



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact:** Lesley E. Thomas  
Director, Communications &  
Intergovernmental Relations  
(504) 248-0104  
[leugene@hano.org](mailto:leugene@hano.org)

Norman D. Roussell  
CEO, Start Smart, LLC.  
(504) 324-1110  
(504) 957-7510  
[NDRoussell@StartSmartLLC.com](mailto:NDRoussell@StartSmartLLC.com)

## **HANO to Start Second Resident Entrepreneur Training Initiative Session This Week**

*RETI students kick-off 10-week intensive session in partnership with Start Smart LLC  
following inaugural graduation ceremony*

**New Orleans, LA (July 11, 2018) --** This week, the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) in partnership with Start Smart, LLC will start its second Resident Entrepreneur Training Initiative (RETI) session launched to assist public housing residents and Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) participants striving to grow successful small businesses.

Twenty-five (25) students will participate in a free, 10-week intensive entrepreneur training program focused on the enhancement of individual strategies for the innovative, new business owner. Similar to the inaugural graduates, the program participants will attend interactive sessions and weekly workshops on how to start, plan and grow a business, and also learn how to build credit to increase the possibility of securing business loans. The students, mentored by a team of consultants from Start Smart LLC, will also gain the *Small and Emerging Business Development* and *Hudson Initiative* certifications that will assist in acquiring federal, state and local contracts.

"HANO is excited to kick-off the second RETI session that will continue to produce resident entrepreneurs," said Executive Director Gregg Fortner. "We are proud of the inaugural graduates that have developed sustainable and innovative businesses that will flourish in this community."

"We were very pleased with the motivation and outstanding creativeness of the inaugural class, which was a great success because of the willingness and determination of these new entrepreneurs," said Norman Roussell, CEO of Start Smart, LLC. "They were focused and opened to learning what it takes to start a business, and I am certain that we will continue to hear great things from them and their businesses in the future. The only question I have is, who wants to be the next RETI Program success story?"

Four new, small business owners were recently honored for their completion of HANO's Inaugural RETI program. During the ceremony, graduates presented descriptive, innovative business plans to family and friends that attended the event.

- *Founded by **Cody Marshall, C.J. Marshall Designs** is dedicated to providing creative, unique and memorable graphic designs and visual communications to include professional logos and other marketing materials.*
- *Launched by **Glenda Graves, Push Transportation** is a full-service non-emergency medical transportation company with special vested interest in providing transportation to health care appointments for Medicare and Medicaid program participants.*
- *Founded by **Calvin Washington, Sr., KJohn's Dip, Dab, & Drank** is a unique approach to entertainment and team building through art workshops.*
- *Launched by **Monica Cenance, MonCena Property Preservation** is a diversified real estate company with expertise in property preservation and maintenance services.*

The next RETI students are scheduled to begin classes today, July 11, 2018. Potential candidates for future sessions must be a HANO public housing resident or HCV (Section 8) program participant who is interested in starting a new business or growing their existing small business. **To apply, visit <https://www.retiprogram.org> or [www.HANO.org](http://www.HANO.org).**

### **About Start Smart, LLC**

Headquartered in New Orleans, Louisiana, Start Smart is a national provider of mission-critical consulting and training solutions for government, corporate and non-profit clients. Start Smart is dedicated to helping clients build more competitive and higher-performing organizations.