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**New Collaboration Strengthe...**

# NEW COLLABORATION STRENGTHENS SUPPORT FOR SMALL BUSINESSES IN WASHTENAW, LIVINGSTON, AND MONROE COUNTIES

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# Michigan Small Business Relief Program

## Washtenaw and Livingston Counties



A collaboration supporting small businesses across Washtenaw, Livingston, and Monroe counties launched this past spring is seeing great success!

Since its inception, more than 200 businesses have signed up to take advantage of the Small Business Support initiative resources. These resources include both business support and mentorship specifically designed for entrepreneurs who identified as:

- Businesses Impacted by COVID-19
- Businesses Owned by Socially or Economically Disadvantaged Individuals (SEDI)
- Minority-Owned Businesses

This initiative brings together multiple business support organizations, including:

- Ann Arbor SPARK
- Entrepreneurship Center at Washtenaw Community College
- Jewish Family Services
- Launch 734 by the Monroe County Business Alliance
- Livingston Business HUB by the Howell Area Chamber of Commerce

- Michigan SBDC Greater Washtenaw Region
- Uplift Michigan by the Michigan SBDC

Together, these organizations form a robust network dedicated to helping small businesses to start, grow, and expand.

Kristine Nash Wong, director of entrepreneurial services at SPARK East, expressed the importance of this partnership: “This collaboration is a testament to our commitment to fostering a resilient and diverse small business community across counties. By working closely with our partners, we’re ensuring that entrepreneurs have the resources, mentorship, and support they need to thrive in today’s dynamic economy.”

There is still opportunity for businesses to take advantage of these free services thanks to support from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC).

## SPECIFIC SUPPORT PROVIDED:

The Small Business Support initiative offers a variety of services to meet the unique needs of businesses at different stages of development:

- **Business Planning:** One-on-one mentoring and workshops that guide entrepreneurs in crafting effective business plans and growth strategies.
- **Marketing and Branding:** Expert advice and resources to help businesses build strong brands and implement effective marketing strategies.
- **Technology and Innovation Support:** Guidance on leveraging technology to improve operations and reach new markets.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Events and connections to a broader business network, facilitating partnerships and collaborations.
- **Access to Capital:** Assistance in securing funding through grants, low-interest loans, and connections to investors.

The Howell Area Chamber of Commerce, representing Livingston Business HUB, emphasized the initiative’s impact. “Livingston Business HUB is proud to be part of this innovative initiative. Together with our partners, we’re helping businesses

to prosper and grow by equipping them to lead and innovate, ensuring long-term success for our local economy," said Howell Chamber President, Janelle Smith.

The Monroe County Business Alliance echoed this sentiment through their Launch 734 program. "Launch 734 is dedicated to empowering entrepreneurs in Monroe County with the tools they need to transform ideas into thriving businesses. This collaboration reinforces our mission to drive economic growth and opportunity in our community," shared Madeline Lark, Launch 734's Director of Partner Relations.

Entrepreneurs and small business owners interested in accessing these resources are encouraged to visit the website at [mismallbusiness.org](https://mismallbusiness.org) (<https://mismallbusiness.org/>) for more information on how to get involved.



## Ann Arbor SPARK

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