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**EMMET COUNTY SMALL BUSINESSES IMPACTED BY COVID-19
CAN APPLY STARTING MAY 3rd FOR RESILIENCY GRANTS**

PETOSKEY, MICHIGAN – Regional Resiliency Program (RRP) grant applications for Emmet County businesses with nine or fewer full-time employees that were hurt by COVID-19 will be available online at www.venturenorthfunding.org at 8 a.m. Monday, May 3 until Friday, May 14, 5 p.m.

With the support of a \$15,000 award from the Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation and \$35,000 from Venture North Funding and Development, a total of \$50,000 will be available for grants through the RRP, administered by Venture North. The Venture North contribution includes funding from a \$200,000 grant provided by the Consumers Energy Foundation and funding from other sources. To date, a total of \$345,000 has been secured through philanthropic donations to support the 2021 program in Venture North's ten-county region.

The program began in 2020 with a catalyst grant award of \$200,000, also from the Consumers Energy Foundation, to make grants to small businesses often overlooked for relief funding to assist them with the immense challenges of COVID-19. In 2020, a total of 16 Emmet County businesses received RRP grants of the 200 grants awarded totaling over \$500,000 in the 10-county region. Grant recipients and past applicants from 2020 are welcome to apply again for program support.

"Small businesses in our community continue to meet the challenges of the ongoing pandemic," said David (DJ) Jones, Executive Director of the Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation. "We recognize that, while time has lapsed, the challenges facing our business community have not. The Community Foundation is pleased once again to support Venture North's Regional Resiliency Program here in Emmet County. When small businesses succeed, our whole community is stronger."

"With the help of the Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation, there has been a strong team of local representatives formed who will review grant applications and recommend funding that we will follow in making up to \$5,000 available to awardees," said Laura Galbraith, President of Venture North. "Applications will be evaluated based on how well applicants are positioned with a plan to resolve urgent needs or adapt operations to successfully continue business. We are all hoping that we see a period of stability and recovery with Venture North following up with growth and development financing which is our core business."

Galbraith said that any organization or individual may donate funding to increase the amount available for grants to Emmet County businesses. "There are unfortunately always more applications than can be funded

and a donor can specify the geographic area where their funds will be allocated such as Emmet County.” Funds may be donated online by going to “Donate to the Fund” at www.venturenorthfunding.org or by calling 231-995-7115.

“The grant application should take no longer than 30-40 minutes to complete,” Galbraith said. “If an applicant needs help, they should contact us at 231-995-7115 or info@venturenorthfunding.org and we’ll help answer questions.”

Venture North Funding and Development provides commercial financing and technical assistance to support business growth and job creation in their ten-county region, often in partnership with other financial institutions. As a Certified Development Financial Institution (CDFI), Venture North also focuses on providing support for underserved populations such as minority, women and veteran owned businesses in low-income communities.

