



2018 BLAST PROGRAM COHORT OVERVIEW

PERFECT YOUR PITCH

Wednesday, June 20th, 2018 – Wednesday, September 5th, 2018
5:30 – 8:00 PM

Syllabus

PURPOSE OF THE BLAST PROGRAM

The Hill Community Development Corporation's Business Leadership Academy for Social Transformation (Blast) Program is a 12-week program designed to develop the capacity and leadership capabilities of entrepreneurs and aspiring business owners. This year's cohort will once again focus on the importance of having a strong elevator pitch to effectively communicate a vision that will attract stakeholders and investors to advance the growth of the business.

Program outcomes are designed to:

- Develop the business leadership skills needed to operate an ethical business driven by social awareness to address the need for change in our communities.
- Create compelling pitching narratives to attract investment from lenders, crowdfunders, and change-makers to support businesses that have the potential to create transformative opportunities in the Hill.
- Provide entrepreneurs with the technical support, mentorship, and space necessary to operate legally structured businesses with revenue generating marketing strategies to build and maintain a vibrant customer base.

Program Facilitator: Vernard Alexander, Owner of the Minority Networking Exchange

Course Location: Hill CDC 2015-2017, Centre Avenue (2nd Floor), Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Other site locations to be announced.

Office Hours: One-on-One consultation office hours to be announced when class starts.

Attendance Requirement:

The BLAST Program is a 12-week program. Full attendance of every class is highly recommended in order to gain the total benefit and achieve overall success of the course. However, administrators of the program understand that within a three-month period, situations can arise that may prohibit students from attending. Students are **required to attend a minimum of 10 classes** in order to successfully complete the program.

Required Materials: Laptop/Tablet or Notebooks will be necessary for some sessions. Binders, notebooks, and pens will be provided to each participant at the first session. They will be NEEDED for EACH SESSION!

2018 Course Schedule and Session Overview

1st Assignment: Start putting together your Elevator Pitch. Vernard will email everyone presentation on Elevator Pitch.

CRAFT YOUR PITCH	Week 1 6/20/2018	<p>Session 1 – Program Orientation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Guest Speaker (Deidra Washington) • Elevator Pitch – 1st time • What's Your Elevator Pitch • Presentation of Business Concept and Business Name • Individual Goal Statements/Individual Goal Plan (In class assignment) • Characteristics of a successful entrepreneur • Personal and Professional Sacrifices of Leaders • Time Management <p>Homework: Elevator pitch revised, type out five questions to ask next week guest speaker and everyone must wear business attire for session 2. Create vision board to present for next week.</p>
	Week 2 6/27/2018	<p>Session 2 – Set a Firm Business Foundation</p> <p>Guest Speaker – Quinntarra Morant, Esq. and TBA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevator Pitch to guest speaker (Video Taped) • Business Structure – Sole Prop, LLC, LLP, etc. • How to register with the State of PA • IRS – EIN Number • Business Checking Account • Importance of Liability Insurance • Q + A – Ask the Attorney • Create Executive Summary of Business Plan (In class assignment) <p>Homework: Present your Executive Summary to the group and make an appointment for consultation with Quinntarra Morant.</p>
	Week 3 7/3/2018	<p>Session 3 – Share Your Vision (Class will be held on Tuesday because of the Holiday)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present Vision Boards – What does your Business look like? • State Your goals (revised from 1st session) • Who's on your Support/Management Team (Consultant, Mentor, Lawyer, Accountant, etc.)? • Market Analysis – What makes you different from your top 3 competitors (SWOT analysis) • Conduct a Feasibility Study (Survey Monkey) max of 10 questions • Beta Testing (Create Launch date) <p>Homework: Present finding results of your feasibility study to the group. Everyone must come in Professional attire and draft design of what you want on your business cards and logo</p>

	<p>Week 4 7/11/2018</p>	<p>Session 4 – Leverage the Power of Your Brand</p> <p>Guest Speaker on the importance of Branding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevator Pitch <p>Branding 101 by Diondre Johnson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Head Shots • Design of business cards • Logo • Brochures • Social Media and Blogs
<p>HONE YOUR PITCH</p>	<p>Week 5 7/18/2018</p>	<p>Session 5 – Crowdfunding</p> <p>Guest Facilitator – Emily Keebler – Kiva Pittsburgh</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation on history of Kiva • Create profiles and campaign for Kiva campaign • Upload pictures for Kiva profile • Pick a Trustee to endorse Kiva loan
	<p>Week 6 7/25/2018</p>	<p>Session 6 – A Network for Success</p> <p>Guest Facilitator – Representative of FinTech</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beta Test Your Pitch (Soft Launch) – Create plan to introduce your business to the world • Elevator Pitch • Meet Your Mentorship Panel <p>Homework: Start to developing a pricing list for all your products and services.</p>
	<p>Week 7 8/1/2018</p>	<p>Session 7 – Know the Power of Your Product</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harnessing your Social Capital • What are you selling? Products/Services? • Pricing • Ethical Business Dealings • Strategic Business Planning (working session)
	<p>Week 8 8/8/2018</p>	<p>Session 8 – Special Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make Up Class • Record revise Elevator Pitch • Start Up Cost • Income Summary • Break Even point <p>Homework: Complete financial forms and formulate five questions for next week guest speaker.</p>

PERFECT YOUR PITCH	Week 9 8/15/2018	<p>Session 9 – Money on Your Mind</p> <p>Guest Speaker – Accountant Simone Quinerly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting Up Quick Books Account (Who will pay for it?) • Business documentation Filing and Management • Importance of maintaining financial records • Bookkeeping • Cash Flow Taxes (Sales taxes, Quarterly taxes, Business and Personal, City, County, State and Federal) • Q & A – Ask the Expert <p>Homework: Formulate questions about funding for next week guest panel</p>
	Week 10 8/22/2018	<p>Session 10 – Bankability of Your Business</p> <p>Guest Speakers Jason Jones – WoodForest National Bank and a Representative from Bridgeway Capital</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying Funding Sources • Bootstrapping • Grants • Crowdfunding • Traditional Lending <p>Homework: Pitch one preferred method of social media you would like to use to design a week long advertising blitz.</p>
	Week 11 8/29/2018	<p>Session 11 – Next Level Marketing Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Marketing – Print, TV, Cable, Radio and Direct Mailing • Non Traditional Marketing – Social Media • Direct Mailing vs. Mailing list • Which traditional and non-traditional methods are appropriate for your business? <p>Homework: Present results of Beta Testing and Final preparation of your Elevator Pitch</p>
	Week 12 9/5/2018	<p>Session 12 – Prep Your Pitch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of Beta Testing (soft launch) • Final preparation with assistance of mentors. • Participate pitches for the last time for Pitch Party.

PITCH PARTY	9/13/2018	Pitch your business to investors, lenders, community stalk holders, community, family and friends. Participant with the best pitch will be receive assortment of prizes.
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This program is made possible through funding provided by Woodforest National Bank and the services of Vernard Alexander.



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