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SBDC SETS ROMNEY SMALL BUSINESS WORKSHOPS FOR THIS SPRING

Even in the face of rising prices for fuel and food, and other challenging factors, people who want to start a small business, or who want to expand and strengthen existing small businesses, are finding cause for confidence.

In February, for the first time since last summer, the percentage of small business owners who believe that economic conditions are improving for them increased, as did the percentage of those who plan to increase spending on business development activities, according to the Discover Small Business Watch, an independently conducted random survey of 1,000 small businesses nationwide.

“And they also reported a decrease in the percentages of owners who feel that economic conditions are worsening,” said Beth Ludewig, manger of the Potomac Highlands Small Business Development Center at Eastern WV Community and Technical College.

To strengthen the foundation of that growing confidence, this spring in Romney Ludewig will offer a Business Basics Institute series of workshops for small businesses, including home-based businesses. In the first of these, ‘Going Into Business In West Virginia,’ April 3, from 10:00 am to noon, at the Bank of Romney Community Center, she will detail the basic steps of starting a new business.

Space is limited. To register, and for more information, call Lacey Ball at 434-8000, or toll free: (877) 982-2322.

That first workshop will cover topics including personal and financial considerations, state licensing, basic recordkeeping, business finance preparation and available resources. Ludewig will also discuss supportive

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SBDC Sets Romney Small Business Workshops For This Spring p. 2

services offered by the state of West Virginia to business owners. “Even folks who are already running a small business will find valuable information and valued interaction in all the workshops,” she said.

Ludewig’s second workshop, ‘Let’s Go Marketing Your Business,’ will explore a four-step model, using a variety of proven marketing tools and advertising techniques, to develop a successful marketing plan specifically tailored to small businesses. This workshop will meet April 16, also from 10:00 am to noon in Bank of Romney Community Center. “Profits grow from satisfying customers’ needs, nourishing a positive image of your business in their minds, and maintaining open and effective communication with them,” Ludewig noted.

On May 1, Ludewig will focus on ‘Building Your Business Plan.’ “Banks will not loan money for a small business unless they see a solid business plan,” she emphasized, “to provide a basis and direction for current and future business decisions.” Her interactive workshop, again from 10:00 am to noon at the Bank of Romney, will explain the various parts of a sound business plan, identify its necessary elements, and provide a step-by-step guide to putting one together.

Arrangements for people with disabilities will be made if requested two weeks in advance.

The SBDC is a division of the West Virginia Development Office and works with colleges, universities and other host institutions to provide free business consulting and technical assistance at 15 statewide locations. SBDC is a program supported by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and extended to the public on a non-discriminatory basis. SBA cannot endorse any products, opinions or services of any external parties or activities.

Serving the residents of Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, Pendleton and Tucker counties, Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College is a comprehensive and equal opportunity community and technical college bringing the resources and assets of Education That Works to the families, communities and employers of the Potomac Highlands.