

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**DSLBD Celebrates 200 Entrepreneurs Trained Through FastTrac DC Program**

*Comprehensive program aimed at equipping entrepreneurs with tools to effectively start and grow businesses*

**(Washington, D.C.)** – Today the Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD) and Kauffman FastTrac® announced the graduation of 200 District small business owners from the Kauffman FastTrac program.

“DSLBD is very proud of the entrepreneurs who completed this rigorous program,” said Robert Summers, Director of the Department of Small and Local Business Development. “DC Entrepreneurs tend to be uniquely qualified to overcome the challenges that go along with operating small businesses, but programs like FastTrac DC make it so that they do not need to navigate these challenges alone. DSLBD is proud to join forces with the Kauffman Foundation to ensure small businesses continue to receive the support needed to mature and thrive.”

FastTrac DC comprises three training courses: NewVenture, GrowthVenture, and TechVenture. Each program is ten weeks long during which entrepreneurs use their own businesses as case examples to learn best practices for starting a business or developing a growth strategy in the unique DC business environment. Additionally, participants are exposed to a number of resources including one-on-one counseling and unique networking opportunities. The 200 entrepreneurs trained represent a multitude of industries including education, retail, healthcare, entertainment, and food service. Many of these entrepreneurs have gone on to obtain business licenses and continue to receive assistance.

DSLBD and the Kauffman Foundation began their partnership in 2012. Since the launch of the program, over 10 courses have been held throughout the District in conjunction with a host of DC-based small business technical assistance organizations. FastTrac DC will offer additional courses to be announced later this year. Interested participants can learn more about the FastTrac DC by visiting the DSLBD website, <http://dslbd.dc.gov>.

**About the District of Columbia Department of Small and Local Business Development** -The District of Columbia Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD) fosters the economic growth, development, and retention of District of Columbia based businesses, and promotes economic development throughout the District’s commercial districts. DSLBD envisions a business environment in which DC businesses are connected in real-time with local, federal, and global business opportunities; businesses navigate government quickly, confidently, and effectively; and, every entrepreneur and business with a great idea and a great plan has the capital to make it happen.

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