

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**FIFTEEN MICROENTREPRENEURS SET TO GRADUATE FROM CHESTER  
MICROENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP'S BUSINESS TRAINING PROGRAM  
Ceremony to be held on the campus of Widener University**

CHESTER, PA (September 12) - Mayor Dominic Pileggi, along with State Representative Thaddeus Kirkland, members of Chester City Council and Stanley White, Chief of Staff for Congressman Robert A. Brady, are expected to be on hand to recognize fifteen area microentrepreneurs at a graduation ceremony sponsored by the Chester Microenterprise Partnership (CMP). The event is scheduled to take place at Widener University, in the recently renovated Leslie C. Quick, Jr. Building, on September 16, 2002, at 6:00 p.m.

The microentrepreneurs are graduating from CMP's highly regarded business training program, designed to teach individuals who want to go into business the fundamentals of starting a small business from the ground up. The program is headed by the well-respected Director of Widener University's Small Business Institute, Dr. John Meli, who will receive special recognition at the event for his commitment to the City of Chester's small business community.

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CMP's business training program has become so successful that Program Director, James Turner, and Widener University's new President, James T. Harris III, are working on plans to expand the curriculum and include more of Widener's business school faculty to instruct the additional courses.

Joel Austin, a Chester resident and graduating student, says he was so motivated and inspired by the training program that he completed a business plan for a laundromat mid-way through the course. Mr. Austin plans to open the laundromat in Chester's new shopping complex, Wellington Ridge. He found the training to be useful and relevant, citing, "CMP's training program is very important to the future of Chester," speaking to the long-term positive effects that business development will have on the community.

Established in December 1999, CMP is a program of the Philadelphia Development Partnership (PDP) and was created as a collaborative effort of PDP, the City of Chester, the Chester Education Foundation, the Pennsylvania Weed and Seed Program, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and several community based organizations, to foster the start-up and growth of microenterprises and small businesses in the City of Chester.

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CMP offers a wide range of business development services to microentrepreneurs and small business owners in Chester and the surrounding Delaware County. These services, which include access to credit, individual business counseling, and business skills training, have made CMP an instrumental part of the City's economic resurgence.

For more information about CMP and its services, please contact James Turner at (610) 499-9184.

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