

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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LOCAL ENTREPRENEUR PROGRAM NOW QUALIFIES FOR SEAP FUNDS
Next Session of “Launch and Build Your Business” Begins April 16

Bellingham, WA, March 25, 2013 – “Launch and Build Your Business,” a program that helps local entrepreneurs to successfully launch new business ventures, has been approved for the Employment Securities Self Employment Assistance Program (SEAP). People who are currently receiving unemployment benefits and who are interested in starting their own businesses should contact their local WorkSource Office for a SEAP application. The entrepreneurship program is offered by Whatcom Community College (WCC), the NW Innovation Resource Center (NWIRC) and Western Washington University’s Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Participants do not have to be enrolled in the SEAP program to take the class.

The three-month course, which is held on WCC’s campus, blends on-line instruction with live workshops and support services that provide participants the foundation to build their new enterprises. They will learn the fundamentals of running a business, develop a complete business plan, and network with other business owners and professionals. The next round of classes starts April 16. A pre-course information session will be held noon-1 p.m. April 2 at WWU’s SBDC downtown Bellingham office, 115 Unity Street, Suite 101.

The \$239 registration fee includes enrollment in Palo Alto Software’s Start, Run & Grow Your Business curriculum; participation and lunch at six biweekly roundtables, including interviews with successful, local entrepreneurs; six-month subscription to Business Plan Pro’s LivePlan to write a business plan; and three textbooks. To register, call (360) 383-3200 or visit www.whatcom.ctc.edu/continuinged.

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The organizers started the program in fall 2012 in response to client requests for start-up business development support. “Some of the business people we’ve heard from have been successfully employed for years in other industries,” says SBDC Director Jennifer Shelton. “They are looking for that extra information that will help them to make decisions and complete elements that are missing for a business launch; to explore accelerated concepts; and to connect with experts and other entrepreneurs in the region for encouragement and inspiration.”

Whatcom is the lead educational institution. NWIRC and SBDC staff will provide ongoing support to help participants with their businesses during and after the program ends.

The NW Innovation Resource Center is a non-profit organization providing economic opportunities and jobs through innovation in Whatcom County. The NWIRC accelerates early-stage startup companies and their rate of success through mentorship, resources and accountability. For more information, please visit www.nwirc.com.

WWU SBDC is part of the most comprehensive small business assistance network in the United States and its territories made up of more than 1,000 SBDC programs funded in part through a partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration. The SBDC serving Whatcom County is part of Western Washington University’s College of Business and Economics. Certified Business Advisors provide free, confidential advising, technical assistance, and research to business owners and managers.

Whatcom Community College is an accredited, comprehensive two-year college with an accomplished faculty and staff who serve more than 7,200 students quarterly. On its beautiful 71-acre campus in Bellingham, WA, and through on-line courses, Whatcom offers transfer degrees, professional and technical training programs, as well as basic education, job skills and enrichment classes. For more information, please visit www.whatcom.ctc.edu.

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