

## **Municipality of Chatham-Kent**

### **Department Name**

### **Division Name**

### **Information Report**

**To:** Mayor and Members of Council

**From:** Jamie Rainbird, Manager, Economic Development Services

**Date:** October 20, 2022

**Subject:** Starter Company Plus – Successful Applicants – Spring 2022 Cohort

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This report is for the information of Council.

### **Background**

The Starter Company Plus Program, fully funded by the Province of Ontario, is an initiative that provides training and mentorship geared towards assisting those entrepreneurs in need of business knowledge and support as well as providing the opportunity to apply for a business grant of up to \$5,000.

Upon completion of extensive mandatory training, applicants that pursue the \$5,000 financial grant are required to submit a viable, sales-ready business plan and engage in follow up consultations for a minimum of three months with the Chatham-Kent Small Business Centre Business Consultants. This is a competitive process, and a limited number of grants are awarded after each training session held twice yearly. Applicants must be able to contribute cash or in-kind of at least 25% of the grant amount.

### **Eligibility**

- 18 years of age or older at the time of application
- Proposing a new company, expansion of an existing company or buying a business in Ontario
- Not attending school full-time or not returning to school
- Be a resident of Ontario
- Be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident
- Have not previously participated in the Starter Company Plus Program
- Not enrolled in other provincially employment or self-employment related programs that include or do not include financial assistance
- Not currently enrolled concurrently in any self-employment or entrepreneurship training/financing programs offered by government funded organizations (some exceptions may apply due to COVID-19)

Business or Proposed Business must:

- Be an independent, for-profit business venture based in Chatham-Kent
- Not be a business that relies on commissioned sales (MLM)
- Be a legal business in Ontario
- Not be a franchise
- Operated at arms-length from family business ventures
- Operate full-time as defined in the business plan
- Have a Master Business License or Articles of Incorporation, or register the business prior to launch
- Maintain a business banking account
- Follow all government rules and regulations and applicable by-laws for the operation of the business
- Demonstrate a viable and sales-ready business plan at the time of funding

### **Comments**

On March 28-April 1, 2022, a five-day training webinar took place with interested eligible entrepreneurs who were provided a wealth of business advice and knowledge. After the training was completed, those entrepreneurs interested in pursuing the financial grant, completed and submitted their viable business plan to the Small Business Centre. Based on a scoring matrix, the following five businesses were awarded grants of \$5,000 each:

#### **tate Body Sciences Corp., Morpeth**

tate Body Sciences Corp. applies kinesiology and sports science principles with the belief that motion is lotion, no matter the body. Specializing in custom 1:1 plans but group programs and self-study courses are also offered.

*“As practitioner-entrepreneurs it’s really hard to pull away from practice and work on the actual business. Having a program like this forced me to take a break from clients and dedicate hours to learning about how to look at my business. Without this perspective shift, let alone having secured the resources I sought, I would not have improved my business systems or expanded my team as I have in just months. “*

*Scott Tate, Owner*

#### **Kylie-Elizabeth, Chatham**

Kylie-Elizabeth is an everyday sustainable body care brand. All of their products are handmade locally, have all-natural ingredients and are made with the planet in mind at all times. Their best sellers are lip balm, deodorant, and dry shampoo in 100% compostable tube packaging. Kylie-Elizabeth also makes all of their business cards out of recycled cereal boxes so that they can keep their environmental impact as low as possible. You can shop Kylie-Elizabeth products on their website [www.kylie-elizabeth.ca](http://www.kylie-elizabeth.ca) or at one of the retailers that carry their products.

*“The Starter Company Plus program grant has been extremely helpful in the growth of my business short and long term. Since receiving the grant, I was able to expand my workspace to make it even more efficient and sustainable, I was able to invest in better quality appliances that will last and be helpful to me now and as my business continues to grow.*

*Everyone at the Small Business Centre was extremely helpful with any questions I had about the program and grant. The Starter Company Plus program has taught me a lot about financial predictions (and why they are important) and how to manage my business more efficiently. It is so important to help small businesses in the community start-up and expand, I hope that they continue this amazing program and continue to inspire upcoming businesses in Chatham-Kent.”*

*Kylie-Elizabeth Deeley, Owner*

Pastamano Artisan Pasta creates take-home traditional pastas with an ever-changing monthly menu.

*“Pastamano Artisan Pasta began as a passion for creating traditional pastas at home and sharing those creations with family and friends around our dinner table. With family on both sides immigrating to Canada from Italy; my husband and I had ample opportunities to admire and learn from our families’ traditions and favourite recipes. This also provided opportunities to travel to various regions in Italy to taste and enjoy, learn the preparation and art of traditional handmade pastas, and explore each regional cuisine to understand how it influenced our family recipes. We always talked about one day turning this love into a small business.*

*In February of 2021, we decided to start sharing our traditional artisan noodles and some family recipe sauces with friends and family and began doing market research on the options for fresh, handmade pasta in Chatham-Kent. Our name came from conversations with cousins in Italy and is a play on the words “pasta” and “a mano”, which translates to “pasta” “made by hand”. We aimed to keep our name, and our branding simple to reflect the simplicity in the ingredients we choose to use, but also to modernize a traditional product.*

*Today, we are operating out of a licensed rental kitchen in Chatham that is owned by a non-profit organization. We produce our pastas by hand in this kitchen after hours and on weekends, have clients order and pay for their artisan pastas and sauces online, and pick it up at designated times at the rental kitchen. We offer a “pop-up” style menu once a month with new featured pastas, lasagnes, and sauces for our customers to cook and consume at home. We are a husband-and-wife team that do everything from product research and development, production, marketing, and administrative duties, and we take pride in our products and sharing our love of food with others.*

*The Foodpreneur Scale Up Program (Starter Company Plus Program) was an avenue for us to connect with other food based small businesses in Southern Ontario, formally engage with the Chatham-Kent Small Business Centre, and to learn from experts in the industry as well as from each other. The most valuable outcome of this program for Pastamano was the training and education that we received from industry experts such as: food labelling regulations set out by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Food Traceability and Food Safety, as well as the education on building a brand and marketing to our target consumers. The networking and*

*connections made in this program were also invaluable, as it led to some partnerships and relationships that we hope to continue to build on, and in turn build each others' businesses. The funding aspect of the program is being used to assist us in scaling up our business as well; we are using some of the funds towards capital equipment purchases and renovations to allow for more efficient production. Overall, we learned a lot through the Foodpreneur Program and it has helped us to start scaling up our business and we hope that although the formal aspect of this Program is completed for us, that we continue to engage with our cohort peers and industry connections to continue to grow and provide our products proudly in CK."*

*Tabitha and Justin Cook, Owners*

### Revolve Spin Co., Chatham

Located in downtown Chatham, Revolve Spin Co. is Chatham-Kent's first and only spin studio experience. Revolve Spin offers indoor stationary spin bikes without the high impact joint stress of running or jogging providing a wide range of possibilities to align fitness and workout goals.

### Feta Pita, Chatham

Located on Richmond Street in Chatham, Feta Pita offers a wide range of healthy lifestyle options including pitas, salads with several vegan and vegetarian options.

### **Consultation**

No other departments were consulted in the preparation of this information report.

### **Financial Implications**

All grant and training costs associated with this program are covered by funding through the Province of Ontario. Economic Development Services' staff provide mentoring, business plan and business advice assistance to the small business entrepreneurs through their normal job duties.

Prepared by: Jamie Rainbird, Manager, Economic Development Services

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Attachments: None