



News Release

Seattle District Office

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Emerging Leaders Initiative Returns to Seattle

Free “Mini-MBA” Program Provided by SBA Gives Business Owners Tools to Spark Sustainable Business Growth, Job Creation in Western Washington

SEATTLE – For the fifth year in row, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Seattle District Office is offering the Emerging Leaders training initiative for local small businesses on the brink of growth.

The intensive entrepreneurship education series – for small businesses beyond the startup stage – includes approximately 100 hours of classroom time during seven months. Upon completion of the course, participants have a three-year growth action plan and a network of peers and industry experts.

Plus, for every \$200 the SBA invests in the Emerging Leaders initiative, a new job is created.

“The beauty of the SBA Emerging Leaders program is it provides the framework for local entrepreneurs to work *on* their business instead of *in* their business,” SBA Acting Seattle District Director Mark Costello said. “It’s amazing to see the progress our Emerging Leaders graduates make during the program and afterward. They truly are local business leaders.”

The Emerging Leaders class is offered in approximately 50 cities across the U.S. There are 20 available seats for the 2017 program in Seattle. The SBA Seattle District Office is now accepting online applications at www.sba.gov/EmergingLeaders through **Wednesday, March 1**; there are informational webinars on [Jan. 27](#) and [Feb. 13](#) to help answer any questions applicants may have about the program.

“Small business owners often know where they want to take their business, but can find themselves struggling with how to get there,” SBA Acting Regional Administrator Nancy Porzio said. “The Emerging Leaders initiative provides business owners with the tools and expert guidance to spark sustainable business growth, which we’ve seen in Emerging Leaders graduates across the country who have reported a 62 percent increase in revenue.”

Past Emerging Leaders graduates from the Western Washington have come from industries such as laboratory design and construction, foodtrucks, strategy consulting services, clean energy, and more.

“The most surprising thing we learned was how much we learned from each other,” CEO of Bright Spring Strategy Consulting and 2016 Seattle Emerging Leaders graduate Meg Halverson said. “Every class, we learned more about our own businesses, and in the process, about each other’s.”

Basic eligibility requirements to participate in the Emerging Leaders program include the following:

- Be a small business owner or head decision-maker
- Have business annual revenues between \$400,000 and \$10 million
- Have been in business for at least three years

- Have at least one employee, other than self
- Make the time commitment required of the course
- Demonstrate the business is on the brink of growth or transition

Since the SBA started the program 10 years ago, the initiative has trained more than 2,700 small business owners across the country. In 2016 alone, nearly 750 small business owners graduated from the program, representing the largest graduating class since the program began in 2008.

Graduates of the program have created nearly 2,000 new full-time jobs, secured more than \$73 million in new financing, and were awarded federal, state, local and tribal contracts worth more than \$1 billion.

For more information about the Emerging Leaders initiative, visit www.sba.gov/EmergingLeaders.

About the SBA Seattle District Office:

The SBA Seattle District serves Washington state and northern Idaho with office locations in Seattle and Spokane. Today's SBA stands for more than Small Business Administration; it stands for Smart, Bold and Accessible. SBA staff provides resources and services in three areas referred to as "the three C's" – Counseling, Capital and Contracting. Visit www.sba.gov/wa for localized information including resource partners, lenders, events and workshops, success stories, news and updates, and other information aimed to help business start, grow and succeed.

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