



EMBRACE: Economic Micro Business Recovery Assistance for the COVID-19 Epidemic

GRANTS FOR MICROBUSINESSES ACROSS VERMONT TO SURVIVE COVID

OUTCOMES

\$2,103,838.50 in grants provided

436 businesses received grants

Developed statewide website to support businesses:

<https://mbdp.org>

FY 2022 REQUEST

We request additional funds to provide grants to micro businesses effected by COVID-19 during the next 6—12 months. Stronger support will lead to stronger outcomes:

- **\$1,000,000 in funding would support 2 grant specialists and providing 180 grants worth \$5,000.**
- **\$2,000,000 in funding would support 4 grant specialists and providing 360 grants worth \$5,000.**

The **Micro Business Development Programs (MBDPs)** of Vermont's Community Action Agencies are experienced and agile in supporting low- to moderate-income entrepreneurs in starting, sustaining, and growing businesses.

In **response to COVID-19**, the MBDPs joined with the Vermont Community Action Partnership to establish the EMBRACE direct grant program to support businesses with five or fewer employees who were negatively effected by COVID-19. Grants ranged from \$2,500 to \$5,000. From August to December 2020, 436 grants were awarded, totaling over \$2,100,000.

81.6% of grant applicants stated that EMBRACE would "prevent them from going out of business." Applicant demographics include:

- 62% are female or minority owned businesses;
- 39% have children living at home;
- 84% rely on self-employment for household income;
- 89% are sole proprietors or single member LLCs;
- 98% had not received any business financial relief before EMBRACE.

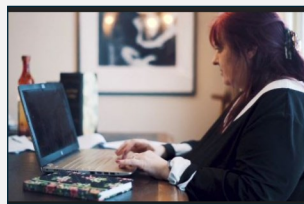
Number of grants by MBDP (with counties):

- CVOEO (Addison, Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle) = 116
- Capstone (Lamoille, Orange, Washington) = 99
- BROO (Bennington, Rutland) = 82
- NEKCA (Caledonia, Essex, Orleans) = 70
- SEVCA (Windham, Windsor) = 69

MICRO BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

* CLIENT SUCCESS STORIES *

BROC Community Action in Southwestern Vermont (BROC)



Patricia Lewis of Van Velzer Press, Pittsford, VT

"We were just going to quietly close. Now we have a powerful wave of energy to tackle some social marketing."

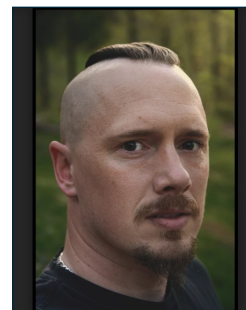
For more about MBDP at BROC, please contact Tyler Jokinen at tjokinen@broc.org

Capstone Community Action

Nathan Payne of Dream Anchor Photography, Williamstown, VT

"Applying for this grant allowed me to reflect on my business and honestly evaluate what critical aspects of my business I was overlooking due to financial concern. By going through this process, I addressed various aspects of my business that were limiting my current and future success. Even if [they] were to have denied me the funds, I would have had a better understanding of my business's weaknesses, which would have altered the course of my business for the better."

For more about MBDP at Capstone, please contact Liz Scharf at lscharf@capstonevt.org.



Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO)

Matthew Gang of Grey Owl Design, Burlington, VT

"Grey Owl Design specializes in laser cut wooden magnets, earrings, ornaments, buttons, ... and other products I haven't thought to make yet. I really appreciate this money (EMBRACE grant funds). I'm a self made man, very self reliant. It is difficult for me to be in a place where I need help. But I am thankful that help has been there for me during these crazy times. Thank you!"

For more information about MBDP at CVOEO, please contact Kathryn Baudreau at kbaudreau@cvoeo.org.

Northeast Kingdom Community Action (NEKCA)

Janet Heartson of Wellness Consulting, Barnet, VT

"I am incredibly grateful that you are helping me grow the services I offer in a way that meets a profound need in the community. Having a chronic illness that I manage, I understand the frustrations that come from not getting answers to 'why am I so sick?'. Working with the medical community, taking the time to map out systemic imbalances and coach clients to a healthier outcome will be an honor and a privilege that you have afforded me. I will repay this by being dedicated and generous with my time and attention to those I serve."

For more about MBDP at NEKCA, please contact Amy Robinson at amyr@nekcavt.org.



Southeast Vermont Community Action (SEVCA)



Lysa Renee Mosca of The SUSU Healing Collective LLC, Brattleboro, VT

"We are grateful to have access to E.M.B.R.A.C.E. funding to address our immediate needs. This grant helped us to make a swift transition to web based sales and continue serving our client base. We have been able to learn new skill, too, to support our market!"

For more about MBDP at SEVCA, please visit

<https://www.sevca.org/economic-development/micro-business-development>