

Dear Members,

I have several items for your attention today, please read on:

Richland County COVID-19 Nonprofit Grant Program Launches today

Thanks to support from our Richland County Commissioners, today we're opening our Nonprofit Grant Program for nonprofits in Richland County – we have \$500,000 to award. Some of the important eligibility criteria includes:

- Must be a 501c3 organization as recognized by the IRS and registered with the Ohio Secretary of State's office
- Have 40 FTE's or less (part-time count as a ½ employee)
- Have \$4M or less in 2019 operating revenues
- Must have been *in operation on February 28, 2020* or prior
- The principal place of operation, or headquarters, for the nonprofit must be located within Richland County. If located outside of Richland County, the organization must have a Richland County address, and must be providing services in Richland County to be considered.
- Nonprofits must fit into one of two program fund categories:
 - Nonprofit Relief Grant program – funding organizations meeting basic or important needs (see [grant guidelines](#) for full definitions)
 - Arts, Culture, and Attractions program – funding organizations with a mission in arts & culture, or that serves a local attraction. (see [grant guidelines](#) for full definitions)



The maximum grant amounts are \$7,500 (for organizations with 2019 operating revenues of \$100,000 - \$4,000,000) and \$2,500 (for organizations with 2019 operating revenues of less than \$100,000). There are other eligibility requirements and exclusions, please [read the full grant guidelines](#).

The application and full grant guidelines can be [found here on our website](#). Applications are open now through 11:59PM on Sunday, November 20, 2020.

This Round is currently being funded with dollars from the CARES Act being given by [Richland County](#). You can read [the full press release](#) here. We are in talks with additional entities so additional funds may be given and we'll keep you apprised of that.

We are holding 4 grant informational sessions via Zoom OR you can watch [the recorded version here](#):

- Monday, November 16th at 2pm – [Register here](#)
- Tuesday, November 17th at 9am – [Register here](#)
- Thursday, November 19th at 12pm – [Register here](#)
- Friday, November 20th at 11am – [Register here](#)

This is not a first come, first served grant, all eligible applications will be scored. In the event of a tie in scoring, an earlier application would get a slight edge. So, you don't have to drop everything this morning to apply, but I would also recommend not waiting until the last minute if possible.

The grants will be announced on Monday, November 30th. It is important to note that we do expect to receive more applications than we can fund. If, however, additional money becomes available we will go to the next highest scoring group of nonprofits to award funding.

If you have questions about the grants, please use this email address: grants@richlandareachamber.com or call our office and we'll be happy to assist you.

State of Ohio Bar & Restaurant Fund – Still accepting applications

Earlier this week it was announced that the Bar & Restaurant Fund had only received applications from about 1/3 of eligible businesses. To refresh your memory, the State announced a \$37.5 million dollar program to provide support to the hard-hit bar & restaurant industry. You must apply to receive assistance, but if you are holding one of 30 different liquor control permit types – and you meet the requirements below – you would qualify for \$2,500 per location with a valid permit.

- These permit holders need to have had an active on-premise permit as of close-of-business October 23, 2020.
- The business does not have to be currently open but must have an active liquor license. You can check the status of your liquor permit [here](#). If it's active, it will be listed as "issued."
- After applying, a licensee will receive \$2,500 per unique business location.

Here is a [one-page flyer](#) with more details. You can visit [this page for the application](#).

State of Ohio Launches Small Business Grant Program

The State of Ohio is still accepting applications for their \$125 million dollar program to offer assistance to small businesses with 25 or less employees. The grants are for \$10,000 per business and here is more about eligibility:

- The business must be a for-profit entity with no more than 25 Ohio employees as of Jan. 1, 2020.
- The business must also have a physical location in Ohio and earn at least 90% of annual revenue based on activities performed in and taxable to Ohio.
- The business must have been in continuous operation since Jan. 1, 2020, except for interruptions required by COVID-19 public health orders and have the ability to continue operations as a going concern.

[This webpage has more information](#) and is where the application can be found. Here is a [two-page flyer](#) that tells you how the money can be spent.

>>>>Are you eligible if you have received other grants? I believe that you could also receive funding through this program even if your business qualified for the PPP or our local grant – but because the funding source is the same for all of those programs, you cannot claim the same expenses as the others. And of course, these grants will show as taxable income as the rules are currently written.

Restaurant Week Launches Next Week – Eat Local – Dine-In or Take-Out



Next week – November 15 – 21st, we're hosting our Richland County Restaurant Week. We know our local bars and restaurants have been particularly hard hit by the impacts of the pandemic, here is a way to support them. [These participating restaurants](#) are offering Restaurant Week Specials – they are good for Dine-In or Take-Out so you can support them however you are most comfortable.

I want to thank our Presenting Sponsor – [Medical Mutual](#), our Premier Sponsor – [City Grille](#), as well as all the other sponsors who have stepped up to help with this. Next week, let's try to Eat Local and support these restaurants!

Small Business of the Year Finalists Announced

Earlier this week we announced our Finalists for the Small Business of the Year – join us in congratulating these businesses:

15 employees and over category:

Debt Recovery Solutions of Ohio
Schmidt Security Pro
Dearman Moving & Storage

14 employees and under category:

Studio 19 Salon & Spa
DRM Productions Inc.
Elzy Milling and Trade

And, I am excited to share that our **Small Non-Profit of the Year winner** has been announced! Please join us in congratulating the **Richland County Foundation!** We'll be announcing the other winners on December 4th – watch for more details.

Updates from the State

I'm sure by now you have heard about what the Governor announced in his Wednesday evening address. The State is now asking businesses to enforce the mask mandate at your location, post [a sign on your door](#) requiring a mask to enter, and have said that for retail establishments they are creating a BWC team to enforce this. (Here [is a whole area with printable signs](#)).

He also addressed some upcoming changes to the gathering rules – it sounds like for banquet facilities and the like. He also mentioned that he will be assessing bars, restaurant & gyms for remaining open next week. I just tried to look for the updated health orders, but am not seeing them. [Here is a summary](#) of what he discussed.

I have been hearing from many of you about how frustrated you are by these latest changes – I feel that, too. I will continue to pass along what I hear to our contacts at the State. I also will try to keep you informed on what I hear in return.

Final Thoughts

When we started this journey together back in early March, I certainly had no idea that we would be facing Thanksgiving eight months later still pitted in the same fight. The virus is surging worse than it has before. Businesses are struggling – despite all the assistance from the PPP, state, or local grant programs. People are hurting -- for many reasons.

I know that you are tired of dealing with this – believe me, I am too. Watching or reading the news can be overwhelming. And I admit that I have done my fair amount of “doomscrolling” the internet over the past few months.

But instead of letting frustration, anger and despair wash over us – let us instead link virtual arms and move forward together. One act of kindness towards a stranger, one kind word, one gift of support to a local nonprofit, one purchase from a local small business who desperately needs your support – these are real things that we can do to show our care to each other.

I see the anger, fear, sadness, and exhaustion out there. But when I look further I can see kindness, mercy, love, and joy.

We can do this, Richland County. We WILL get through this. We ARE continuing to build our communities up. We ARE continuing to move forward. Stay strong!

Onward,
Jodie

Jodie A. Perry, CCE, IOM, CCEO-AP
President & CEO
Richland Area Chamber & Economic Development