

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Community Foundation Support Local Businesses with Grants to Five Chambers of Commerce**

March 25, 2021 (Oakton, VA) – The COVID-19 pandemic hasn't just put stress on minority-owned businesses in the Northern Virginia region, but also on the chambers of commerce that serve them. The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia today announced it has awarded grants totaling \$43,000 to five area Chambers of Commerce: **Northern Virginia Black Chamber of Commerce, Asian American Chamber of Commerce, Virginia Hispanic Chamber, NOVA Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce.**

The grants, which come from Community Foundation's [Build Back – Dream Forward Fund](#) will help support programs and services each Chamber of Commerce offers to the minority-owned business community still grappling with the pandemic's negative impact on local businesses.

"We truly appreciate the generous grant from the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia. It will help us implement programs on helping Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders Owned Businesses access the resources they need to rebound from unexpected challenges and have focused support in addressing business re-opening, critical funding, contracting, and operational needs in the unique circumstances resulting from COVID-19," said Cindy Shao, President, Asian American Chamber of Commerce.

Through financial support from the Build Back-Dream Forward Fund, the Northern Virginia Black Chamber of Commerce will be able to implement programming and administer its ***Build Thriving Returns Now (BTRNow)*** initiative.

"Our goal is to facilitate the economic empowerment of black-owned businesses in Northern Virginia and the success and development of the region," said Sheila Dixon, Executive Director, Northern Virginia Black Chamber of Commerce. "Together, I believe we can set a new foundation for a robust economy now and for our next generation of business leaders in Northern Virginia."

“Building a business is grueling work, exciting, inspirational, and exhausting. During this rebuilding season, let’s focus on what we have, rather than on how much we lost. Let’s use these new constraints and challenges, to guide your entrepreneurial spirit. Constraints drive innovation and force focus. Instead of trying to remove them, use them to your advantage in the rebuilding process,” said Susana Marino, President and CEO, NOVA Hispanic American Chamber of Commerce.

“The Build Back-Dream Forward grant will support our Bilingual Business Development Center (BBDC), which provides bilingual educational workshops and webinars, networking opportunities between small business owners and entrepreneurs, and one-on-one mentoring to Hispanic individuals interested in starting or growing their business, “ said Michel Zajur, CEO and Founder, Virginia Hispanic Chamber.

#### **List of organizations receiving grants:**

##### **Northern Virginia Black Chamber of Commerce - \$10,000**

This grant will support BTRNow, Build Thriving Returns Now, the accelerator program that strives to decrease the wealth income gap of black businesses in Northern Virginia. BTRNow provides the infrastructure to help businesses scale and be competitive in the marketplace and exposes them to the ecosystems of Google and other partners to help gain potential clients for continued growth.

##### **Asian American Chamber of Commerce - \$10,000**

Funding will support AACCC’s continued focus on helping Asian American-owned businesses to access the resources they need to rebound from unexpected challenges. Specifically, this grant will fund a program series to ensure that Asian and minority-owned businesses have support in addressing business re-opening, critical funding, contracting, and operational needs in the unique circumstances resulting from COVID-19.

##### **Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce - \$10,000**

Support from the funding will help to sustain trusted bilingual business programs and expand virtual offerings to support the rapidly growing Hispanic entrepreneurial community in Northern Virginia. Programs provide bilingual educational workshops and webinars, networking opportunities between small business owners and entrepreneurs, and mentoring.

##### **NOVA Hispanic Chamber of Commerce - \$6,500**

This grant will support the Entrepreneurs Bootcamp Revenue Accelerator. The program consists of twenty hours of core training divided into three modules, plus an additional forty-eight to sixty hours, delivered in 4 to 6 hours of monthly technical assistance with team building activities prepared for business owners to thrive despite the COVID-19 crisis.

##### **Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce - \$6,500**

This grant will enable the Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce NOVA Office to expand capacity to support their existing work serving immigrant entrepreneurs with assistance needs ranging from basic start-up support to advanced level business development that will, in turn, help spark maximum economic activity and community vitality.

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**About Community Foundation for Northern Virginia**

The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia grows philanthropy to respond to critical need, seed innovation and lead and convene the community. Comprised of donor advised funds, permanent funds, giving circles, and other charitable endowments, the Community Foundation connects donors to community and promotes a more equitable and inclusive prosperity that marries our economic strength with the full breadth of our diverse community. In 2020 the Community Foundation awarded more than \$13 million in grants and scholarships and reports more than \$82 million in managed philanthropic assets. For more information please visit us at [www.cfnova.org](http://www.cfnova.org), follow up on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#)