

MEDIA RELATIONS

9 INTERNATIONAL DRIVE
PEMBROKE, ON, CANADA
K8A 6W5
(613) 735-7288
www.countyofrenfrew.on.ca



**FOR
IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**

RELEASE DATE:

July 17, 2025

Starter Company Plus Spring 2025 Grant Recipients

Pembroke, (ON): Enterprise Renfrew County is excited to announce the Starter Company Plus Spring 2025 grant award recipients.

The Starter Company Plus program provides three months of business coaching, business plan and cash flow projection development, mentoring and instruction from staff and professional trainers. At the end of the program there is an opportunity for participants to compete, by pitching their business plan, for a grant of up to \$5,000 to be applied to their business operations.

With 20 dedicated entrepreneurs fast-tracking development of their business, marketing, and financial plans during the training, the following individuals successfully earned grant awards totalling \$42,000:

- Aaron DiLella, Grown and Gathered (cut flowers and microgreens farm), Township of McNab/Braeside
- Daniel Stermac-Stein, The Herd's Throne (hand-crafted leather tanner), Township of Brudenell, Lyndoch and Raglan
- Davis Scheel, Ottawa Valley Sharpening (shear and knife sharpening), Town of Arnprior
- Elizabeth Lepine, Valley Cap (roofing, siding, construction), Township of Madawaska Valley
- Emily Prospero, Snark Coffee (coffee roastery), Township of McNab/Braeside
- James Smith, Bad Dog Bakery (dehydrated dog treats), Town of Deep River
- Jay Renaud, Valley Friends (graphic design and merchandise), Township of Whitewater Region
- Kathryn Weatherbed, Nomadic Smiles (mobile dental hygiene), Town of Laurentian Hills
- Kayla Glenn, pRAWper Pet Treats (freeze dried pet treats and store), Town of Renfrew
- Sheila O'Brien, The Paint With Sheila School of Art (art classes and workshops), City of Pembroke

- Sigrid Geddes, GGs Skincare (luxury skincare line), Township of Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards

Thank you to Renfrew County Community Futures Development Corporation for sponsoring the Starter Company Plus program in 2025.

"The Starter Company Plus program guided me through the process of dreaming up what the best-case scenario could be for my business, then gave me the tools to get very practical about planning on paper and into spreadsheets," says Daniel Stermac-Stein, owner of The Herd's Throne. "The dream for my business is now a coherent and relatable plan that I can put into action. A big thanks to the Starter Company Plus trainers, who were clear and supportive and immensely helpful throughout the whole process."

Kathryn Weatherbed, owner of new business Nomadic Smiles shares the course was led with so much knowledge, warmth, and real-life experience.

"The guidance, along with insights from the amazing guest speakers, helped turn my scattered thoughts into a clear, focused plan. I walked away with tools, confidence, and direction — and I truly believe I wouldn't have made it this far without this program," she says. "Behind every small business is a mountain of dedication, heart, and hard work, long before a product or service is ever delivered. I now see just how important it is to value and support that."

Information sessions for the fall training program of Starter Company Plus are scheduled for September 9 from 10-11 a.m. and September 11 from 1-2 p.m. Interested entrepreneurs must attend one information session to receive an application. Deadline to apply is Friday, September 19 at 12 p.m. For program guidelines and to register for an information session visit www.enterpriserenfrewcounty.com/starter-company-plus or contact ercinfo@countyofrenfrew.on.ca.

Enterprise Renfrew County is a non-profit organization funded by the Government of Ontario, County of Renfrew, Town of Renfrew and the City of Pembroke. Its mandate is to encourage and contribute to the enterprising spirit and economic development of Renfrew County by assisting entrepreneurs with the development of new or existing companies.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Hillary Panke | Acting Small Business Advisor | 613-735-8224 |
| Tina Peplinskie | Media Relations Coordinator | 613-735-7288 |