



**VENTURE
NORTH**

PRESS RELEASE

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**MANISTEE CO. SMALL BUSINESSES HURT BY COVID RECEIVE GRANTS
THROUGH REGIONAL RESILIENCY PROGRAM PARTNERSHIP
Industrial Development Corp. Plans to Announce More Grants Next Week**

MANISTEE, MICHIGAN – Two organizations with legacies of generous giving to support the economy and quality of life in Manistee County are helping ten small businesses recover from the damages of the Covid pandemic, with each receiving grants of either \$5,000 or \$2,500. The \$40,000 in grants was made possible through an award of \$20,000 by the Manistee Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), a grant of \$10,000 from the Manistee County Community Foundation (MCCF) through the Community Response Fund and \$10,000 through the Regional Resiliency Program, administered by Venture North Funding & Development.

“Small businesses are essential to all sectors of our economy and employment base in Manistee County,” said Mike Ennis, President of the Manistee Industrial Development Corporation, a 62-year-old tax-exempt nonprofit that is coordinating the county’s participation in the Regional Resiliency Program. “COVID has delivered unprecedented blows to many of the more than 1,200 companies in the County with nine or fewer employees. We need to act now to help sustain small businesses and support their resiliency into 2021.”

The IDC plans to announce some additional awards to small businesses the week of November 30, 2020 in tandem with additional grants to Venture North.

The Regional Resiliency Program began in May 2020 with a \$200,000 grant to Venture North from the Consumers Energy Foundation. To date, the Regional Resiliency Program has secured over \$500,000 and made grants to over 150 small businesses with nine or fewer employees in their ten-county region. In all cases, the Program is a partnership with local organizations like the IDC that help promote the program and make funds available for the small business grants.

“We’re planning to join Venture North to make a handful of additional grants next week,” said Steve Brower, Board member of the IDC. “The IDC has committed an additional \$30,000 in grants for the program but only if a sum of \$30,000 is raised through others interested in partnering with us. We required this match out of our wish to help as many small businesses as we can while encouraging others to step forward. We have more grant applicants that we would like to help but need new funding partners to do so.”

“We are pleased to partner with the IDC and Venture North to help support businesses that provide goods and services to our residents and are vital to our economy,” said Laura Heintzelman, President and CEO of the MCCF. Every community in Manistee County has felt the impact of the pandemic. Our County has a history of generous giving that is once again leaving an indelibly positive imprint and inspiration during this unprecedented time.”

Venture North Funding and Development is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) that specializes in supporting economic growth and jobs by making capital available to small businesses. Venture North administers the Regional Resiliency Program that provides grants of up to \$5,000 to northwest Michigan businesses with nine or fewer employees.

Donations to the fund can be made online by clicking the “Donate to the Fund” button at <https://www.venturenorthfunding.org/regional-resiliency-programtraverseconnect.com/our-region/regional-resiliency-fund/> or by contacting Laura Galbraith at 231-357-6776.

Small Business Grant Recipients Include:

J. Catlett & Company

Happy Owl Book Shop

Diner 31, LLC

The Baca Agency

Kathleen’s House of Style

Krista LeAnns Studio of Hair Design

Betty’s Beauty Salon

Transitions Women’s Wellness Center

Jennifer’s Hair Studio

M-22 Grill