



County offers two grants programs for business owners

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Though money is tight these days, people still want to develop and grow their businesses. York County is here to help its entrepreneurs. The Office of Economic Development and Economic Development Authority are pleased to announce the launch of two grant programs available to county residents and business owners.

The first is the NxLevel Scholarship Program, which was developed to encourage entrepreneurs to attend the Hampton Roads Small Business Development Center's NxLevel course. The course is a 12-session entrepreneurial training program that helps people learn the skills needed to create and strengthen successful business ventures.

"This class is priceless," said Melissa Dickens, the county's Senior Business Development Representative. "It exposes you to experts in various industries, such as bankers, accountants, attorneys, marketing professionals, and more, to teach you firsthand about all the different aspects of running a business. At the end, you walk away with a business plan that's ready to take to a bank for financing."

The county is offering a 50 percent matching grant to any resident or current county business owner interested in taking the course.

The second grant was designed to encourage business owners in the county to create their own Web sites.

"We feel that every business today needs a Web site," Dickens said. "The Web is the first place people go if they're looking for a service or product. In order to have a competitive edge in the marketplace, we feel our businesses need at least to have a basic Web site, if not to have online shopping and commerce capabilities, and more."

Through the E-Commerce Grant Program the county is offering a 50 percent matching grant of up to \$500 per York County business, or \$1,000 for woman- and minority-owned and certified businesses, to help cover design costs for a new business Web site, or for enhancing current sites to accept online payments and/or offer online shopping and commerce.

For more information, visit www.yesorkcounty.com

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