



For Immediate Release
2017-152
Wednesday, May 17, 2017 - 8:35am

IGNITE Charles County Business Resource Fair Inspires and Connects Local Entrepreneurs

The Economic Development Department, in partnership with College of Southern Maryland's Entrepreneur and Innovation Institute, hosted the first IGNITE Charles County Business Resource Fair on Friday, May 12. More than 70 current and potential entrepreneurs had the opportunity to meet and network with 20 exhibiting business resource partners, and learn from six entrepreneur speakers in two IGNITE sessions.

"By all measures, the event was a big success," said Economic Development Department Director Darréll Brown. "Those who attended gave us great reviews; the IGNITE presenters were encouraged and inspired; and the exhibitors were very pleased with the connections they were able to make and the new audience they were able to reach. We know it will enhance the spirit of entrepreneurship in Charles County."

Exhibitor tables were set up to allow attendees to speak one-on-one with resource partners from local, state, and federal agencies that specialize in small business services. IGNITE Charles County sessions were held at 10 a.m. and then again at 1 p.m. During these sessions, successful entrepreneurs briefly shared how they were able to "ignite" their success. The presentations were followed by Q&A sessions.

IGNITE session speakers:

- Angela Melton-Fray and Richard Fray, Dat Jerk Caribbean Chagrill
- Pennie Drinkard, Advanced Vision Systems
- Mike Thielke, hotDesks
- Guy Black, Blackout Investigations and Security Services
- Scott Decker, Cardinal Scientific
- Somnath Sengupta, Powerhouse Consulting Group

Attendees enjoyed the five-minute speakers and their willingness to share information freely and sincerely. The department plans to continue the event next year.

"This spring event will complement our annual Fall Meeting, which focuses more on our five-year strategic plan," said Economic Development Department Deputy Chief Marcia

Keeth. “This resource fair will help support our small businesses and entrepreneurs, and give them valuable tools to use in their businesses.”

The Fall Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 7 at the Greater Waldorf Jaycees Community Center (3090 Crain Highway, Waldorf). More information will be posted as available at www.MeetCharlesCounty.com/events. Video of the IGNITE sessions will also be available soon on the website.

The Economic Development Department would like to thank sponsors of the event, including Strategic Marketing Group, Energetics Technology Center, College of Southern Maryland, TEDCO, Restore Health Rehabilitation Center, and Cyber Security Research and Solutions Corporation, as well as exhibiting business resource partners for their participation.

<https://www.charlescountymd.gov/news-releases/ignite-charles-county-business-resource-fair-inspires-and-connects-local-entrepreneurs>