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Contact: Michael Gillen
718.263.0546
mgillen@queensny.org

Queens Economic Development Corporation Announces Fall Programs and Services

Start or Grow a Business, Learn Skills, Get Certified

(LIC, NY) — Looking to serve business owners, entrepreneurs, home improvement contractors, minorities, immigrants, women, and all others, the Queens Economic Development Corporation announced its new programs and services during its annual networking event at Z Rooftop in Long Island City on Sept. 1.

The eleventh annual **Queens StartUP! Business Plan Competition**, sponsored by Citi Foundation and organized in cooperation with Queens Library, will award three winning businesses as much as \$10,000 each, while providing technical assistance, resources, and training to all partakers.

Contestants must attend free seminars on four topics — All About Business Planning and Research; Business Operations and Management; Creative Sales and Marketing; and Developing Financial Statements. These two-hour sessions will take place at Flushing Library on various dates between Oct. 1, 2016, and Jan. 28, 2017. After attending a fourth session, applicants can write business plans and submit them to a panel of judges, who will select the winners.

Free StartUP! information sessions are offered as follows: Sept. 12, 6:15 pm, Glen Oaks Library; Sept. 14, 6:30 pm, Flushing Library; and Sept. 17, 10:30 am, Cambria Heights Library.

The **Entrepreneurial Assistance Program** is for aspiring and existing small business owners. Offered since 1991, this 20-class course informs on ways to minimize risk and maximize reward when starting or expanding a business.

With an experienced professor, participants study the following: How to Write a Compelling Business Plan; How to Conduct Industry and Market Research; Marketing and Sales Techniques; Operations Structure; Technology to Automate and Streamline a Business; How to Legally Structure a Business; Competitive Positioning; How to Structure Financial Statements; and How to Finance a Business.

Classes will run twice a week — on Tuesdays and Thursdays — from Sept. 27 to Dec. 13 at the Entrepreneur Space, QEDC's food-and-business incubator in Long Island City. The cost is \$500, but an 80 percent discount is available to veterans and those with an unemployment or self-employment award letter that was in effect up to three months prior to the start of the class.

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QEDC will continue offering its highly successful **Home Improvement Contractor Training** course in English, Mandarin, and Spanish. HICT prepares contractors to pass the NYC Department of Consumer Affairs licensing exam. It consists of three six-hour classes led by an experienced teacher, who also takes students as a group to the licensing exam at DCA headquarters in Manhattan. The lessons are accompanied by one-on-one business advisory services, such as consultations on permits and licensing, business development, avoiding liability, procurement, and access to capital. HICT is offered as per demand. To sign up for HICT, please fill out an interest form or contact Sarah Liu at or sliu@queensny.org.

QEDC will also continue offering **M/WBE certification**. Women and minorities who have been in business for at least a year can obtain a special designation that would give them priority for government contracts. For more info, contact Ricardi Calixte at rc@queensny.org.

Along the same lines, the **Queens Women's Business Center** will continue to help woman start and grow their companies. The program director, Andrea Ormeño, provides one-on-one counseling by appointment, but she also organizes workshops and networking opportunities, including the Power Networking Breakfast, which usually attracts about 50 female entrepreneurs. Contact her at aormeno@queensny.org.

In conjunction with New York Community Trust, Queens Public Library, and Emerald Isle Immigration Center, QEDC will continue offering **Ruth's Ready for BuSine\$\$**, an innovative 60-hour program that provides clients with advanced English instruction that incorporates business terms. Plus, local banks offer incentives for clients to open business bank accounts.

Finally, QEDC will continue operating **MadeInQueens** (aka MiQ), the pop-up store that sells locally made artisanal products, crafts, design goods, home accessories, and food products at 27-24 Queens Plaza South in Long Island City. The shop, which opened last June, showcases borough-based manufacturers, producers, entrepreneurs, artisans and local partners.

More information on these programs and other services are on QEDC's website: queensny.org.

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