

THE ACCELERATION PROJECT

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TAP AND CENTER FOR WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP AT CHATHAM UNIVERSITY PARTNER TO "INCUBATEHER"

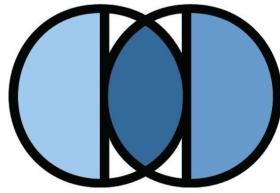
SCARSDALE, NY (8/9/19) -- The Acceleration Project (TAP) and the Center for Women's Entrepreneurship at Chatham University have partnered to educate and train women entrepreneurs in the Pittsburgh area through ***IncubateHER***, a free, competitive, year-long business development program. Designed for early-stage female business owners, ***IncubateHER*** provides participants with grants, industry-specific training, and general business education through mentoring and networking opportunities. The program is funded by the PNC Foundation and the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, with additional support from Chatham University alumni donors, and members of the Center for Women's Entrepreneurship.

After a successful launch in 2018, when it served five participants, ***IncubateHER*** was expanded to 10 participants in 2019. This year's program began in January, and is assisting owners of a wide variety of local businesses: *Americat Company, CC Busy, INNERgy Vending LLC, Ki11erpancake, Knotzland, OOA Designs Ilc, PetaVision Glass, Procopia, Synchronous Beginnings Wellness Center, and Wedding Flea Market.*

According to Jane Veron, CEO of TAP, "An important part of TAP's mission to fuel local economic development is partnering with unique small business initiatives around the country. ***IncubateHER*** offers us the opportunity to continue to engage with and educate women entrepreneurs on a grassroots level. Our team members have been leading the financial portion of this year's curriculum to help participants effectively measure success and scale future growth."

Specifically, TAP consultants conducted two workshops with these entrepreneurs: one to provide a basic understanding of financial statements and their value in business management; and another to offer information on how to produce financial forecasts and use them to inform business decisions. In addition, TAP consultants assessed each business owner's needs for support and provided one-on-one training to address those needs. As a result, nine of the 10 business owners reported that they have already have applied what they have learned to make business decisions, and feel they are better able to run their ventures.

CONTACT: Henriette Moureau / Laura Halligan (media@theaccelerationproject.org)
Bill Campbell (BCampbell@chatham.edu)



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“Financial acumen can be a challenge for many entrepreneurs without formal business training,” said Rebecca Harris, executive director of the Center for Women's Entrepreneurship. “TAP helped address this gap for the female entrepreneurs in our *IncubateHER* program. They delivered a tailored curriculum to establish a financial foundation that participants were then able to apply to their own businesses through one-on-one coaching sessions with TAP consultants.”

“A successful business owner should combine an entrepreneurial spirit and drive with strong business acumen and financial proficiency,” said Stephanie Novosel, head of PNC Commercial Banking. “We are proud to continue our partnership with the Center for Women’s Entrepreneurship and welcome TAP as they work together to empower women entrepreneurs within the local community to reach their long-term business goals.”

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About The Acceleration Project

The Acceleration Project (TAP) is a unique consulting firm that provides strategic and tactical advice to small businesses, entrepreneurs, municipalities and nonprofits. A 501c3 organization, it serves entities that would otherwise be unable to access consulting services of this caliber. TAP’s innovative model leverages the untapped potential of professionals to accelerate local economic development, and provides a range of well-structured, accessible, results-oriented services to enable clients to grow and flourish. To learn more, visit theaccelerationproject.org.

About the Center for Women’s Entrepreneurship

Building on Chatham University’s tradition of educating women for 150 years, the Center for Women’s Entrepreneurship at Chatham University creates economic opportunities for women through entrepreneurial education and training, mentoring, and networking for the past 10 years. The center is also the host of Chatham’s Women’s Business Center (CWBC), which provides services geared specifically to women and underserved populations, minority entrepreneurs, and veterans throughout Western Pennsylvania. CWBC offers aspiring and existing business owners free business counseling, training programs, technical support, and mentoring focused on business planning and financing, access to capital, federal contracting, and business expansion through international markets and exporting.

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