



For Immediate Release

November 3, 2017

SMARTstart Celebrates 2017 Participants

AIRDRIE, ALBERTA – Seventeen up-and-coming local entrepreneurs representing 15 businesses were celebrated on Wednesday, November 1 at the 2017 SMARTstart Program Celebration Event in Airdrie.

The entrepreneurs spent the last eight months refining their idea for a new business or working to strengthen their existing business through the made-in-Airdrie SMARTstart entrepreneurial training program.

"It's exciting to watch these entrepreneurs learn and grow," says Sara Chamberlain, SMARTstart Organizing Committee Member. "The Celebration Event was an opportunity to celebrate their achievements and hear about their future plans. It was truly an inspiring evening."

The 2017 participants recognized at the event were:

- Erica Hatch, Airdrie Osteopathic Care & Wellness Centre
- Adam & Veronica Boccinfuso, BOCC Home Inspections Ltd.
- Ashley Williams & Drucilla Heighton, Byoode Bar
- Margo Drever, Cumberland Accounting & Bookkeeping Consulting Ltd.
- Heather Dunbar, Home Maid Help
- Ashton Bennett, Lace & Locket Photography
- Heather Doyle, Loving Hands Partners in Care
- Kerri Kuefler, Made in the Shade Blinds & More
- Vladimir Gonzalez, Maxi Foods
- Dana Remillard, Mosaic Learning Solutions
- Barbara Brown, My Myo Smiles
- Jenn Lisoway, Pure Creations Events & Design
- Paula Collett, Tulaa
- Emily Fleming, The Art of Steel
- Kara Fulton, Thumbprint Craft Beer Market

SMARTstart provided the participants with online business skills training, 11 in-person workshops delivered by Airdrie business experts, and a local mentor. Working with their mentor, each participant completed a business, strategic or feasibility plan by the end of the program.

"One of the best things about the program is the sense of community," said 2017 program participant Veronica Boccinfuso during her speech at the event. "There's nothing like this to help you grow or start your business in Calgary. Airdrie is a great place to do business."

The event was also an opportunity to celebrate the 16 local businesspeople who volunteer their time to be SMARTstart mentors.

- Gary Armstrong, Empowered Employee Education
- Wendy Bates-Wiebe, The Hair Lounge
- Joan Bell, retired
- Jennifer Benner, Benner Database Designs
- Dr. Jacqueline Boyd, Access Chiropractic and Wellness Centres
- Danielle Coulter, Tutor Doctor
- Jody Funk, ABBL Hardware
- Tracy Goodbrand, Irricana Kountry Kennel
- Jacqui Jepson, The Pink Wand Cleaning Services
- Jody Keller, K.T. Keller Holdings Ltd.
- Danielle Kot, former owner of Simply for Life
- Kari Lines, Budget Blinds of Airdrie
- Kelly Paisley, The I.T. Company
- Robyn Pearson, A Friend Indeed
- Lorelei Talbot, Astoria Asset Management
- Sid Van der Meer, retired

SMARTstart

setting new businesses up for success

SMARTstart was launched in 2014 by the Airdrie Business Resource Partnership. It is an award-winning program delivered by Airdrie Chamber of Commerce, City of Airdrie Economic Development and Community Futures Centre West. SMARTstart has now provided training to more than 70 entrepreneurs.

The program is made possible with support from local sponsors. “We are overwhelmed by the support SMARTstart receives from the Airdrie business community,” says Chamberlain. “Many of our sponsors have been with us since the program began – a real testament to their belief in the importance of SMARTstart.”

The 2017 SMARTstart sponsors are:

- Title Sponsors: Astoria Asset Management and BMO Bank of Montreal Kingsview Market
- Entrepreneur Sponsors: Airdrie Women in Business Association, Sid Van der Meer and The Pink Wand Cleaning Services Ltd
- Friend Sponsors: Kerry Oswald and Edward Jones – Derek Lalonde
- Media sponsors: Air 106.1FM, airdrielife, Airdrie Echo, and Here’s the Scoop.

Applications for the 2018 program are open until December 20, 2017. Entrepreneurs with an idea or new businesses (in operation for less than three years) are invited to learn more at an information session on Tuesday, November 21 at 7 p.m. at the Airdrie Chamber of Commerce office, #102, 150 Edwards Way NW.

To learn more, visit www.smartstartbusiness.ca or e-mail info@smartstartbusiness.ca.



The 2017 SMARTstart participants. Back (from left): Adam Boccinfuso, Veronica Boccinfuso, Erica Hatch, Kerri Kuefler, Heather Dunbar, Dana Remillard. Front (from left): Heather Doyle, Paula Collett, Kara Fulton, Ashton Bennett, Margo Drever, Drucilla Heighton, Jenn Lisoway and Vladimir Gonzalez. Missing: Emily Fleming and Ashley Williams.

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