

The Long Branch Free Public Library in partnership with the City of Long Branch, Long Branch Office of Community and Economic Development and the Greater Long Branch Chamber of Commerce to launch a “Back to Business for Small Businesses” city-wide initiative.

Back to Business will strengthen small businesses and startups by offering a set of one-on-one training sessions, tools and resources to assist with the creation or expansion of an online presence, obtain information to sustain or start up an enterprise and more.

"During these difficult times, we want to do everything we can to help. The program, Back to Business, will help businesses get back on their feet. It is important that as a City, we support the growth and come-back that we know our business community will make after this pandemic is over." - Mayor John Pallone

The program will officially launch May 4th. Businesses will receive help via phone, email, or video chat. The program will include 10 private one-on-one tutoring sessions by experienced library professionals. Business owners can learn the basics of Zoom, Instagram, LinkedIn, Microsoft Office, Google Suite, Twitter and more. Business resources will include access to virtual notaries, assistance with designing business cards and business plans, employment services, marketing and branding tips, free access to business databases including Reference USA, a database designed to find demographic information, market research, industry sector profiles and company information and financials. Reference USA includes data for over 14 million U.S. businesses and 220 million U.S. residents. This information can power searches for suppliers, patent research, and competitive intelligence. Also included is free access and training to use Ebsco's Small Business Reference Center. The *small Business Reference Center* offers exclusive full text for many top consumer small business reference books, as well as tools to address many small business topics. It includes business videos, a help and advice section and details on how to create business plans. Other databases include Rosetta Stone (learning language software), Global Road Warrior (to study customs, cultures, and travel requirements of individual countries) and many more. Databases are provided by the New Jersey State Library.

"I am honored to partner with the City of Long Branch Economic and Community Development and the Greater Long Branch Chamber of Commerce on this endeavor. From recessions to superstorms, libraries have and will be instrumental to the recovery process. After challenges and crises, community members turn to the library as respected and trusted organizations. Library staff interact with much of their community on a regular basis. We are extremely good at triaging community needs and working to address them. A challenge such as this demands strategic, innovative thinking on the local level. Back to Business creates a cost-effective network of resources that directly work to strengthen our local economy." Tonya Garcia, Library Director.

The Long Branch Free Public Library and partners recognize the importance of small businesses and startups to the city. Small businesses (recognized as businesses with under 500 employees) keep our economy moving, create jobs, spark innovation, and drive economic growth in smaller geographic areas. Small businesses also provide opportunities for many people, including women and minorities, to achieve financial success and independence. Long Branch supports our small business.

"We invite those who have been adversely impacted by the outbreak of the novel Coronavirus to reach out to us. If it is a small business or a property owner looking for some form of assistance, we may be able to help or refer you to the proper resource. Our goal is to restore you to having a positive "quality of life" livelihood here in Long Branch. " Jacob L. Jones, Director, Office of Community and Economic Development.

To learn more about the program please contact the Long Branch Free Public Library 732.222.3900 ext. 2270 or the Office of Community and Economic Development 732-923-2043 or email BackToBasicsLB@gmail.com.