



**VENTURE  
NORTH**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**LEELANAU TWP. COMMUNITY FOUNDATION AWARDS FUNDS FOR SECOND ROUND OF GRANTS FOR  
SMALL BUSINESSES THROUGH REGIONAL RESILIENCY PROGRAM**

*Businesses Can Apply Today through Nov. 2 for Grants*

**LEELANAU TOWNSHIP** – Thanks to the generosity and compassion of the Leelanau Township Community Foundation, small businesses with nine or fewer employees impacted by the COVID pandemic in Leelanau Township can now apply for grants up to \$5,000.

The Foundation made this possible by awarding up to \$30,000 to the Regional Resiliency Program that is administered by Venture North Funding and Development. This is the second grant round sponsored by the Community Foundation that awarded \$25,000 in the first round that enabled grants to seven small businesses.

“COVID-19 is an immense challenge facing Leelanau Township small businesses,” said Joan Moore, Executive Director of the Leelanau Township Community Foundation. “The first round of grants to Township businesses was helpful but there’s more to do. This grant to the Regional Resiliency Program run will provide another shot in the arm to small businesses which are the economic backbone of the Township. We have to work through these uncertain times by supporting one another.”

Applications for grants will be accepted until 5 p.m. on November 2, 2020. The application is available at the Venture North web site at: [www.venturenorthfunding.org](http://www.venturenorthfunding.org) or by emailing [info@venturenorthfunding.org](mailto:info@venturenorthfunding.org). An advisory team formed by the Foundation will review and provide recommendations on applications for grant funding by Venture North.

“This is a wonderful display of leadership and caring in the face of the most damaging pandemic in at least a century,” said Laura Galbraith, Executive Director of Venture North. “We pride ourselves on offering expeditious service to turn around funding we receive into grants for small businesses. And, thanks to a recent grant of \$50,000 from the Consumers Energy Foundation to administer the Regional Resiliency Program, we are able to provide help at no additional cost to the Leelanau Township community.”

The program was created on May 27 with a grant of \$200,000 from the Consumers Energy Foundation to Venture North to establish the Regional Resiliency Program and help small businesses hurt by the pandemic in Benzie, Leelanau and Grand Traverse counties. Since then, Manistee and Antrim Counties have joined the program and a total of \$400,000 has been allocated in grants to 100 small businesses. If another Federal stimulus is approved, the Regional Resiliency Program will offer help to small businesses in making the connections needed to secure stimulus funding.

“We’ve received many testimonials about the value of the grants to small businesses,” Galbraith said. “The funding is being used to ward off crises and also to help companies create new approaches in sales and marketing to sustain revenues. Funding may be used for a variety of purposes, from paying fixed costs like sewer taxes to costs involving new online sales systems. We hope that additional corporations and foundations will follow the lead of the Leelanau Township Community Foundation to benefit small businesses in that Township as well as the entire region we cover.”

In addition to the Township Community Foundation and the Consumers Energy Foundation, funds have also been donated or granted by Cherryland Electric Cooperative, DTE Energy Foundation, TCF Bank, Brookby Foundation, Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation through their Urgent Needs Fund, TCF, Fifth Third Bank, Huntington Bank, the Manistee County Industrial Development Corporation, the Manistee County Community Foundation and private donors.

Venture North Funding and Development is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) that specializes in supporting economic growth and jobs by making capital available to small businesses. Venture North also administers the Regional Resiliency Program that provides grants of up to \$5,000 to northwest Michigan businesses with nine or fewer employees.

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