



## News Release

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For Immediate Release



### **River District Association announces RDA 2023 Dream Launch Bootcamp Now Open for Registration**

#### **Over \$129K available to local entrepreneurs that complete the Dream Launch Bootcamp**

DANVILLE VA – The River District Association (RDA) is excited to announce that registration has opened for the fifth cohort of the River District Association Dream Launch Bootcamp. Since the start of the program in 2019, over 400 individuals have participated in some or all of the boot camp classes; 133 individuals have completed the entire series of classes and earned a Dream Launch Bootcamp Certificate.

The RDA Dream Launch Bootcamp is for anyone who wishes to learn more about opening, owning, and operating a business in the Dan River Region; the Bootcamp is also opened to current businesses that would like to expand as well as those that would like to audit the courses to prepare for potentially opening a business in the future. There is no cost to participate in the Bootcamp.

Entrepreneurs or existing businesses who complete all six Bootcamp sessions and plan to open brick and mortar locations in the River District may apply to compete in the RDA IGNITE Business Pitch Competition (Formerly the RDA Dream Launch Pitch Competition) for awards and incentives totaling \$50,000. Additionally, RDA Dream Launch Bootcamp participants who wish to open a business outside of the district are eligible to compete in the Danville Pittsylvania County Chamber of Commerce Rev-Up Pitch. Rev-up will have \$75,000 available in awards and incentives.

Movement Bank will be involved with both pitch opportunities this year, offering two \$2,000 grants; one to an RDA IGNITE Pitch participant, and one to a Rev-Up Pitch participant.

RDA will once again offer an additional educational resource for food related businesses in the region. The Food and Beverage Workshop will be optional for all Dream Launch Bootcamp participants but required for those wishing to pitch specifically to open a food and beverage business. Panelists from Virginia ABC, Health Dept, and the Danville and Pittsylvania County Planning and Zoning Departments will be on-hand to provide information needed for business owners in this industry. Local

entrepreneurs with an interest in learning more about opening a food and beverage business are also welcomed to attend; this workshop is free but requires separate registration.

“The support of Dream Launch on both the local and state level really speaks to the quality of the program and all the partners involved” says Diana Schwartz, Executive Director of the River District Association, “without collaboration, the program would not be as successful. We are particularly thankful to our local lending institutions that have chosen to work with our RDA Bootcamp Certificate holders. Access to capital is the number-one hurdle for most start-ups, and the opportunity to apply for a business line of credit as a brand-new business owner will go a long way to get our entrepreneurs the financial assistance they need to be successful.”

Registration for the RDA Dream Launch program is now open at <https://tinyurl.com/2023RDADreamLaunch> or can also be found at [www.riverdistrictassociation.com](http://www.riverdistrictassociation.com) or on the RDA social media pages ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#))

If you'd like to know more, you can register to attend a virtual information session being held on Tuesday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, from 6pm-7pm. Sign up at: <https://tinyurl.com/RDADreamLaunchInfoSession>.

Funding for the RDA Dream Launch Boot Camp, IGNITE Business Pitch and Rev-Up Danville Pittsylvania Pitch is made possible by the City of Danville Economic Development office, Pittsylvania County, Danville Regional Foundation and The Launch Place.

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**The River District Association** was organized in 1999 as the Downtown Danville Association. In May 2015, the organization was renamed the River District Association to complement the city's River District brand and is an accredited Virginia and National Main Street Community. The office is currently located at 208 N Union Street, Danville VA.

**The Danville Pittsylvania County Chamber of Commerce** accelerates business growth by connecting its members to dynamic resources and networks. The Chamber's number one goal is to help area businesses of all sizes to grow and prosper.

**Movement Bank** exists to love and serve people with a purpose Bigger Than Banking. Founded in 1919 by a community of 21 Black men and women in segregated Danville, Virginia, Movement Bank continues this mission in the 21st century. The bank offers a comprehensive suite of products and services, including checking, savings, money market and certificates of deposit for individuals and businesses. The bank also specializes in mortgage, home equity, auto and personal loans for individuals, and lines of credit, commercial, and real estate financing for businesses.