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Milwaukee County Awards \$11.6M in Small Business Grants

MILWAUKEE, WI – Today, Milwaukee County announced that it has awarded \$11.6 million in Small Business Initiative Grant funding to 1,534 Milwaukee County small businesses.

“The response to Milwaukee County’s Small Business Initiative Grant has been overwhelming,” said Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley. “With over 2,100 applications received, the need for relief for local businesses was heard loud and clear. Our goal is that this funding will help businesses stay afloat amid the economic challenges of this pandemic and enable entrepreneurs to operate in the safest, most sustainable way possible.”

Earlier this year, Milwaukee County fully advocated all CARES Act funding, including by setting aside \$7 million to aid businesses. Based on the outpouring of requests for that aid, an additional \$5 million was re-allocated to ensure that as many Milwaukee County businesses as possible could receive relief.

“Recognizing the urgency of the financial challenges businesses are facing, the Milwaukee County Board has been working closely with County Executive Crowley to provide relief as quickly as possible,” said Milwaukee County Board Chairwoman Marcelia Nicholson. “Our businesses are being asked to function under dire circumstances, and it is a priority for Milwaukee County to alleviate that burden as much as we can with the resources we have available.”

Grant funds will enable businesses to cover a number of expenses, including PPE, restocking inventory, physical space modifications to follow COVID-19 guidelines, rent or mortgage payments, payroll and utilities.

In step with the County’s mission to address racial inequity, priority was given to businesses with a letter of support from a member of the Ethnic & Diverse Chamber Coalition, a group of chambers of commerce supporting entrepreneurs of color, women, LGBT and veteran-owned businesses and other enterprises in historically underserved places who don’t have access to flexible, affordable capital.

“Our pursuit of racial equity will not be put on pause for the pandemic. It is crucial to invest in our marginalized communities now to secure a path forward and opportunity for continued economic growth long after the COVID-19 pandemic subsides,” said County Executive Crowley.

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