

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT

Michael Berman
DLBA Communications Manager
Michaelb@dlba.org
562-708-6295



Four Local Entrepreneurs Awarded Grants Through DLBA's Woman-Owned Business Accelerator Program

(LONG BEACH, CA – November 16, 2022) The [Downtown Long Beach Alliance \(DLBA\)](#) and its partners are giving four local woman-owned businesses a boost with a \$10,000 grant awarded through the Woman-Owned Business Accelerator (WOBA) economic development program.

“Encouraging successful entrepreneurship in Downtown Long Beach is one of the most effective ways to create jobs and stimulate the local economy, especially as we make our way back from the effects of the coronavirus pandemic,” said DLBA President & CEO Austin Metoyer. “Now in its fifth year, we know the Woman-Owned Business Accelerator annual grants and free training are investments that pay dividends. We’re filling gaps with tailor-made solutions for the traditionally underinvested businesses.”

The \$10,000 grant this year is being shared by the following DTLB business owners:

- Julie Darrell, [BYO Long Beach](#), a retail business dedicated to zero-waste reusable products. Darrell plans to use the money and training to improve the company’s signage, graphics and website, while also making customer experience more engaging and educational.
- Katy Impellizzeri, [Ethiki Package-Free Goods](#), which is an eco-minimalist market inciting change one zero-waste product at a time. Impellizzeri will use her funding and training to develop a grocery delivery system and loyalty program for online shoppers.
- Angela Macias, [Scholars Collective](#), which offers tutoring and enrichment programs for children. Macias plans to invest in marketing, promotional events and grant writing services.
- Michelle Qazi, [6th and Detroit](#), a vintage home décor business. Qazi will put her grant funding and training toward website updates, some in-store technology upgrades to improve efficiency and the replacement of a graffiti-damaged window.

With the grant funded by [Farmers & Merchants Bank](#), the recipients were selected by a judging panel and recently approved by DLBA’s Economic Development Committee. Each of the small, women-owned businesses went through a competitive application process, in which they presented business plans detailing how the money would be used to start or grow their operations.

“Farmers & Merchants Bank is pleased to continue our ongoing partnership with DLBA and its partners through this grant program as well as other initiatives to stimulate our Downtown economy,” said F&M Bank President Henry Walker. “We recognize the importance of continuing to invest in women-owned businesses, which is an investment in our future.”

Grant winners also gain access to valuable technical assistance and coaching from the [Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship](#) at California State University, Long Beach, and are eligible to receive business development coaching from the [Fuller Management Corporation](#), located Downtown.

“Working with entrepreneurs through the WOBA program is such a pleasure,” said Fuller Management Corporation Owner and Executive Director Kena Fuller. “Embarking on year five of this incredible program, we look forward to another stellar cohort of wildly impressive, determined, passionate women entrepreneurs who pursue business ownership in a way we love and appreciate.”

The DLBA is dedicated to supporting entrepreneurs Downtown, including minority-owned businesses, through a variety of economic development programs.

“WOBA is unique in the area as it provides direct support to women-owned small businesses,” said Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Director Wade E. Martin, Ph.D., who teaches economics at CSULB.

“Although the amount may be modest, the impact can be significant as it allows these businesses to meet immediate needs to modernize systems, update shelving, support social media strategies that will ultimately generate new business,” Martin said. “Combining this funding with relevant workshops and individual support can be really impactful for these businesses and the overall economic growth of Long Beach. The Institute is proud to be a partner in delivering this program.”

#

About the Downtown Long Beach Alliance: DLBA is a non-profit, community-based organization whose mission is to cultivate, preserve and promote a healthy, safe, and prosperous Downtown. By balancing the interests of the residents, as well as businesses, the DLBA creates tangible progress by way of vested interest and solidified partnerships across local, municipal, and commercial lines. For additional information, visit www.downtownlongbeach.org, or follow on Facebook @downtownlongbeach, and on Twitter and Instagram @DLBA.