



News from the Office of
Adam J. Bello
Monroe County Executive



For Immediate Release
Tuesday, October 26, 2021

MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO SIGNS FIRST OF MORE THAN 1,200 FAST FORWARD MONROE 2.0 CONTRACTS — REMINDS SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS OF APPLICATION DEADLINE FOR GRANTS

ROCHESTER, NY — Monroe County Executive Adam Bello today signed the first of more than 1,200 grants of up to \$20,000 under the *Fast Forward 2.0* program. He also reminds local business owners the deadline to apply for the grants is 5 p.m. Friday, October 29, 2021.

“I want our local small business owners to know help is still available to recover from losses related to the COVID-19 pandemic,” **said County Executive Bello**. “Fast Forward Monroe 2.0 is here to help entrepreneurs who suffered financial losses through no fault of their own. I encourage all our business owners to apply and thank Congressman Joe Morelle, Sen. Charles Schumer and Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand for their help in securing CARES Act funding for this program.”

Some Fast Forward 2.0 contracts are being executed and funds are on the way; the remainder of qualifying applicants will get their grants by the end of the year.

The initial Fast Forward program, launched in October 2020, helped more than 1,500 local small businesses survive the pandemic with \$20.4 million in CARES Act funding.

Recognizing that minority-owned small businesses were some of the hardest-hit by the pandemic, Monroe County joined with community organizations including the Urban League of Rochester, PathStone Enterprise Center and the Ibero-American Action League to make the Fast Forward 2.0 program more accessible. The groups give business owners comprehensive help with their applications and assist individuals with limited English proficiency.

Eligible businesses can receive grants of either \$10,000, \$15,000, or \$20,000 depending on the number of full-time employees. The money can be used for rent, payroll, operating expenditures, or COVID-related business expenses and other funding shortfalls.

The county Department of Planning and Development hired additional employees to process applications.

The program is funded with an additional \$20 million in CARES Act money, which must be distributed by the end of this year.

Businesses that got grants during the first round of the program are still eligible to receive funds through Fast Forward Monroe 2.0. Businesses that did not receive funding in the first version of the program are given priority under Fast Forward 2.0.

To apply, visit www.monroecounty.gov/fastforwardmonroe.

--- 30 ---

Media inquiries:

Gary Walker, Director of Communications

Garywalker@MonroeCounty.gov

(585) 753-1064

Meaghan McDermott, Deputy Director of Communications

MeaghanMcDermott@monroecounty.gov

(585) 469-4365