



Westchester County EDC grants second round of funding

January 19, 2021 - Front Section

Westchester County, NY The Westchester County Office of Economic Development has announced a second round of funding for county-based small businesses and nonprofits facing challenges as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. The county has secured \$4 million in additional funding to support 175 eligible organizations seeking relief. In addition, 20 of the county's Chambers of Commerce applied for and were each awarded a grant to be used for providing business services.

The funds are part of Westchester County Business FIRST: Financial Investments for Recovery and a Sustainable Tomorrow, a grant program designed to offer immediate financial relief to organizations in Westchester County that have been negatively impacted by the pandemic. The county last month awarded a total of \$10 million to 262 county-based small businesses and nonprofits. Based on the substantial number of applicants, the county expanded the program to enable additional awards to eligible organizations that had applied to the initial program. Businesses did not need to submit a second application.

“Due to the tremendous response we received for financial assistance, we knew we needed to expand our Business FIRST grant program,” said Westchester County executive George Latimer. “We are so pleased we were able to secure additional funding to assist even more small businesses and nonprofits, and our Chambers of Commerce as we work together toward a sustainable future.”

The grant program, launched in September, was open to businesses and nonprofits with 99 or fewer employees. Eligible entities could apply for up to \$49,000 to cover expenses such as rent or mortgage payments, employee salaries or benefits, working capital, equipment and other COVID-19-related expenses. The 262-recipient organizations comprise industries such as restaurants/food service; arts, entertainment and recreation; social services and education. A full list of awardees will be made available once each awardee has signed their grant agreement.

The Westchester County Business FIRST grant program is being administered by the County Office of Economic Development through the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The county is currently working to secure additional funding for the program.

“It is so important to provide a financial boost now, to enable these organizations to work through the difficult times so they can plan for a better tomorrow,” said Bridget Gibbons, Westchester County's director of economic development. “As ‘The Catalyst’ for economic growth and vitality, the Office of Economic Development is committed to supporting our business and nonprofit sectors and getting our economy back on track.”

For more info, visit <https://westchestercatalyst.com/business-first-programs/>.

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