



NEWSLETTER
AUGUST 2020



SOMEONE KNOWS SOMEONE

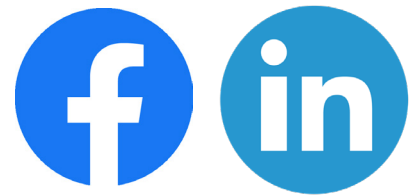
GROWING THE MOVEMENT

Odds are that most of us also know someone who seems to know everyone. And everyone knows that to get to a certain someone, you've got to know someone.

At Strengthening Stark, our work is a collaboration formed by a lot of someones, and a ton of someones behind them. And oftentimes, our contributors come to the table because someone told them about the amazing movement that is happening here in Stark County.

Will you be that someone for Stark County? How, you ask? Choose to be:

-Someone who follows us on **FACEBOOK** and **LINKEDIN**. You never know who will come to mind as someone who could help or someone who could benefit. Follow us for yourself and recommend our page to anyone you think might be able to get involved.



-Someone who visits our **WEBSITE**. Things in a movement rarely stay still so our website is always changing. Our initiatives grow and evolve, and the someones we need at the table are always changing too.

-Someone who **RECEIVES OUR NEWSLETTER** and recommends it to others. One of the quickest ways to learn what's new and exciting here at Strengthening Stark!

SUBSCRIBE

We are strengthening Stark County
but can only do that with **EVERYONE** on board.



@StrengtheningStark



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WALSH OFFERS SKILLED TECHNICAL WORKFORCE PROGRAM

CREATING QUALITY PLACES

Walsh University has received national attention for the STWF Program and is aligned with an initiative from the National Science Board. We have also been recognized as an education provider by the state of Ohio's TechCred Program. TechCred is an initiative whereby the state, in an effort to strengthen and make our workforce more competitive, will reimburse employers for the cost of tuition invested in "up-skilling" workers through technology or STEM related training. As a result, we can provide this customized content to businesses at no out-of-pocket costs to them or their employees that are Ohio residents.



There is no fine print or hidden costs. If an application for funding is accepted by Tech Cred, a company is eligible for up to \$30,000 per funding cycle to be used as tuition reimbursement. This translates into 15 participants per company per funding round. Funding rounds are typically open every other month (COVID-uncertainty dependent). As such, the company can submit additional applications for additional participants in future rounds and/or enroll those who completed level 1 into levels 2 & 3 of future rounds.

The credentials of focus for the course are data analytics, cloud computing and basic Internet of Things (IoT) technologies. Upon completion of Walsh's Program, participants will understand the versatility and flexibility of IoT solutions and the countless possible applications for data collection technologies. They will learn how key metrics are identified and how data is collected, analyzed and used to increase safety, efficiencies and profitability. Participants will be empowered to identify potential IoT and data solutions within their job responsibilities and will receive professional resources and skills to collaborate and communicate technical knowledge with peers and management to create maximum impact. Again, the program is scalable based on the education background/experience level of the participants.

Dan Passerini of Walsh University is currently preparing customized proposals for interested businesses to submit to the state for full tuition reimbursement through the TechCred Program. The next funding round for state funding opened on Aug 4 but will close on August 31. Contact Dr. Passerini at 330-854-0057 for additional details about a customized curriculum and to begin the submission for tuition reimbursement in advance of the deadline.

GREAT STARTS FOR GREAT FUTURES

DEVELOPING OUR TALENT



The mission of Great Start for Great Futures (GSFGF) is to ensure all children have access and opportunity to high-quality early education to ensure kindergarten readiness in all (early learning) educational domains. In pursuit of their mission, GSFGF was recently awarded a \$400,000 Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant from the Ohio Department of Education.

The collaboration from Stark Education Partnership, State Support Team Region 9, and Early Childhood Resource Center came together with support from the YWCA early childhood staff to advise about practical implementation of the training. This grant will focus on improving the science of reading in preschool programs located in Canton City, Alliance City, and Massillon City which will set a critical foundation for future learning in our youngest Stark County residents.





FAITH IN STARK GRANTS

NURTURING BUSINESS GROWTH



The
Gessner Family
Foundation

You may have heard of our Faith in Stark initiative, an effort led by a group of local faith-based leaders, business partners and philanthropic organizations to support Stark County small businesses negatively impacted by COVID-19. Through generous donations, \$542,940 was awarded to 148 small businesses in the county. The last check was cut in mid-August to the final recipient.

Small business grants were provided by the Faith in Stark Fund at Stark Community Foundation. The fund was established in early April with an initial gift of \$100,000 from JumpStart in partnership with KeyBank and \$50,000 from the Gessner Family Foundation. Over 25% of the funds were raised by local churches. Additional donations from across the county include \$100,000 from the Port Authority here in Stark County.

Pastor Brannon Marshall of North Canton Chapel, one of the original churches to support the fund said, "Once our church understood the difficulty these very small business owners faced during this crisis, we had to get involved."

Grants ranged in size from \$500 to \$5,000 and supported a variety of small businesses including barbershops and salons, contractors, child care centers and restaurants. About 65% of applicants were headed by women. Minority and veteran owners were about 20% of the total.

The response from the grant recipients have been overwhelming. You can see [THIS VIDEO](#) for more, but here are a few of our favorite responses thanking all of the funders, churches, and community residents who made this amazing grant possible:

THANK YOU SO MUCH
FOR SUPPORTING
OUR SMALL BUSINESS
THROUGH THESE TIMES,
WE FEEL VERY
loved
RIGHT NOW.

OH MY GOSH!!
THANK YOU!!!
JUST IN TIME TOO.

GOD IS GOOD!!

OH MY GOODNESS! WE
ARE SO HUMBLLED AND SO
GRATEFUL. THANK YOU SO
MUCH FOR THIS BEAUTIFUL
BLESSING!

Thank you so much!!
God is Great!! We have
prayed about what the
next step was for our
company that has been
in business since 1992.
We are truly blessed!!

I JUST WANT TO THANK YOU SO MUCH
FOR YOUR SUPPORT-IT MEANS THE
WORLD TO ME! MY HEART AND SOUL IS
FULL FOR ALL THE LOVE FOR OUR CITY!

I WILL DO EVERYTHING TO MAKE CANTON
THE GREATEST! THANK YOU SO MUCH! I
APPRECIATE YOU VERY MUCH!

THANK YOU FOR
BELIEVING IN SMALL
BUSINESSES IN
STARK COUNTY.

IT'S PRETTY GREAT,
TO BE A PART OF
THIS!



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OUR MISSION

Strengthening Stark is a community-wide movement of residents, business, government, nonprofits and philanthropists who share a vision for a vibrant, growing county. Our goal is to make Stark a great place to start and grow a business, develop one's talent and pursue a career, and live and raise a family.

STARK SUCCESSES

15 DAY UNITY CHALLENGE TO DISMANTLE RACISM

Our staff is dedicating time each day to listening and learning about race, power, privilege and leadership as part of our community's 15-Day Unity Challenge to Dismantle Racism. Thanks to the Dismantling Racism Coalition of Stark County for spearheading this challenge and encouraging others to build more effective social justice habits! If you're interested in challenging yourself to learn and grow, sign up for the challenge [HERE!](#)

UNITY
CHALLENGE
TO DISMANTLE
RACISM
HAS TO END.