Have a Business Idea? Pitch It Bladen County 2027 Is Looking for You!

Program Offering Business Training, Individual Counseling and $3,000 in Cash Prizes Applications Now Open for Free Eight-Week Entrepreneurship!

BLADEN COUNTY, NC – Do you have a business idea you've been thinking about but aren't sure how to turn it into reality? The Small Business Center at Bladen Community College is inviting aspiring entrepreneurs to take the next step through **Pitch It Bladen County 2027**, an eight-week business development program and pitching competition designed to help turn promising ideas into successful businesses.

Applications are now being accepted, but interested individuals must act quickly. The deadline to apply is **December 11, 2026**, and only 10–12 participants will be selected.

Pitch It Bladen County is more than a business competition. It is an opportunity to receive practical instruction, individual business counseling, and the tools needed to develop a business plan and prepare for launching a new business.

Beginning January 12, 2027, selected participants will attend eight structured classes at Bladen Community College in Dublin. Classes will meet on Tuesday evenings from 5:30–8:30 p.m. The program was developed using the Real Entrepreneurship curriculum and is designed to guide participants through the essential steps of establishing a business.

Topics will include:

- Understanding business startup requirements and selecting a business structure.
- Developing a comprehensive business plan.
- Establishing bookkeeping practices and understanding financial reporting.
- Creating a marketing plan to reach customers.
- Understanding startup costs and financial planning.
- Preparing funding requests for grants and loans.
- Developing and presenting a business pitch.

In addition to classroom instruction, participants will receive two hours of individual business counseling with the Small Business Center Director. By the end of the program, each participant will have developed a business plan, financial plan, and pitch presentation.

A Chance to Win $3,000 in Cash Prizes

The program culminates in a business pitching competition. Participants will submit their completed business plans and presentation decks by March 25, 2027. Selected finalists will present their business concepts to a panel of judges representing local businesses and funding partners on April 7.

Thanks to the generosity of the program's sponsors, the top three business pitches will receive cash prizes to help move their business concepts toward reality:

- **First Place: $1,500**
- **Second Place: $1,000**
- **Third Place: $500**

Winners will be announced, and certificates presented, during the **Small Business Expo on April 21, 2027**, at Bladen Community College. The Expo will provide an opportunity to recognize the participants and celebrate the next generation of Bladen County entrepreneurs.

Who Should Apply?

Pitch It Bladen County is designed for individuals interested in starting a new business located or based in Bladen County. All types of businesses are eligible, including home-based and internet-based businesses.

Applicants may have already registered an LLC or other business structure with the state, but the proposed business should not have opened a business bank account, begun receiving income, or started incurring business expenses. Existing business owners may also apply if they are proposing an entirely new business concept that will operate as a new company.

Applicants must be over 18. Individuals 18 and under may participate with a legal guardian who must attend classes and counseling sessions alongside them.

Important Dates to Remember

- **December 11, 2026:** Application deadline.
- **December 18, 2026:** Selected participants notified.
- **January 12 – March 16, 2027:** Eight weeks of Tuesday evening classes, 5:30–8:30 p.m.
- **March 25, 2027:** Business plans and presentation decks due.
- **April 7, 2027:** Business pitch presentations to judges.
- **April 21, 2027:** Certificate presentation and cash prize winners announced at the Small Business Expo.

Take the First Step Toward Business Ownership!

If you've been waiting for the right opportunity, this may be it. You don't have to figure out the process of starting a business on your own. Pitch It Bladen County provides the instruction, guidance, and support to help you transform your business idea into a workable plan. Applications must include a description of the proposed business idea and a resume. Selected participants must commit to attending at least six of the eight classes, completing assignments, participating in individual counseling, and submitting a final business plan and pitch presentation.

To request an application or learn more, contact the **Small Business Center at Bladen Community College at 910-879-5572**. Applications are available on BCC's website:bladencc.edu/instruction/sbc/pitch-it-bladen-county/
Completed applications may be emailed to **tdennison@bladencc.edu** with "PITCH IT APPLICATION" in the subject line or mailed to:

Small Business Center
Bladen Community College
P.O. Box 266
Dublin, NC 28332

Don't let a great business idea remain just an idea. Apply by December 11 and get ready to Pitch It Bladen County!

Pitch It Bladen County 2027 is sponsored by Vision Ag, Hilton Companies, Bladen Community College and the Elizabethtown-White Lake Area Chamber of Commerce.