



Snohomish County
Dave Somers
County Executive

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Snohomish County Celebrates First 44 Graduates of the Small Business Innovation Assistance Program

Program Provides Technical Assistance and Grants for Small Business Owners and Entrepreneurs Looking to Grow or Start a Business

Snohomish County, Wash., September 7, 2023 – Executive Dave Somers announced that Snohomish County and Ventures are celebrating the first 44 graduates of the Small Business Innovation Assistance (SBIA) program. SBIA provides technical assistance services coupled with microgrants to help Snohomish County-based small businesses recover from the effects of the pandemic as well as incentivize new, innovative ideas from start-ups and entrepreneurs. The program is funded by the County’s federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allocation.

“Our small business community remains the backbone of our main streets and local economy. They provide the goods and services that make our communities thrive,” said Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers. “The Small Business Innovation Assistance program is boosting economic growth, job creation, and innovation across our county and helping business owners and entrepreneurs build long-term resiliency. Congratulations to all of the program graduates – I can’t wait to support your new businesses!”

“The Small Business Innovation Assistance program has been a great way to help businesses recover and become more resilient since the economic shutdowns. The graduates from this program will be stronger moving forward and I am excited to see their future success,” said County Council Vice Chair Nate Nehring ([District 1](#)).

The 44 graduates include small businesses ranging from catering, to retail, to construction. Nearly half – 21 – of the graduating small business owners speak Spanish as their primary language. A Spanish-language graduation celebration took place September 6, and an English-language celebration will take place today, September 7. Details are as follows:

SBIA Graduation Celebration

Date & Time: Thursday, September 7, 6 – 8:30 p.m.

Location: Connect Casino Road, 14 E Casino Rd., Everett, WA 98208

Parking: There is free parking available in the parking lot outside the building.

Due to potential capacity restraints, members of the media interested in attending the graduation should RSVP to Kelsey.Nyland@snoco.org.

“This graduation is a milestone that highlights the power of collaboration resulting in community enrichment. We are so proud that this partnership has resulted in the first of many graduating classes of passionate and innovative entrepreneurs,” said Monique Valenzuela, Executive Director, Ventures.

This graduation marks the completion of the Business Basics Course for the first cohort of SBIA participants. The eight-week course took place over the summer and covered the basics of business marketing, sales, financial management, and operations. Now that the graduates have completed the Business Basics Course, they are eligible for access to

capital opportunities such as small business loans and grants as well as a targeted incubation program to support the development of startup businesses in the food and child care industries.

Ventures will be enrolling new SBIA participants for a fall/winter cohort. Anyone interested in participating can visit <https://www.venturesnonprofit.org/snohomish> to learn more.

Executive Somers established the Office of Recovery and Resilience to guide the County's recovery work by ensuring federal pandemic relief is administered quickly, effectively, and equitably. Information on the County's recovery work can be found at <https://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/Recovery>.

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