



For Immediate Release

March 1, 2019

SMARTstart Launches 2019 Program

AIRDRIE, ALBERTA – The 2019 SMARTstart entrepreneurial training program officially launched Tuesday night with an enthusiastic and dynamic group of local entrepreneurs and mentors.

“It’s always exciting to welcome another group of entrepreneurs into our program,” says Tara Levick, SMARTstart Organizing Committee Member. “We are at the beginning of the sixth year of our program and so excited to help these entrepreneurs move their businesses forward with training, business planning and mentorship.”

Launched in 2014, SMARTstart has assisted almost 90 local entrepreneurs with their new business or business idea. As a result, 16 new businesses have opened and a further 30% of participants had expanded their business operations by the end of the program.

Sixteen entrepreneurs, representing 15 businesses, have been accepted into this year’s program.

Entrepreneurs with an idea:

- Cowork Space/Cocktail Lounge, Nick Davies
- Fashion and Soft Furnishings, Moonliza Menya
- Le Potager Kitchen Gardens, Natasha Guillot
- Smile Agency, Morgan Lee Sylvain & Kayla McPhail
- Vinyl Wraps for Automotive Applications, Ryan White

New business owners (in operation less than 3 years):

- Airdrie Exchange, Lindsey Coyle
- Boulevard Home Inc., Danielle Doetzel
- DigiWave Services, Scott Jones
- Distinct Graphics & Software Solutions, Cigdem Fareed
- Evolution Performance Ltd., Colin Bailey
- Getintheloop Airdrie, Chrissie Rozak
- Grounded Natural Cleaning Services, Marla Elms
- Leaps N Bounds Inflatables, Chris Lindsey
- Re’Ferbish Group INC, Tara Reid
- Things by Kitty, Kitty Bexson

Over the course of eight months, the entrepreneurs will complete the *100 Essential Business Skills* online training from GoForth Institute, participate in 11 in-person workshops, and work with a mentor on the completion of a business, feasibility or strategic plan.

Mentors are volunteers from the Airdrie business community. The 17 local business leaders volunteering in 2019 are:

- Danielle Coulter, former owner Tutor Doctor
- Don Dixon, Cangos
- Jacqueline Boyd, Access Chiropractic and Wellness
- Jacqui Jepson, The Pink Wand Cleaning Services Ltd.
- Joan Traub, Retired (Airdrie Yoga Studio)
- Jo-Anne Yau, Masuch Law
- Kari Lines, Budget Blinds
- Melanie Beingessner, Blessingways Family Wellness
- Michelle Carre, MichelleCarre.com and The Carre Group
- Nadine Woitt, Mezzanine Hair Studio
- Natalie Gibson, InnoVisions and Associates
- Robyn Pearson, A Friend Indeed
- Ron Farrell, Beneficial Insurance Solutions
- Sandi Christensen, Goodmen Roofing
- Sid Van der Meer, Retired (Northwest Equipment)
- Stacey Lauer, CTR Refrigeration
- Tracy Goodbrand, Irricana Kountry Kennel

The Launch Event was held on February 26 at Airdrie's Hampton Inn & Suites where the 2019 participants, mentors and sponsors were introduced. A "speed connecting" session was held to provide the opportunity for program mentors and entrepreneurs to meet.

SMARTstart is an award-winning program delivered by the City of Airdrie Economic Development and Community Futures Centre West.

The program is made possible with support from the following sponsors:

- Seminar Sponsors: BDC, MNP
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To learn more, visit www.smartstartairdrie.ca

Photos submitted: Spruce & Sparrow Photography

Photo 1 – Mentor Nadine Woitt and entrepreneur Cigdem Fareed meeting at the speed connecting session

Photo 2 – Program mentor Robyn Pearson of A Friend Indeed MC'd the February 26 Launch Event

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