



PROGRESS REPORT



20
23



MEET THE FUNDERS...SOUTH HAVEN & LAKESHORE AREA

Workshop is designed to introduce area small business owners to representatives from a variety of business banking institutions in the SH/Lakeshore area.

During this session you will:
Meet area funders in the SH/Lakeshore region.
Understand key documents needed for funding.
Identify nontraditional funding options.

Register
cont.a.cc/3x50TH



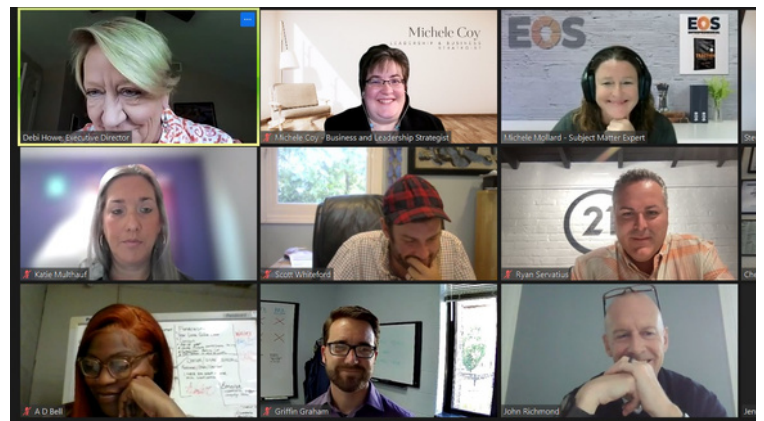
ALL BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE

Local small business owners to discuss the wins (and challenges) of owning a small business. Opportunity to share views, be heard, and propose solutions.

During this session you will:
Have your successes with the group
earn how to overcome obstacles from others
Take an impact with your input
Share and minimize your challenges

Register
cont.a.cc/3x50TH

South Haven Region Business Hub



"I attended The Pitch presented by the South Haven Region Business Hub and saw the video featuring your business. It appears to be a very interesting concept that could help to resolve work force development and affordable housing issues in South Haven."
- Natalie Escandon, Hostel SoHa

JOBS CREATION 2022 / 2023

10 NEW Business Starts

32 New Jobs

- **27 City**
- **5 County**



2022 / 2023

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL JOURNEY PODCAST

In this series of recordings, host Ryan Servatius and Executive Director Debi Howe, talked with small business owners, HUB, and mentors about what it takes to start a business, grow a business, and be successful in business.

Our target audience is Van Buren County businesses with 25 or fewer employees, startups, and aspiring entrepreneurs.

GOALS

The Goals of the South Haven Region Business Hub are to increase equitable opportunities for ALL entrepreneurs, but primarily work to eliminate racial disparities in business revenues and empower entrepreneurs to create long lasting businesses that generate wealth.

Our planned outcomes include:

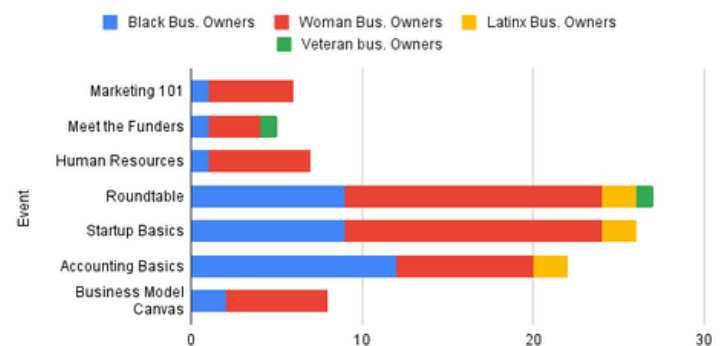
- Increase small business longevity to five and 10 years.
- Increase business scaling opportunities.
- Improve business owner financial skills.
- Increase funding for marginalized entrepreneurs.
- Increase diversity in entrepreneurship.
- Grow sustainable businesses that create jobs and wealth.
- Continue to investigate and deploy solutions for ecosystem gaps

REACH

The past year, more than 211 business owners have attended our business events. Of the total 39 business owners who have been mentored they, self-identify as:

- 18 women
- 12 minority
- 2 Veterans

Attendees, Black Bus. Owners, Woman Bus. Owners, Latinx Bus. Owners and Veteran bus. Owners



"Thanks for all you do to support local entrepreneurs. Your efforts are greatly appreciated! We appreciate having access to tools and information to help us grow our business. Being a small business is isolating and getting together with other small business owners truly helps. We look forward to seeing more programing and resources from the South Haven Region Business Hub.

—Josh Musinski, Water and Wheat

STARTUP SERIES FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

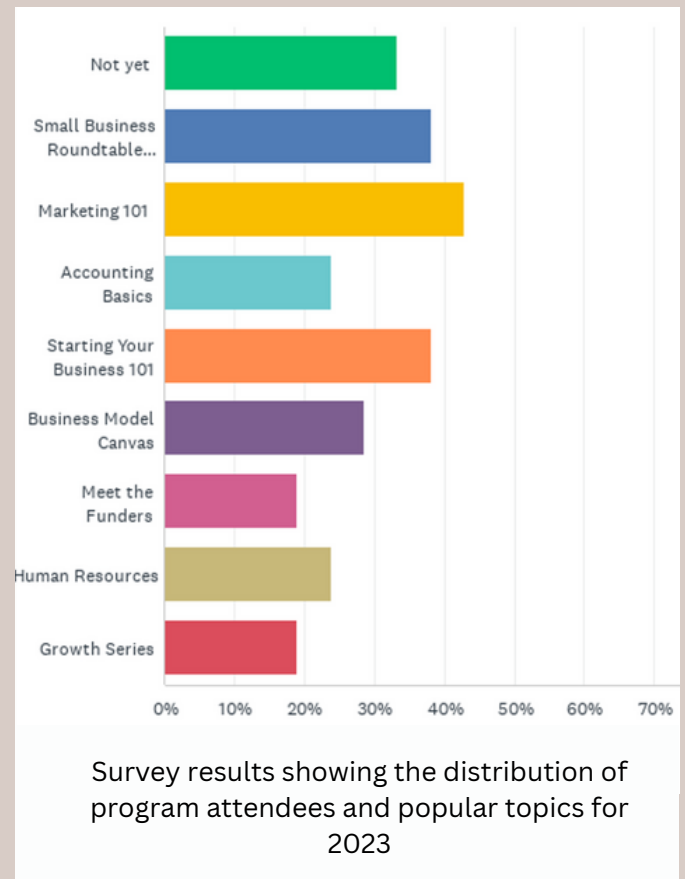
2023

PROGRAMMING

- Marketing 101
- Human Resources
- Startup Basics
- Accounting Basics
- Business Model Canvas
- Get Your Business on Google
- Meet the Funders

ROUNDTABLES

Six countywide roundtable events, on a variety of topics, were attended by 129 small business or nonprofit representatives.



GROWTH SERIES FOR SMALL BUSINESSES



ALLEGIAN LAUNDRY,
JEREMIAH SMITH

Qualifications for Participants

- Minimum 3 years in business
- \$100,000 in sales
- At least one full-time employee
- Own a business in Van Buren County
- Attend 14 week program

During the Growth Series participants received one-on-one mentoring and achieved measurable business growth milestones based on the Growth Wheel and mentor and self-assessment. Each participant attended a series of 7 workshops in addition to weekly mentoring meetings for 7 weeks.

CURRICULUM

1. Your Financials and How to Conduct an In-Depth Review
2. One-to-one Live Financial Mentoring
3. Leadership Challenge
4. Developing your Customer Strategy for Your Product Mix
5. Marketing Tactics to Reach Your Target Markets
6. Integrity Selling
7. Developing Your Internal Processes for Consistency and Success

ALL GROWTH SERIES participants have the opportunity to participate in THE PITCH

2023 THE PITCH

In the spring of 2023, four local businesses were selected to participate in The GROWTH Series. Participants attended a series of workshops, received one-on-one mentoring and coaching, and presented their businesses to potential investors, community influencers, local organizations, and the general public at The Pitch event.

Samantha Craig of Craig Katahdin Farms received the Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems \$2,500 technical assistance award.

**MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY**
Center for Regional
Food Systems



CRAIG KHATADIN FARMS, SAMANTHA CRAIG



THE KINGROUP, ANTHONY MCNAIR



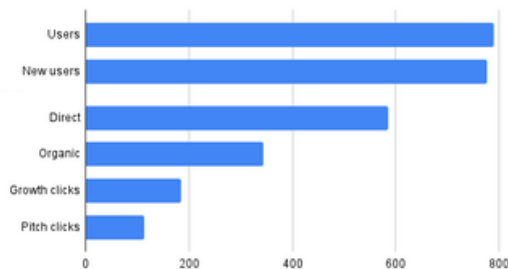
EXCELLENCE IN REHABILITATION, BRIAN SCHERFF, P.T.

MARKETING AND WEB HIGHLIGHTS

SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

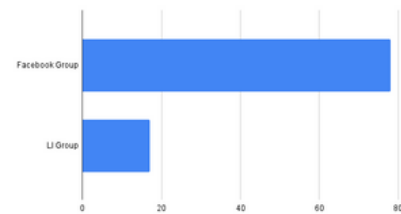
Website traffic

777 New Users
:53 Engagement Time
297 Event Clicks



Social Media Groups

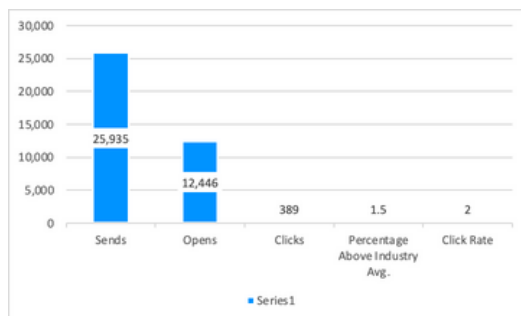
85 Facebook
17 LinkedIn



Email Marketing

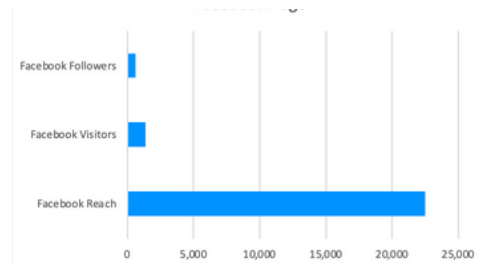
25,935 Sends
12,446 Opens
388 Clicks

Click Rate 2% (1.5% above industry average)



Facebook Page

22,493 Reach
1,380 Visits
633 Followers



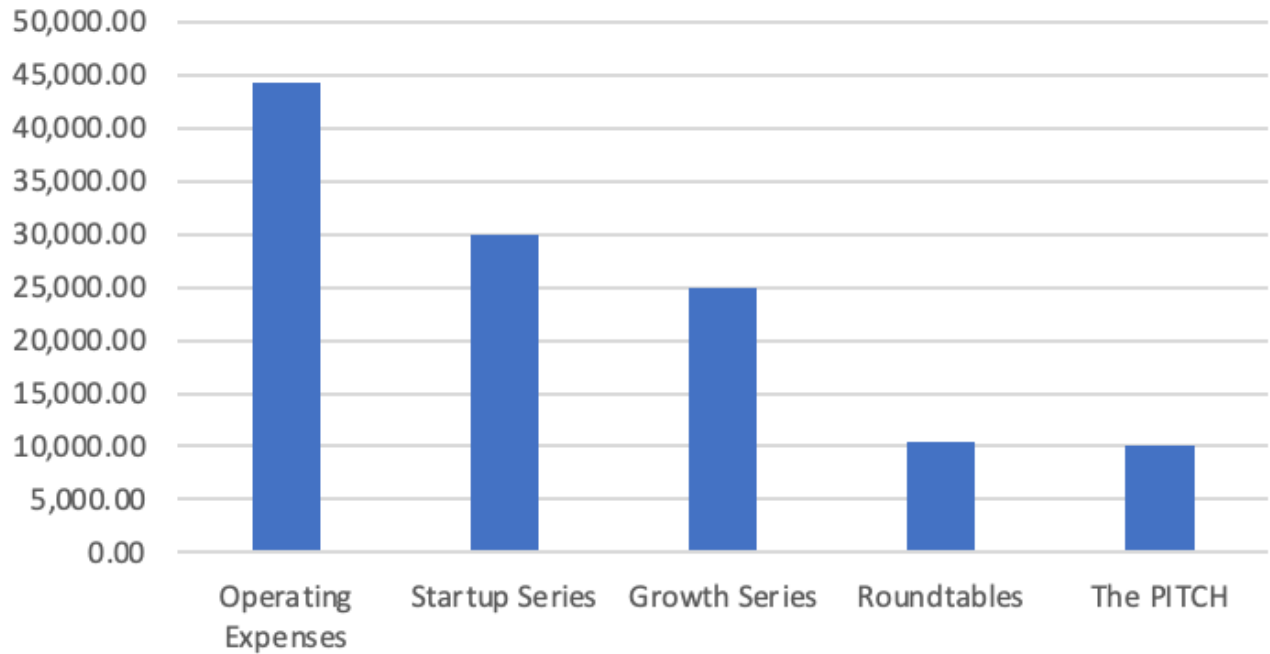
Campaign Reach
Growth Series



2024

FUNDING REQUEST

Economic Investment



Operating Expenses

\$44,200

Startup Series (7 Workshops and Resources)

\$30,000

Growth Series (14 Weeks with Mentoring)

\$25,000

Roundtables (6 Roundtables)

\$10,500

The PITCH (Community Highlight)

\$10,000

Total Annual Investment

\$119,700

In-Kind Donation (over 3 years)

Lake Michigan College Space/Technology

\$350,000

TOTAL ANNUAL INVESTMENT NEEDED
FOR CONTINUED GROWTH
\$119,700.00

CONTRIBUTIONS TO-DATE
\$44,200.00

PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

Planning Team

GB Richmond, Goodbye Money Stress
Scott Whiteford, Whiteford Wealth Management
Mike Neiss, Michael T. Neiss & Associates
Trevor Brooks, Kitchen Tribes
Michael Medema, Amplify Innovations & Entrepreneurship

Mentor Team

Kathy Merchant, Calico Cleaning
Prince Covington, MovePortz
Kevin Whiteford, Whiteford Wealth Management
GB Richmond, Goodbye Money Stress
Michael Medema, Amplify Innovations & Entrepreneurship

Subject Matter Experts

Steve Cummings, SPC Consulting
Michele Coy, Michele Coy Enterprises
Michele Mollard, EOS Worldwide
Julie Payovich, FocusCFO
A. Elizabeth Bernhard, Manufacturing Growth Alliance
Jennifer Sistrunk, Van Buren County Convention & Visitors Bureau
Mike Neiss, Michael T. Neiss & Associates
Bob Jank, Consultant/Investor
Michael Griffin, First Source Bank
Sandra Cochran, WMed Innovation Center
Valarie Cunningham, Synergy Health Center

Sarah Forrest, Michigan Small Business Development Center
Maria Sorrentino, Pest Pros of Michigan
John Kepplinger, SCORE
Kalamazoo/SW Michigan
Cheri Bales, Hannah/Gold Communications Marketing

Community Partners

City of South Haven
Emerge Innovation Hub
Lake Michigan College, South Haven
Manufacturing Growth Alliance
Market Van Buren
MEDC
MI Works!
MSU Center or Regional Food Systems
South Haven Area Chamber of Commerce
South Haven Township
South Haven Van Buren County
Convention & Visitors Bureau
WBC at Cornerstone Alliance

Donors and Event Sponsors

Amplify Connections
Big Blue Rentals
EssentialJen Virtual Services
Goodbye Money Stress
Hannah/Gold Communications
Heart of the Haven
Huntington Bank
Kitchen Tribes
Michele Coy
Michigan Flywheelers
Paul Buchbinder Productions
Sturgis Bank
Whiteford Wealth Management

Being a small business is isolating and getting together with other small business owners truly helps. We look forward to seeing more programing and resources from the South Haven Region Business Hub.

—Mo'Nique Crowley, Fruit Street Kitchen

SUCCESS STORY

Larry Phillips' business journey began while teaching Cornhole (Bags) at the South Haven Senior Center.

Larry was just starting to sell his products when an associate encouraged him to obtain the appropriate business structure as he grew. He was told to seek a business coach and given Debi Howe's name. Debi Howe is the Executive Director of the South Haven Region Business Hub, a local entrepreneurial hub.

From hand-making bags in his garage, to producing more than 500 units Larry's growth blossomed and so did his bottom line. Here's his story...

What's your 'special sauce'?

"The fact that we are approved by the American Cornhole organization and certified to host ACO events is huge!" said Phillips. A local cornhole enthusiast group, the "269 Baggers" will now be hosting its regionals at First Baptist Church Gym (where Phillips is the pastor).

How did South Haven Region Business Hub help you?

"They helped with choosing a business strategy, writing a business plan, determining my return on investment and how to measure it and overall, helped me discover how to be profitable."

"The most difficult part of being a giving soul and running a business was pricing the product to compete with its market," said Phillips.

What was the most valuable thing about working with South Haven Region Business Hub?

"How to go from making a little money doing something I was already enjoying personally to turning it into a real business and selling my products to the general public and the cornhole professional market. That's very rewarding."

What measurable results has your business achieved since your interactions with the South Haven Region Business Hub?

"We sell in 1/2 sets of 4. In 2022 we sold 109 1/2 sets and in 2023 we sold more than 500 1/2 sets at \$70 each." From his profits, he has reinvested in the company purchasing additional production equipment, a website, and bags material in bulk. He is looking into a storefront with a manufacturing facility in 2024.

Additional words of wisdom for our entrepreneurs (or mentors)?

"I taught Debi bags and Debi taught me business. Don't be afraid to ask for help and trust the process."

Company Information

BP Bags & Boards, Larry Phillips, South Haven, MI, Est. 2022

[Facebook Page](#)

Why does the business exist?

"During covid we started the business to supplement my income for my young family." As business grew, Phillips attracted a larger audience, and caught the eye of professional cornhole players. His bags have now been approved by the American Cornhole Organization for professional use, and certified to host ACO events. A local enthusiast group, "269 Baggers" will now be hosting regionals at First Baptist Church Gym, in South Haven, where he is the pastor.



BP BAGS & BOARDS, LARRY PHELPS



LAKESHORE CAPITAL CONSORTIUM

**Nonprofit and
for-profit lending
support**

The Lakeshore Capital Consortium helps small business located throughout Van Buren County and the Lakeshore area to access the capital they need in order to get off the ground or expand.

The Consortium consists of non-profit lenders, for-profit lenders, and other funders who work together with the South Haven Region Business Hub to improve access to capital resources.

FOUR local businesses have received funding through the Lakeshore Capital Consortium. Two are in the pipeline.

Our Mission: Making the South Haven Region a place where entrepreneurs want to start and grow.

Guiding Principles: Combining collective knowledge, connections, and resources of the community, creating initiatives, and partnerships for ALL our local entrepreneurs.

It takes a community to raise an entrepreneur!

For more information
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Facebook: <https://bit.ly/SHRBHFacebook>