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## Mountain BizWorks Awards Catalyst Micro-Grants for 19 Entrepreneurs of Color to Take the Next Step

**ASHEVILLE, NC (November 10, 2022)** — [Mountain BizWorks](https://www.mountainbizworks.org), with funding support from Truist Financial and Appalachian Community Capital, has awarded 19 micro-grants to startups and emerging businesses owned by people of color across Western North Carolina. The grant awards, which range from \$1,000 - \$5,000 and cumulatively total \$40,000, are intended to help diverse founders move their bold entrepreneurial ideas forward, including supporting capacity building for creative initiatives and removing small obstacles to propel their big ideas forward.

Jeremiah Robinson, Catalyst Entrepreneur in Residence, expressed the importance of the Catalyst program and the support from key partners: "Funding from partners like Truist Financial and Appalachian Community Capital enable us to support entrepreneurs from historically marginalized groups with a line of capital that can be catalytic in unlocking potential for long-term success."

This round of funding received 135 applications. All applications were reviewed by the Multicultural Catalyst Fund Advisory Council, which consists of 9 members of the BIPOC community. The Council works closely with Mountain BizWorks to provide input on grant and loan decisions awarded to businesses through the Catalyst Fund with the expressed purpose of elevating long-term success and creating inclusive economic growth. Applicants had to meet the requirements of being a for-profit business located within WNC, be at least 50% BIPOC-owned, and have annual gross revenues less than \$100,000.

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The following 19 businesses were selected for this round of funding: Altitude Print & Design, Ann's Tree, Artesana 100% Natural LLC, Asheville Community Enterprises, LLC, Black Bear Lock & Security, Carolinacutz Barbershop, Contessa Aesthetics, Flowers Productions, Folk Saints, It's Amira M, LLC, Luv-Lee Naturals LLC, Moon Girl Glass, My Mighty Dawgz, Sharon J Consulting LLC, Show and Tale Creative, Singh Studios, Stella Stellar Network, LLC, Sweet Plantain, and Tierra Fertil Coop LLC.

“The Catalyst Fund is a powerful testament of Mountain Bizworks’ commitment to support the aspirations of entrepreneurs of color to build wealth and become economically self-sufficient. Appalachian Community Capital is proud to be partnering with Mountain Bizworks on this important work,” shared Donna Gambrell, President and CEO of Appalachian Community Capital.

The Catalyst Program precipitates fundamental changes in traditional lending practices to accelerate business growth for entrepreneurs of color by building on great ideas. This program includes the Fund, Cohorts, and now also Micro-Grants. With an understanding of each founder’s strengths, successes, and goals, Mountain BizWorks provides access to the tools needed to take the next big leap. For more information about the Catalyst Program, visit [mountainbizworks.org/catalyst](https://mountainbizworks.org/catalyst).

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## **About Mountain BizWorks**

Mountain BizWorks provides learning opportunities, coaching, and financing to emerging and established small businesses in Western North Carolina. We proudly create access to capital and support the local entrepreneurial spirit, in spite of barriers to traditional resources. We turn the dream of business ownership into a reality. For more information, visit [mountainbizworks.org](https://mountainbizworks.org).