

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Downtown Suffolk Community Business Launch Pitch Night Set

SUFFOLK, Virginia (November 27, 2018) – Downtown Suffolk entrepreneurs who recently completed the Community Business Launch (CBL) workshops will compete for grant funding on **Tuesday, January 15th** at **Pitch Night** at the Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts, starting at 5:30 p.m.

CBL is sponsored by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development and the Suffolk Economic Development Authority, and promotes the opening or expansion of storefront business operations in Downtown Suffolk in 2019. Suffolk was one of five communities announced by Governor Ralph Northam selected to receive \$45,000 of grant funding for new and expanding business ventures.

The CBL program includes a seven- week business education workshop, a business plan qualification review and finally, a business pitch competition. Business plan submittals and the business pitches will be scored by a panel of judges that include:

- Allison Anderson, Owner of A. Dodson's
- LaTroy Brinkley, Owner of Serendipity Hair Salon
- Tanya Hill, former Owner of Cordially Invited
- Wesley King, Vice Chairman of the Suffolk Economic Development Authority

- Kevin Hughes, Director of the Suffolk Department of Economic Development

While only three entrepreneurs will be selected as winners, the hope is that CBL will give rise to other future budding start-ups that have been prepared, through the initiative, to become successful business owners. Additionally, the program encourages citizens to take an active role in fostering Downtown Suffolk's growth.

Pitch Night will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts, 110 West Finney Avenue. The public is invited to attend; no reservations are necessary. Beverages and light refreshments will be served following the pitches. For additional information, contact Gregory Byrd, Assistant Director, Suffolk Economic Development, at 757.514.4042, or Gbyrd@suffolkva.us.



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