

Testimony for Micro Business Development Program

February 10, 2020

Dear Governor Scott, Senators, and Representatives,

Please do not cut the funding for CVOEO's Micro Business Development Program. It is an essential program that provides opportunity to better your circumstances. I live in South Burlington and am just one of the many people who have benefited from its existence. The program offers workshops, such as Keys to Credit and Creating a Financial Future, which teach financial responsibility. It also has a Vermont Matched Savings account to help you save toward your goal. The matching savings is an important piece for me. Having the account teaches goal setting, patience, consistency and accountability. It is showing me that despite our financial circumstances, I am able to save each month for two years towards my goal. The increase in savings with the match will help provide a good base to launch my dream goal. For me, that is to start my own business using my artistic skills.

With the help of my Business Counselor, John Gergely I have taken steps to develop a budget for myself as well as my business. He has been a valuable resource of knowledge as well as a source of encouragement. Three months ago I had my first solo art show. Afterwards, John discussed ways for me to continue to show my work in other venues and how to increase sales. One of the biggest impacts John has made in my life was his guidance eight months ago when my husband and I feared we had exhausted our financial resources and needed to sell our home. John helped me to look at other options and worked diligently with me for the five months it took us to refinance our home. The refinancing came through the credit union that CVOEO uses for their matching funds. Without being part of the Micro Business Development Program, I believe we would've lost our home and I would've lost the chance to move forward with chasing a dream that I put on hold while raising a family and supporting them in their goals. I am so grateful to have an organization and a counselor who believe in me and for this new start. There are many others who also deserve the opportunity to improve their life. Please give them the chance by continuing to fund CVOEO's Micro Business Development Program.

Thank you,

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