

Alaska Startups Effort Builds Statewide Entrepreneurial Capacity

ANCHORAGE, AK — Starting this week, care packages for entrepreneurs and “wanna-preneurs” living in rural Alaska will be mailed to communities across the state. Inside is an ecosystem directory, featuring information about funding sources, educational offerings, prototyping, events, and networking opportunities, along with promotional posters and balloons.

“In Anchorage, it’s fairly easy to connect with the startup community,” says Nigel Sharp, UAA Global Entrepreneur in Residence. “Start going to 1 Million Cups, sign up for Startup Weekend, or get involved in a design sprint. But once you get outside the urban core of the state, and especially when you’re off the road system, accessing resources to aid in your entrepreneurial journey is much more challenging.

To respond to this need, a group of entrepreneurship ecosystem builders, including the Alaska Investor Network, Launch Alaska, State of Alaska Division of Economic Development, and the University of Alaska Center for Economic Development (CED), pooled resources to create the directory as well as a number of digital tools. A revamped Alaska Startups website (www.alaskastartups.com) hosts the directory in searchable digital form, along with an events calendar, startup stories, and how to connect on social media. Ideator, an online platform for founders, startup teams, investors and mentors to engage around business ideas, lists over 100 active ideas since its launch earlier in 2018.

“We want everyone interested in launching a startup to know where to find the information they need to achieve success, whether it’s funding, mentors, team members, or just a community that understands what they are going through” continues Sharp. “Being an entrepreneur is hard, wherever you live, and we hope the resources we’ve put together make it just a bit easier.”

The print and digital resources complement in-person entrepreneur development workshops to be led by CED in rural Alaska, kicking off fall 2018. “We’ll be visiting Utqiagvik, Glennallen, Prince of Wales, Dillingham, Bethel, and more before the end of 2019,” says Gretchen Fauske, CED Associate Director. “Our hope is that by making information about entrepreneurship easy to access, more people will launch businesses or actively support those who are already doing so. This is especially important when you consider the high rates of unemployment and poverty in parts of rural Alaska, in some cases three times the national average.” CED will work with local community organizations and partner with Spruce Root to deliver the workshops.



8/10/2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Gretchen Fauske

907.382.1881

gwfauske@alaska.edu

About Alaska Startups

Alaska Startups is a community initiative managed by CED, offering a one-stop shop with resources for entrepreneurs, mentors, investors, and general rabble rousers.

About the University of Alaska Center for Economic Development (CED)

CED is a university-based partnership promoting economic diversity through entrepreneurship, community building, and action oriented strategy. CED is one of 52 University Centers designated by the U.S. Economic Development Administration and is a program of the UAA Business Enterprise Institute.

###

