

Microenterprise program will return to Albion

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ALBION — What does boating, local radio, nail designs, venison, snowmobiles, architecture and gardening have in common?

These are the seeds of new small businesses that are now open or being explored in Orleans County through the Microenterprise Assistance Program offered by Orleans Economic Development Agency and Genesee Community College's BEST (Business and Employee Skills Training) Center.

This program is designed to increase chances of success for anyone considering starting a small business.

The course will meet at Hoag Library, 134 South Main St., Albion from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesdays from Sept. 8 through Nov. 17.

The essential business topics covered in the Microenterprise Program include:

- Development of comprehensive business plans
- Marketing and advertising
- Business organization
- Tax, accounting, insurance and financing
- Specialized computer application
- Creating effective leadership

Since 1999, more than 400 individuals have participated in the Orleans Microenterprise Assistance Program, which accepts existing Orleans County small businesses with five employees or less, as well as entrepreneurial candidates at least 18 years of age. Local job creation is required and low-to-moderate income level candidates are encouraged.

Among the participants who completed the program this past spring were: Alicia Dingman (marina), Alex Fig (Orleans Radio), Jessica Reigle and Lorrie Reigle Gurslin (nail salon), Stephen Kruger (Superstruct Architect), Andrea Chilton (garden nursery), Doug Ashbery (Venison Specialty Meals) and Michael Donnelly (small vintage snowmobile engine repair).

The fee for the 10-week program is \$295. To apply for a scholarship to cover the cost of the program, contact Diane Blanchard, microenterprise business coordinator, Orleans EDA, at (585)

589-7060, Ext. 101 or email dblanchard@orleansdevelopment.org.

FastFitness and its owner Kim Lockwood are often cited as one of many Orleans County small business success stories. Their business plan was formulated back in 2003 in the MAP class, and as a successful graduate of the program, Lockwood was eligible for a low-interest EDA loan.

She opened her women-only exercise gym originally in Albion in 2004, and through gradual expansion plans, FastFitness is now in its third location in Medina with 400 members and a new FasTan salon.

Sam Campenella and Dick Petite, advisors from The BEST Center's Small Business Development Center, were both instrumental in helping the young company secure success.

New participants can also register and pay for the Microenterprise program online:

<https://app3mid.genesee.edu/flexibleregistration/index.jsp?frc=BEST&q=subj>:

To view a video about the program go to:

<http://www.orleansdevelopment.org/#!/small-business-development/c1v3u>