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Ripon launches second annual business planning program

Ripon, WI – Prospective entrepreneurs may not only receive free advice on starting a business — they also may be paid for their ideas.

A partnership formed by several Ripon groups and businesses plan to provide access to resources and capital would-be business owners need to start and sustain their enterprises. This new program will be available to retail, service, entertainment and manufacturing prospects.

Ripon Main Street, Inc. and the Ripon College Creative Enterprise Consultants are proud to sponsor Ripon's first entrepreneurial development program. Beginning Tuesday, October 25th, this eight-week course will take entrepreneurs through a step-by-step approach to writing a professional business plan. The course is designed for those who are considering starting a business. In addition, the program can also benefit existing small businesses that are interested in expanding.

The cost for the Ripon Entrepreneurial Training course is only \$150, which includes handouts and other materials. A course of this nature usually costs \$1,000 or more, however, the Ripon College Creative Enterprise Consultants and Ripon Main Street, Inc. are offering entrepreneurial training grants to qualified applicants that covers 75% of the tuition.

The Ripon Entrepreneurial Training Program covers topics such as Research, Marketing, Organizational Matters, Financial Planning and Projections, and Managing Growth; culminating with the creation of a comprehensive business plan for each participant. Every Tuesday evening, November 1 through December 13, course participants will meet to gain the knowledge and skills required to create a plan for the ultimate success of their business.

Additionally, all of the completed plans are automatically entered into a contest for the best business plan, with a \$1,000 cash award for the first successful concept. Successful business plans will also qualify for a \$35,000 low interest loan from the Ripon Revolving Loan Fund (RLF).

The Ripon RLF, which currently has a loan balance of over \$253,000, is available to provide gap financing in the form of low interest loans to businesses that create jobs within the city limits. The purpose of the RLF is to promote local economic development through the expansion and retention of employment and business opportunities in the community.

As a preview to the course, Ripon Main Street and Ripon College will host a free introduction to business-planning seminar, "Starting a Business in Ripon," on Tuesday, October 18, 5:30 to 7:30 pm in the Silver Creek Room at the Ripon Public Library. This one-evening course will talk about some of the basics that go into a start-up business. The session will also allow perspective entrepreneurs to sign up for the Ripon Entrepreneurial Training Program.

The Ripon Main Street, Inc. is a public/private partnership dedicated to improving the economic vitality of the county and its residents. Celebrating our 29th anniversary, Ripon Main Street has been successful in helping businesses create and retain hundreds of jobs through a myriad of programs and initiatives.

Visit www.downtownripon.com and click on "[BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES](#)" for additional information. Those interested in participating in the program must submit an application which is linked on the Business Opportunity page. Please contact the Ripon Main Street office at (920) 748-7466 to discuss this opportunity in greater detail.

- [Entrepreneurial Program Rules & Regulations](http://www.downtownripon.com/riponmainst/pdf/Business_Plan_Rules_and_Regulations.pdf) (www.downtownripon.com/riponmainst/pdf/Business_Plan_Rules_and_Regulations.pdf)
- [Business Plan Application](http://www.downtownripon.com/riponmainst/pdf/Business_Plan_Application_(2016).pdf) ([www.downtownripon.com/riponmainst/pdf/Business_Plan_Application_\(2016\).pdf](http://www.downtownripon.com/riponmainst/pdf/Business_Plan_Application_(2016).pdf))