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Celebration of Entrepreneurs Gary Celebrates Graduates of Gary Micro-Enterprise (GMI) Program

Gary, Indiana-The City of Gary hosted its 3rd “Celebration of Entrepreneurs” on Thursday, July 11, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. at the Genesis Center. The city celebrated 11 graduates of the program who completed 8 weeks of “New Start-up Business” workshops through the Gary Micro-Enterprise Initiative (GMI).

Prospective business owners who are Gary residents attended workshops held on Monday and Wednesday evenings each week at Gary Arthouse located at 411 E. 5th Avenue. Workshop topics included: Business Entity/Structures, Components of Business Plan, Financial Management, Marketing Plan and Using Social Media for Start-up Companies.

The goal of GMI is to provide a road map for Gary residents as they journey toward business ownership. GMI provides instruction and direction and works with Gary residents to increase their knowledge in conducting business in the city. The GMI program is supported by the Department of Commerce with funding from the Community Development Division through the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

“GMI is an initiative that encourages residents to think about starting businesses or expanding their current business in a number of areas such as: retail, real estate, culinary, professional services,” said, Mayor Karen Freeman Wilson. “Those completing the program can also apply for small business loans through our partnership with First Financial Bank.”

In March this year, the city of Gary partnered with First Financial Bank to establish a Micro-Loan pool of \$100,000. The pool makes available small business loans to GMI graduates. The loans are doled out in \$10,000 increments and are renewable annually. Joselyn Kelly of J's Breakfast Club was the first recipient of a micro-loan.

For more information about GMI contact the Department of Commerce and Program Manager, Diana Sandlin, dsandlin@ci.gary.in.us, 219-881-1312.

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