Julie McClellan	Wanda Richards	Juan Toress
Stacey Brugh	Amanda Ellinger	Martha Hooker	Terri McClung	Chris Riha	Cherly Tucker
Levi Buck	Tom England	Erin Huffman	Lindsey McClure	Tom Roberts	Kelly Turner
Darlene Burchum	Heather Fay	Pamela Irvine	Theresa McCoy	David Robertson	Richard Turner
Jodi Burgess	Lisa Fenderson	Heather Jackson	Ken McFadyen	Jeff Robertson	Rob Turner
Chet Butler	Brandy Flint	Douglas Jackson	Kathy McLeod	Joe Rogers	Dale Turner
Jonathan Buttram	Shannon Fogus	Lois James	Denise Membreno	Jimmy Russell	Jason Turner
Jeremy Butterfield	Cynthia Forbes	Scott Jenkins	Paul Menschner	Abrina Schnurman	Doloris Vest
Brandon Caldwell	Bethany Fresh	Aisha Johnson	Anne Millehan	Keith Schult	Asher Walker
Luke Campbell	Amanda Forrester	Gail Johnson	Chance Miller	Chad Scott	Joyce Waugh
Katheen Carr	Allen Foster	Jim Jones	Stevii Mills	Roger Scott	Charles Whiting
Megan Carter	Lynda Foster	Sara Beth Jones	Tamara Mills	Tammy Scruggs	Jack Wilkinson
Tyler Carter	Catherine Fox	Wendy Jones	Jamal Milner	Getra Selph	Paula Williams
Lynn Chapman	Gavin Fox	Jim Jones	Candace Monaghan	Tom Sibold	Kelly Willis
Angie Chewing	Marty Francis	Greg Keene	MacKenzie Moore	Aimee Simmons	Brian Wilson
Amanda Christiansen	Patrick Franco	Bridgett Kidd	Casey Morgan	Regina Sink	Bill Wilson
Jean Clark	John Franson	Carl Knoblock	Nicholas Morgan	Lisa Sink	Sheri Winesett
Shelia Clark	Becky Freemal	Simone Knowles	Josh Morris	Judith Sivonda	Judy Wood
Bob Clement	Bethany Fresh	Crystal Knuttgen	Jill Morris	Steven Smith	Melissa Woodson
Phillip Clements	Aaron Garland	Keith Krzeminski	Leo Mulcahy	Dustin Smith	Don Woodward
Siobhan Cline	Beth Garrett	Ryan LaFountain	Bob Mullen	Stuart Smith	Ben Worth
Fonda Coffey	Kenny Garrett	River Laker	Paul Murphy	John Smith	Clark Worthy
Chris Conner	Nate Gay	Ken Lanford	Stephen Niamke	Jerry Smith	Yanez Xochitl
John Conner	Frank Giannini	Susan Larkin	Daryanne Neilson	Matthew Snare	Jonathan Young
Kathryn Conner	Steve Goad	Gary Larrowe	Clay Nichols	Cindy Snider	Chad Young
Micken Cowden	Laura Godfrey	Mary Beth Layman	Betty Noel	Lisa Soltis	Derrick Ziglar
Dan Coy	Ramain Gohar	Betsy Lee	Savanah Oakes	Mary Katherine Stahl	Mary Zirkle
Todd Creasy	Pam Golden	Rebecca Leverett	Kat Pascal	Caroline Stanfill	

“My mentor Kimberly Eakin is extraordinary. She shared her knowledge, enthusiasm, and support with me without reservation. I would not be as sure-footed as I am in launching my business as I am now without Kimberly.”
Jennifer Bigelow, The Bigelow Leadership Group LLC

Meet Our 2022 Entrepreneurs!

Jonathon Aldridge	Traci Crigger	Megan Haywood	Juan Motley	Judith Sivonda
Herbert Atwell	Austin Criss	Tiphane Helm	Morgan Myers	Valerie Stanton
Carolyn Avalos	Michael Daroshefski	Julia Hendrix	Mary Beth Noonan	Ean Steidel
Kayleigh Baliles	Kelly Delroy	Juanita Hill	Mason Owen	Carl Steinhart
Sierra Barrow	Mylan Do	Kate Hinderer	Margaret Pace	Linda Leigh Strelka
Emily Beavers	Taylor Dowe	Natalie Hodge	Lisa Pedigo	Laura Stump
Heather Biagi	Kristi Dressler	Christi Hodges	Lauren Pittard	Brent Styler
Jennifer Bigelow	Cynthia Edgerton	Chad Holt	Harley Porter	Genevieve Sylla
Josh Blancas	Matthew Estes	Marthe Honts	Venena Preston	Meaghan Tate
Jeff Bland	Jay Ezelle	Melanie Howard	Ashleigh Pritchard	Sarah Taylor
Erin Boettcher	Michael Fitzgerald	Ashley Ingram	Ana Rash (Vargas)	Richard Taylor
Cherri Boitnott	Forrest Forschmiedt	Thomas Jernigan	Lindsey Ratcliffe	Shane Tudor
Catherine Bolling	John Fredrick	Tanya Jones-Harrison	Steve Redden	Jamie Walker
Brittany Bonner	Jacob Galbraith	Alexander Kassebaum	Leigh Remington	Erica Way
Frank Boxley	Sarah Gardner	Andrea Leonard	Telesa Reynolds	Natalie Weare
Jasmine Bray	Thamara Giampaolo	Jeremy Lorton	Wanda Richards	Lydia Weldon
Susan Brown	Abraham Gonzalez	Stephen Lowe	Lauren Riddle	Madeleine Wells
Emma Leigh Buffington	Loronia Gravely	Genny Luedtke	Chris Rill	Rachel Williams
R Nadean Carson	Kenya Gravely	Lee Markham	Shatera Robertson	Cassie Wilson
Quincy Caveness	Kathryn M Habib	Tameisha Mason	Alicia Rogers	Katherine Wirtanen
Jess Chattin	DeShanta Hairston	YUMiKO Masua	Anastasia Roseberry	Shane Wood
Shanna Clark	Chanitlla Hairston	Lee Anne Mayhew	Sebrina Ruth-Cooper	Deshawn Wooding
Michael Clark	Jacob Hamilton	Bryn McDaniel	Michael Scales	Jim Woods
Kirk Cotter	Xavier Harris	Duncan Monroe	Natalie Schneider	Tova Yellock
Jessica Creasy	Chloe Hart	Mercedes Moreno	Lisa Sink	



Kind Baking Company is a small batch bakery located in the Roanoke Valley and focuses on sourcing local ingredients and produce by supporting local farmers and growers in Southwest Virginia. We offer family recipes that prioritize these local and home-grown ingredients and sincerely care about the impact of local support on our communities.



Laurel Lynn Designs' pieces are created using exquisite, hand-picked gemstones paired with beautiful sterling silver to create unforgettable eye-catching pieces for anyone wishing to show their individuality and style. All our pieces are one-of-a-kind with the gemstone color and shape as the major design influence.



Love.dee Creations is a home-based business specializing in handmade woodworking and laser engraved items. Love.dee Creations sells products in-person, at events, and through online sales channels. Products range from tables to cutting boards to unique memorial pieces on a custom basis.



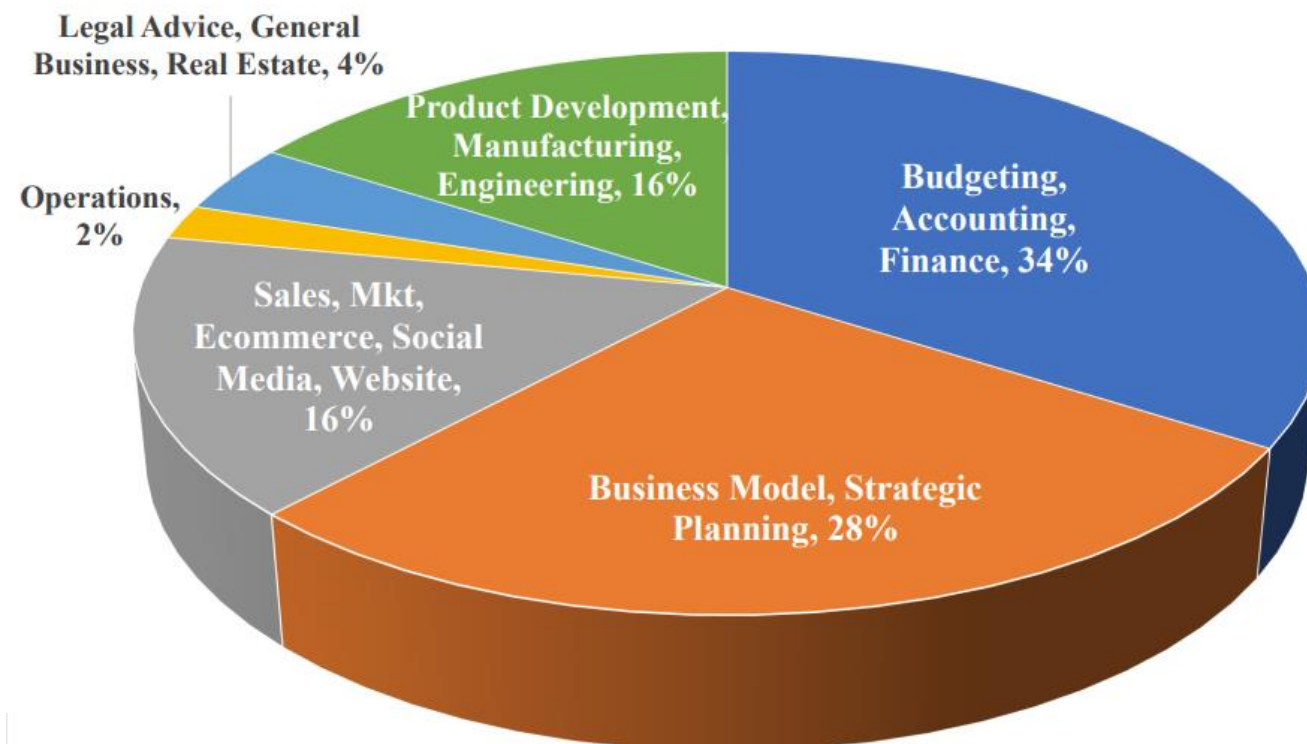
LTL Trichology Clinic's mission is to help re-establish hope and confidence back to each client that has been diagnosed with alopecia, hair loss, hair thinning. I will start by renewing your mind from inside out to force good health habits. What you put in your body is what come out of your scalp.



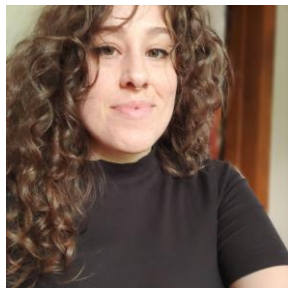
Luna Fe, LLC is a marketing item and customizable gift shop. With the help & support of my family we have created a living, breathing version of my passion for creating things. I am so very proud of what we have built and the direction that we are headed.



2022 Program Participants Top Needs



"Thank you all for the hard work and dedication to make this program a success and so full of useful business tips and information. Thank you for believing in each of our businesses and encouraging us to do the work to see our plans through!"
DeShanta Hairston, Books and Crannies



J'ing Hendrix Art is a contemporary artist based out of Roanoke, Virginia. I specialize in acrylic painting, poetry, mixed media, and graphic design. I create colorful art for the undomesticated heart!

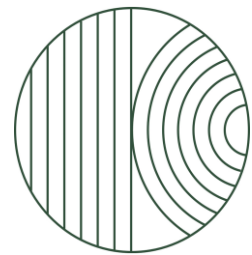


Jazzy's Soul Food Catering, LLC is a soul food catering company with a mission to serve the community with delicious soul food and give work opportunities to less fortunate and local single mothers.



Jess Chatten Virtual Assistant Services specialty is providing quality management services with joy, sincerity, authenticity, and honesty.

“So grateful for all the wonderful experiences shared and how honest and raw everyone in the class was! What a relief to not have to be perfect and feel comfortable enough to truly learn amidst people I look up to. Thank you!”
Madeliene Wells, The BeeVe



Kenkashi Microbes brews liquid microbial concentrates for use on soil, plants, and compost, for soil health and plant resiliency. Our mission is to build positive connections between humanity, our actions, and the microbial ecosystem, using traditional and natural techniques.

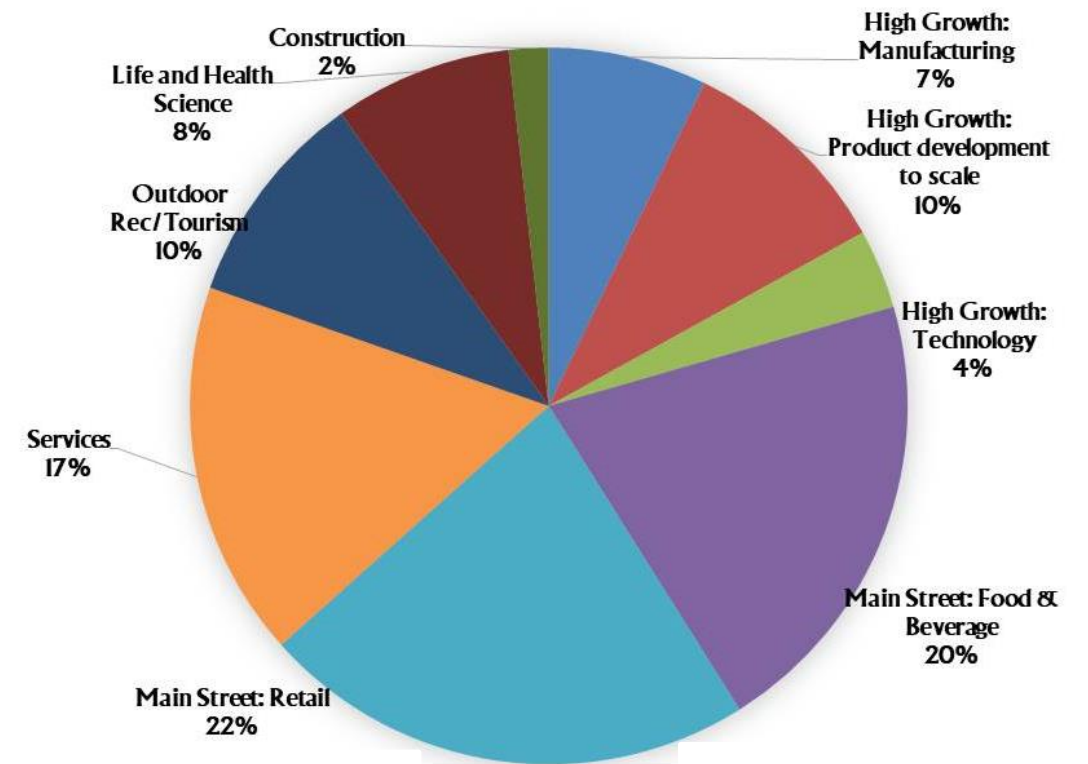


Kidable Therapy provides pediatric occupational therapy services in the comfort of your family's home. Our therapists use fun, realistic strategies to help children develop the sensory, motor, social-emotional, and/or cognitive skills required to overcome any challenges they may experience throughout the day.



Bedford Networking Event

Industry Type - Gauntlet 2022



“This program was so much more than I thought it was going to be. It was confidence, skills, laughter and connections. The entire program was so great, and I got so much information each week! Thank you for the time and effort that you put into this program.”
Nadean Carson, Oya Construction, LLC

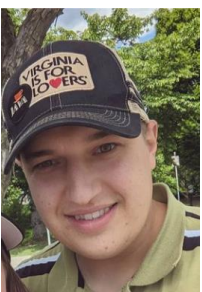
“You provided an invaluable experience for which I am very grateful to have participated in.”
Jacob Galbraith, Asher's Coffee Beans



Uptown Martinsville Networking Event



Ali's Sweet Shoppe/Bath and Body Treats sells natural hand-crafted bath & body products while also providing mobile lash services. We go to women where they are instead of women coming to us.



Asher's Coffee Beans started in October 2020 to provide fresh and locally roasted coffee to the Roanoke area and beyond. Asher's offers over 17 different craft coffee blends in compostable packaging. We truly have a coffee for everyone! Our green coffee beans are sourced from reputable suppliers and regions that allow us to create unique small batch roasts that can only be found at Asher's Coffee Beans.

“Millions will be made and generations will be positively impacted because of your time investment. THANK YOU. “

Natalie Hodge, Rudy's Girl Media



Backspace Coffee is a specialty coffee roaster located in Martinsville, Virginia. Backspace Coffee was created to fuel entrepreneurs, hustlers, and the go-getters of the world. Our coffee is roasted with a relentless pursuit of excellence while keeping community impact as the driving force behind every bag we serve.



Bite Me Confections is a start-up, scratch-made marshmallow business. Sebrina has been an educator for 20 years and a marshmallow crafter for over 10 years. She is ready to retire and craft delicious mallows full-time. Sebrina is always thinking of new and tempting flavor combinations and fun names to match!



Blue Ridge Mushroom Co. produces gourmet and medicinal mushrooms with locally sourced substrates. Our goal is to provide fresh mushrooms for both retail and wholesale distribution. Currently we are in the startup phase, beginning our journey at the Virginia Innovation Collective in Buena Vista.



Food Hustle Pineapple Pleasure is a place where your family can feel like you are on vacation with our delicious food and drink menu. We want to provide the community with ways to eat healthier and teach cooking basics.



Function First Therapies is an outpatient occupational therapy practice providing services in client's home and community settings.

“The Gauntlet experience has been life-changing. It has elevated my understanding and desire to be an entrepreneur and has equipped me to launch my own business.”

Jennifer Bigelow, The Bigelow Leadership Group LLC



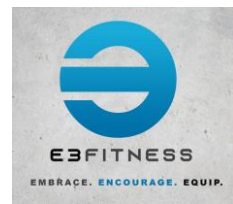
GK's Dream is a 6 year-old's dream to help foster kids find their forever homes by revealing the meaning of the first catchphrase, What's up with the FOM, through a intriguing story presented in a series of t-shirts with mascot Titan.



Home on the Road Pet Transport, LLC is a USDA certified pet transportation company based in Botetourt County, Virginia. We are in business to help pet owners and individuals transport their pets and goods safely and conveniently. A portion of the profit generated from our company is donated to local rescues and charities that benefit the community.



Iris Marketing Services provides social media creation and management, website design and management, and logo design to small business owners and non-profit organizations. We specialize in helping small business owners and local non-profit organizations reach their marketing goals.



E3 Fitness prides itself on serving our families and community to better health, fitness, and nutrition. Pairing each individual's needs and goals with the best pathway to get there. Functional and community-based fitness for a functional and community-based life.



EarthMagic Recycling, LLC takes in food and beverage glass from the community and turning it into useable sand. The eco-friendly sand is sold for many purposes from unique crafts, to hydroponics and soil additives, and even to building our bridges, buildings, and roads.



Electric Iris 3D is here to shake up the poultry incubator industry. We opened in June of 2021 and since then we've fulfilled over 700 orders for our aftermarket poultry incubator accessories. Our products help farmers raise new classes of birds, from quail to geese, and help farmers raise more birds at a time by increasing hatch rates.

"The faculty and staff and alumni are so dedicated and supportive of all the participants. They are genuine in their desire for everyone to be successful."

Dr. Mary Beth Noonan, Children First Pediatrics of Virginia PC



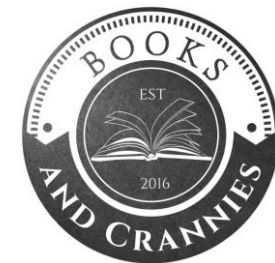
Fables & Feathers Winery; Genny Luedtke, along with husband Adam, their children Gwen & Jesse, and in-laws Pam & Tom, started the adventure of a lifetime when they all moved from northern Illinois to Virginia in the winter of 2020. Together they have worked to reopen the former White Rock Winery, now known as Fables & Feathers Winery, Brewery, & Event Center.



Faithfully Yours creates custom items such as t-shirts, masks, hats, home decor, and promotional goods. I do silk screening, vinyl and glitter applications, sublimation, direct-to-film transfers, and embroidery. My company is promoted on Facebook, Etsy, Instagram, and www.shopfaithfullyyours.com. Our mission stresses that it is all about community and collaboration, not competition.



BOCS Build Offsite Container Structures, will modify used shipping container into small prefabricated dwellings (ADUs, offices, cabins, Airbnbs). Richard Taylor moved to Roanoke 26 years ago after graduating from Va Tech with a Mechanical engineering degree. He and his wife Joy are proud parents of 3 children, Elizabeth, Aiden, and Camden.



Books and Crannies which opened in September 2016, is a Black woman-owned, independent bookstore, located in Martinsville, Virginia. The bookstore sells new and used books in all genres for both adults and children. Although it is a brick-and-mortar store, online ordering is also available with shipping across the nation.



Buffalo Mountain Adventures provides fully-facilitated, guided adventure packages for small groups to include guides, gear, transport, and meals. We are in the process of expanding and opening a store in Floyd that will sell equipment, gently used outdoor gear, and have climbing walls. Our food truck will be parked outside of the adventure business serving food to our community, sourced from local farms!



Building System Integrations, LLC is a home performance company that is helping build better homes. We focus on energy efficiency and sustainable construction practices.



Caffé Museo Coffee Bar and Museum of Antique Coffee Mills opened in Clifton Forge in 2019 after completing the Gauntlet. The place is decorated with about 170 antique coffee mills. The coffee is superb.

"The knowledge I have gained through this program has been life changing! Thank you to all of the presenters who took the time to help out up and coming small businesses. "

Lauren Riddle, Perfectly Polished Mobile Nail Service



Care Connect of Virginia, LLC is an agency that finds host homes for individuals with a disability. The program is called Sponsored Residential Services and is funded through the Medicaid Community Living Waiver. We work with individuals with disabilities and their family, friends, and other external resources, in order to help them increase their independence in a nurturing, loving, and supportive home environment.



Caring Hands Transportation, LLC is a small business that provides reliable and safe transportation for non-emergency medical services for the low-income, elderly, disabled, and Medicare/Medicaid recipients, with no means of transportation, to their healthcare appointments. Taking care of the elderly, disabled, and vulnerable members of my community is my passion and joy.



Children First Pediatrics of Virginia, LLC was started by Mary Beth Noonan, M.D., FAAP on August 1, 2016 to serve the children and families of Martinsville/Henry County and surrounding areas. Our Pediatric practice has grown so much and now has three full-time Pediatric Nurse Practitioners to help Dr. Noonan provide care to all the children in our area. We provide comprehensive Pediatric care and support to our children and families so that families can feel empowered and help their children thrive.



Coco-Nuts is located in Radford. We specialize in cupcakes bouquets and all occasion cakes. Our mission is to meet or exceed our customer satisfaction by providing a one-of-a-kind product in the industry.



Compass for Life located in Covington, Virginia will be a 90-day residential home for those coming out of incarceration and needing services to transition back into the community.



Constellation Montessori

Constellation Montessori is an early childhood education center, with an academic focus on restorative agriculture and environmental awareness. Montessori classrooms already traditionally introduce deep studies in botany, zoology, horticulture, and biology to very young children. We are going to reinforce those introduced concepts by having children work directly with food-plants to grow food that will then be prepared and eaten in the classroom.



Customiz3design, LLC is a one stop shop for an idea to become a reality. We are a Martinsville based consultant and retail space focused on bringing small scale manufacturing and design to the region.



CyberCade provides retro themed event space to Centertown Bedford, Virginia. Cybercade will bring new life to classic arcade games and pinballs. New school meets old school through the love of gaming.



Dark Moon Cards and Games is an online and convention-based micro-business bringing the joy of Pokemon to fans across the US. Whether online or at an anime, comic, or gaming convention, Dark Moon Cards and Games brings Japan's best Pokemon right to you. We don't have "something for everyone" but we do have something for every Pokemon Fan!



Dependable Home Healthcare, LLC provides in-home personal care including assisting with feeding/eating, grooming, walking, bathing, dressing (or undressing), medication reminders, and etc. We also provide meal preparation, light housekeeping, laundry, shopping (and errands), and most importantly, companionship to our clients. Many individuals have no family or friends to engage with and only have the client-caregiver relationship to rely on.