

RISE aims to level the business playing field for women, minorities

Written by By Holly J. Wagner Sun Correspondent
Friday, 01 April 2022 04:54

Gallup businesses eligible for awards

Running a small business is a challenge for anyone, but can be especially difficult for women and people of color who may not start with a lot of connections or advantages. Comcast's RISE program was created to help level the playing field.

"Comcast RISE launched in October 2020 to advance digital equity and help provide underrepresented small business owners with access to the digital tools they need to thrive," Kyle Biederwolf, Comcast manager of external affairs, said.

It has reached 8,000 recipients in 590 cities in 34 states.

So far, 13 New Mexico businesses have qualified for RISE awards, including a vegetarian café, a coffee house, legal and credit consulting businesses, a beauty supply store, a pottery studio, a personal trainer, a screen printer and nonprofits supporting vehicle donations and STEM education.

"We have not yet had a Comcast RISE recipient from Gallup or McKinley County, however the current application round doesn't close until June 17, 2022. I have high hopes that we'll have a winner from the Gallup area in that round," Julianne Phares, Comcast New Mexico director of external affairs, said.

Winning applicants may qualify for services in creative production and marketing or a technology makeover, free with the possible exception of taxes and other fees.

Applicants must provide information about themselves and their businesses, including revenue, history, how their services impact the community, unique aspects or selling points, social media use, how they use technology and a video pitch.

RISE aims to level the business playing field for women, minorities

Written by By Holly J. Wagner Sun Correspondent
Friday, 01 April 2022 04:54

The tech makeover includes computer equipment and Internet, voice and cybersecurity services for 12 months.

Applications for marketing assistance are targeted to include advertising and marketing consultations with Effectv marketing research and creative teams to gain insights on how to grow the business; or a turnkey production of a 30-second TV commercial, plus a media strategy consultation; or a 90-day media placement schedule.

The program is open to businesses that are independently owned and operated, not a franchise location; at least 51% owned and operated by someone who identifies as Black, Indigenous, a person of color or female; registered to conduct business in the United States; have been operating for at least a year; and are within the Comcast Business or effective service area footprint.

Winners will be announced July 26, Biederwolf said.

RISE applications are available online at <https://www.comcastrise.com/rise-apply/>

By Holly J. Wagner
Sun Correspondent