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LAKE SHORE ADVANTAGE RECEIVES 887 RESTART GRANT APPLICATIONS

Review committee in place to process applications, awardees to be announced by Sept 20.

8/10/2020 // ZEELAND, MICH –Lakeshore Advantage received 887 Michigan Small Business Restart Grant applications from Allegan and Ottawa County businesses and nonprofits competing for \$3.5 million in available funding. Thirty percent of the awards will go to women, minority, and veteran-owned businesses. A review committee of local business and nonprofit leaders has been established to review these applications with awardees receiving grants of up to \$20,000 each.

“With much thought and intentionality, we’ve built an equitable and inclusive review process and recruited strong community, business and nonprofit representatives to provide leadership on the Review Board,” said Mike Ramirez, Partner & President, Orka Automation and Restart Grant Board Chair for the Lakeshore Advantage grant administration process. “This grant lends much opportunity to reach deep into our lakeshore communities to provide small businesses and nonprofits access to the support they need in critical times.”

Members of Lakeshore Advantage Review Committee Board for Allegan and Ottawa county Restart grant applications are:

- Mike Ramirez, Chair, Orka Automation
- Holly Johnson, Vice Chair, Frey Foundation
- Mandi Brower, Quality Car Wash
- Esperanza Degnan, Mercantile Bank of Michigan
- Ada Delgado, Macatawa Bank
- Boyd Feltman, Peachwave
- Nick Genova, Haworth

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- Robert Heath Sr., Legacy Leadership
- Phil Koning, West Michigan Community Bank
- Kavy Lenon, Herman Miller
- Kris Lewis, Allegan Credit Union
- Scott Lubbers, Fifth Third Bank
- Joe Matthews, Gentex
- Jennifer Owens, Lakeshore Advantage
- Chih-Hsuan (Sandy) Pierce, Padnos
- Jennifer Remondino, Warner Norcross + Judd
- Amy Sparks, Nuvar Manufacturing
- Chris Streng, Great Lakes Financial Insurance Agency
- Jenny White, Velo City Cycles

The Michigan Strategic Fund, through the federal CARES Act and Michigan Economic Development Corporation, has made available \$100 million in grant funds to eligible small businesses and nonprofits in Michigan. Lakeshore Advantage is administering \$3.5 million of that funding for eligible businesses and nonprofits in Allegan and Ottawa counties.

Local strategic partner organizations shared about this grant opportunity with their constituents in Allegan and Ottawa counties and assisted with establishing the review process. The strategic partner organizations include:

- Allegan Area Chamber of Commerce
- Allegan County Community Foundation
- Allendale Area Chamber of Commerce
- Community Foundation Holland Zeeland Area
- Coopersville Area Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Ottawa County United Way
- Grand Haven Area Community Foundation
- Hudsonville Area Chamber of Commerce
- Lakeshore Ethnic Diversity Alliance
- Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce

- Otsego Plainwell Area Chamber of Commerce
- The Chamber: Grand Haven, Spring Lake, Ferrysburg
- West Michigan Blue Star Chamber of Commerce
- Women of Color Give

“From getting the word out to make sure all eligible businesses knew about this opportunity, to the initial review and evaluation, our strategic partners have been integral to this process,” said Jennifer Owens, Lakeshore Advantage President. “It takes a true team effort to make these funding decisions.”

Applicants applied for the grant program through one universal application administered by Michigan Economic Development Corporation. The application period was from July 15-August 5. Application review and selection is occurring now through August 24. Awardees will be notified starting August 25. Disbursement of awards will begin September 1, and awardees will be publicly announced by September 20. More information is available at www.lakeshoreadvantage.com/restart.

About Lakeshore Advantage

Lakeshore Advantage is a non-profit local economic development organization started in 2003 by forward-focused business and community leaders to ensure current and future generations want to live and work in our vibrant economy. Lakeshore Advantage assists primary employers, from startups to large world-class corporations, in West Michigan’s Allegan and Ottawa counties.

In 2019, Lakeshore Advantage supported 21 business growth projects, resulting in \$127 million in private investment and 1,000 new jobs. More at www.lakeshoreadvantage.com.

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