

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership announces recipients of Starter Company Plus grants

November 14, 2019

The Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership is announcing that six local businesses have been selected to participate in the 2019-2020 Starter Company Plus Program.

Offered by the Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership's Business Enterprise Centre, Starter Company Plus is a joint initiative with the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation, and Trade that is designed to support entrepreneurs by combining grant funding with coaching, mentorship, and community support.

Through the program, six local businesses will each receive a \$5,000 grant to help start a new venture or grow an existing business while also accessing personalized coaching and mentorship from business leaders in the Sarnia-Lambton area. The six businesses will also meet monthly over the course of the year-long program to share learnings and best practices with one another.

"The Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership is committed to providing programming that fosters new businesses and entrepreneurship and also supports those small and medium enterprises that already make up the backbone of our economy," said Stephen Thompson, Chief Executive Officer of the Economic Partnership.

"Starter Company Plus will provide the tools and resources to help these six businesses in their endeavours, and we are pleased that we will be able to offer this program for the foreseeable future as well," Thompson added.

The six businesses participating in the program were chosen by a volunteer committee of business and community leaders.

Of successful applicants, four are engaging in growing an existing business, while two of the participants are starting a new business and represent a balance of urban and rural parts of the County.

"Whether it is growing an existing business or starting a new one from scratch, the importance of entrepreneurship to the Sarnia-Lambton community can not be overstated, and we strive every day to support entrepreneurs and their ideas," said Thompson before adding "Starter Company Plus is a program we are proud to be able to offer our area's innovators."

The Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership would like to thank the Sarnia-Lambton Business Development Corporation, Libro Credit Union, Western Sarnia-Lambton Research Park, CR Creative Co., and Starter Company Alumnus Chelsey Hart for their in-kind contributions to the success of the program.

Photo opportunities and interviews with the successful applicants can be arranged by contacting the Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership.

A full list of businesses participating in Starter Company Plus can be found below.

2019-2020 Starter Company Plus Participants

Starting A Business

Balance Physio Yoga – Balance Physio Yoga is a new business opening in Warwick in 2020. Entrepreneur, Meaghan Chisholm, is a clinical physiotherapist and yoga therapist on a mission to optimize health and wellness in our society.

Mivida – Mivida is a mobile massage therapy business launched by Sarnia based entrepreneur, Manuel Batista. Manuel is eager to offer his massage therapy service to people in the comfort of their homes.

Growing An Existing Business

Circle Studio - Circle Studio is a holistic health, healing, and wellness studio based in Petrolia. Entrepreneur, Brigitte Hynes-Taylor, has a passion for health, wellness and family fitness. The studio offers fitness and personal training, nutrition services and a variety of Canadian made products and apparel.

Culture Shock Kombucha - Culture Shock Kombucha is located in Grand Bend and owned by two Registered Holistic Nutritionists specializing in digestive health. Entrepreneurs, Shannon Shurgold and Laura Rideout, brew handcrafted Kombucha using the finest ingredients, love and phytonutrients.

Great Lakes Refill Co. - Great Lakes Refill Co. is Sarnia-Lambton's first zero-waste grocery store and bulk refill bar. Melissa Matthews and Lisa Ladouceur are two sisters working towards a common goal of creating change in their community. Their store is located in downtown Sarnia.

Taproots Green Gardens - Taproots Green Gardens, located in Sarnia, is focused on reimagining our relationship with food by providing the community with clean, locally grown, chemical-free produce. Entrepreneur, Ryan Slyzuk, can be found in the garden and at the farmers market promoting healthy habits and a strong sense of community.

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For Media Inquiries:

Shaun Bisson

Marketing & Events Coordinator
Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership
519-332-1820
shaun@sarnialambton.on.ca