River District Association

www.riverdistrictassociation.com

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News Release

March 21, 2024

For immediate release

River District Association Dream Launch Certificates of Completion to over 90 participants

DANVILLE VA – On March 20th the River District Association (RDA) hosted a graduation ceremony to award Dream Launch Certificates of Completion to over 90 participants. To earn a certificate and graduate, participants must attend all 6 Dream Launch Bootcamp classes.

To date, 612 individuals have participated in all or some of the Dream Launch Bootcamp classes, and over 300 have completed the entire series of classes.

The RDA Dream Launch Bootcamp is for anyone who wishes to learn more about opening, owning, and operating a business in the Dan River Region; the Bootcamp is also opened to current businesses that would like to expand as well as those that would like to audit the courses to prepare for potentially opening a business in the future. There is no cost to participate in the Bootcamp.

RDA strives to make the Dream Launch Bootcamp classes diverse and accessible. This year, Dream Launch Bootcamp participants were: 70% Black, 24% White, 2% Two or more races, 1% Native American, 1% Asian, 1% Hispanic/Latino, 1% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. Of all participants, 76% were Female and 24% Male.

"We wish for everyone who participated in the Dream Launch Bootcamp to keep moving forward." Said Will Mackaman, RDA Director of Economic Vitality, " This community is counting on its entrepreneurs and small business owners. As in each year of the program, the class instructors, business mentors and pitch competition judges deserve to be recognized in particular for their volunteer time and unique talent lent toward the Dream Launch Bootcamp program."

A portion of participants who earned their certificate will pitch their business idea in the RDA IGNITE Business Pitch Competition (Formerly the RDA Dream Launch Pitch Competition) for awards and incentives totaling $50,000. Additionally, RDA Dream Launch Bootcamp participants who wish to open a business outside of the district are eligible to compete in the Danville Pittsylvania County Chamber of Commerce Rev-Up Pitch. Rev-up will have $50,000 available in awards and incentives. Additional prize contributions include a $2500 prize from Community Investment Collaborative (one for Ignite, one for Rev Up) and one $250 grant from Movement Bank for Ignite only.

Registration for the 2025 Dream Launch Bootcamp Cohort will open in the fall of 2024.

Funding for the RDA Dream Launch Boot Camp, IGNITE Business Pitch and Rev-Up Danville Pittsylvania Pitch is made possible by the City of Danville Office of Economic Development and Tourism, Pittsylvania County, and The Danville Regional Foundation. The Dream Launch graduation ceremony was sponsored by Letterpress Communications.

The River District Association was organized in 1999 as the Downtown Danville Association. In May 2015, the organization was renamed the River District Association to complement the City's River District brand and is an accredited Virginia and National Main Street Community. More information about the River District Association can be found at www.riverdistrictassociation.com.