

## thank you to our funders!

- Blandin Foundation
- City of Superior Community Development Block Grant
- Duluth-Superior Area Community Foundation
- Knight Foundation
- Minnesota Power
- Northland Foundation
- Northwest Area Foundation
- St. Louis County Community Development Block Grant
- Small Business Administration
- US Bank

## Micro Equity Fund—a New Option for Financing Your Business

For those who need business financing but are hesitant about taking out a loan, another option is about to become available.

The Micro Equity Fund is a new product soon to be offered by the Northeast Entrepreneur Fund. It is a way for you to increase your income and accomplish your goals by allowing us to invest in the start of your new business.

A Micro Equity Fund investment is not a loan. It involves no interest rates or monthly payments. The way it works is that we will provide you with financial assistance to get your business up and running, and you don't owe us anything until your business

begins turning a profit. Our investment will be repaid through your business profits.

The Micro Equity Fund will give the business owner an opportunity to focus their time and efforts on building a successful business without financial worries hanging over their head. The business owner will also benefit from continual guidance and support from our staff.

For information about the Micro Equity Fund or how to apply, contact:

Dale Porter  
Business Developer &  
Micro Equity Fund Program Manager  
1-800-422-0374 ext. 402  
dalep@entrepreneurfund.org

## Financing Your Growing Business

As your business grows and changes over time, you are likely to find yourself in need of new equipment, extra inventory, additional employees, or even an entirely new business location.

The Northeast Entrepreneur Fund has a variety of loan products available to help you finance these projects or purchases with loans of up to \$100,000 available to existing businesses and experienced entrepreneurs.

The financing we'll provide you with can be used for any of a number of business needs, including:

- Working capital
- Inventory and supplies
- Machinery and equipment
- Real estate

Our financing is available to just about any type of business, including retail, service, and manufacturing.

We can be the sole lender, and we can also partner with banks and other lending institutions to provide you with the finances you need to achieve

your goals.

Our financing isn't limited to successful, growing businesses either. If you've got a business that is struggling or you've run into some personal setbacks that have affected your business, we are here to help you get back on track.

The Northeast Entrepreneur Fund also provides financing of up to \$35,000 to start-up businesses and first-time entrepreneurs, including financing the purchase of an existing business.

There are a number of benefits in financing your business with us, such as:

- Low closing costs
- No application fees
- No origination fees
- Flexible terms
- Fixed interest rate

To apply for a loan or for more information, contact:

Bob Voss, Loan Fund Manager  
1-800-422-0374 ext.232  
bobv@entrepreneurfund.org

## 3rd quarter 2005 loans disbursed

- Aroma Wine, Inc.  
—Deer River, MN
- The Babbitt Diner  
—Babbitt, MN
- Bare Feet Heating & Refrigeration  
—Ely, MN
- Daddio's Take & Bake  
—Duluth, MN
- Grand Rapids Greenhouse  
—Grand Rapids, MN
- Lakeshore Property Management  
—Gilbert, MN
- Maritime Community Mortgage  
—South Range, WI
- Miles Custom Cabinetry  
—Cloquet, MN
- Morris Enterprises, Inc.  
—Grand Rapids, MN
- No Swetts  
—Duluth, MN
- Northern Lights Lodge  
—Ely, MN
- Prime Time Realty  
—Solon Springs, WI

Helping your business succeed

N O R T H E A S T  
**entrepreneur**  
F U N D

Non-Profit  
US Postage PAID  
Virginia MN 55792  
Permit No. 20

8355 Unity Drive, Suite 100  
Virginia, MN 55792

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## calendar of events

### Brainerd

Nov. 1: CORE FOUR® Business Planning Course begins, 6:00-9:00 PM, 4 sessions, \$244

### Cherry

Nov. 8: Finding and Minding Your Finances, 6:30-8:00 PM, \$25

### Cloquet

Dec. 7: IRS Doesn't Have to Mean 'I'm Really Scared!', 6:00-7:30 PM, \$25

### Duluth

Nov. 2: Duluth-Superior Small Business Resource Fair at the DECC, 8:30 AM-3:30 PM, Free to attend.

Nov. 16: Promote Your Product, Protect Your Profit, 6:30-8:00 PM, \$25

Dec. 3 & 10: CORE FOUR® Business Planning Course (2 sessions, Saturdays), 9:00 AM-3:30 PM

### Ely

Nov. 9: Public Speaking 101, 7:30-9:00 AM, \$25

Dec. 12: IRS Doesn't Have to Mean 'I'm Really Scared!', 5:30-7:00 PM, \$25

### Grand Rapids

Nov. 1: CORE FOUR® Business Planning Course begins, 4 sessions, 5:30-8:30 PM, \$244

### Hibbing

Nov. 14: Finding and Minding Your Finances, 5:30-7:00 PM, \$25

Dec. 14: Public Speaking 101, 7:30-9:00 AM, \$25

### International Falls

Nov. 15: CORE FOUR® Business Planning Course begins, 4 sessions, 5:30-8:30 PM, \$244

### Superior

Nov. 1: Networking Luncheon for Business Owners, 11:30 AM-1:00 PM, \$15 (free the first time you attend!)

Nov. 8: CORE FOUR® Business Planning Course begins, 4 sessions, 5:30-8:30 PM, \$244

Nov. 21: IRS Doesn't Have to Mean 'I'm Really Scared!', 5:30-7:00 PM, \$25

Dec. 2: Promote Your Product, Protect Your Profit, 7:30-9:00 AM, \$25

Dec. 6: Networking Luncheon for Business Owners, 11:30 AM-1:00 PM, \$15 (free the first time you attend!)

### Virginia

Nov. 2: IRS Doesn't Have to Mean 'I'm Really Scared!', 5:30-7:00 PM, \$25

Nov. 10: Networking Luncheon for Business Owners, 11:30 AM-1:00 PM, \$15 (free the first time you attend!)

Dec. 5: Promote Your Product, Protect Your Profit, 5:30-7:00 PM, \$25

Dec. 8: Networking Luncheon for Business Owners, 11:30 AM-1:00 PM, \$15 (free the first time you attend!)

### Online

Nov. 14: CORE FOUR® E-learning, \$244

**1-800-422-0374**  
[info@entrepreneurfund.org](mailto:info@entrepreneurfund.org)

ENTREPRENEURIAL

# spirit

Helping your business succeed

N O R T H E A S T  
**entrepreneur**  
F U N D

8355 Unity Drive, Suite 100  
Virginia, MN 55792

218-749-4191  
800-422-0374

[www.entrepreneurfund.org](http://www.entrepreneurfund.org)

Offices in Duluth, Grand Rapids, Superior, and Virginia.

## Taxes with a Personal Touch

*Anne Scherer the Tax Lady*



Anne Scherer (seated) is pictured with a group of her staff (l-r): Maggie Yankowiak, Anita Aijala, Alan Scherer, Deni Mendrick.

Take one step into Anne Scherer's office and you immediately feel welcomed. A friendly group of staff, a bright office overflowing with photos of family and grandkids, and Anne's outgoing personality somehow make the tax season seem a little less daunting.

For as much success as she has had as a business owner, Anne Scherer never set out to become an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship fell into her lap in what she now looks back on as "a gift given by God."

Anne began her career in tax preparation at age 19 doing clerical work for her mother, a tax accountant. She went on to work for H&R Block for many years in a number of different job capacities, and also worked part-time for a CPA firm.

Anne's career path took a sudden turn with the tragic loss of her oldest son, Steven, in 1987. She chose to transition into working solely for the CPA firm, in a more 'behind-the-scenes' role that would give her some flexibility during this period of grieving.

Before long, some of Anne's former clients approached her wanting to continue their professional relationship with her despite her career changes.

Anne started out working from her dining room table, preparing taxes by hand. As her client base continued to grow, Anne began working full-time on her own and turned the basement of her home into an office. Over the years her clients numbered well into the hundreds.

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total results  
to date...

Program Participants:

**6865**

Business Started,  
Stabilized, or  
Expanded:

**813**

Jobs Created  
or Retained:

**2032**

Dollars Loaned:

**\$5,604,881**

inside...

Micro Equity Fund—a New Option  
for Financing Your Business

Financing Your Growing Business

Duluth-Superior Small Business  
Resource Fair

Creating an Entrepreneurial  
Community

Women's Business Network  
Update

# board of directors

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**John Stene**

American Bank, Grand Rapids, MN

**Kaye Tenerelli**

Superior Business Improvement District  
Superior, WI

**Carol Willoughby**

Let the Whole World Know and Window Doodads  
Duluth, MN

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Anne hired a few employees and made the move to computerized tax preparation. Her business was named, simply, *Anne Scherer the Tax Lady*.

The City of Duluth eventually stepped in and notified her that it was against city ordinance to run a business with employees out of her home. Once the tax season was over, she would need to relocate.

Through friends and acquaintances, Anne learned of the Northeast Entrepreneur Fund and contacted them for assistance in relocating her business. NEF Business Developer Steve Peterson helped Anne in the process of transitioning from a home-based business into her new office in the Arrowhead Place on West 2nd Street – a course of action that had to be handled quickly in order to comply with city requirements.

Since that time, Anne Scherer The Tax Lady has grown considerably. Anne now employs 7 staff, including her husband, Alan, who joined her after his retirement a few years ago.

Anne Scherer the Tax Lady provides a number of services to individuals and small businesses throughout Duluth and the surrounding area, including tax preparation, bookkeeping and accounting, payroll services, personal cash management, financial counseling and planning, and assistance in choosing and forming a business entity.

What is it that brings in clients and makes Anne Scherer's business a success?

"My staff," is Anne's reply, without a moment's hesitation. "The people I've hired fit a mold, they have a certain personality."

Anne also feels it is important in her line of work to get to know her clients personally.

"Social work plays a role. You are working with people as they go through divorce, marriage, death, unemployment, moving, bankruptcy... I get to know my clients. Some people prefer to do a drop-off, and that's what works best for their lifestyle. But I love to meet with people too. I never schedule a meeting with anyone for less than an hour."

That personal touch, coupled with the quality services provided by Anne and her knowledgeable staff, is what brings so many individuals and small business owners to her door at tax time.

Anne has seen the full range of benefits and drawbacks in her years as a business owner. The highlights of entrepreneurship are the freedom of pursuing your goals and managing your own time and schedule. A drawback is the work involved in having to make a lot of decisions on your own. For Anne, there is also the added responsibility of being an employer and having several people whose livelihood depends on working for her.

Anne's greatest satisfaction as a business owner, and what she takes the most pride in, is the fact she is able to maintain a certain standard of ethics in everything she does.

"My business has a good reputation," she says. "Above all we are honest and ethical."

Entrepreneurship has proven itself to be a lot of hard work, but also very rewarding for Anne Scherer.

"My children are proud," she remarks. "That makes me feel great."

**Anne Scherer the Tax Lady**  
205 West 2nd Street, Suite 201  
Duluth, MN 55802  
218-786-9714  
taxlady@infionline.net  
Website coming soon!

# staff

**Alison Beauregard**  
Finance Director

**Annie Fahrenkrug**  
Program Director, Women's Business Network

**Siiri Gilness**  
Marketing & Communications Assistant

**Susan Martin**  
CORE FOUR® National Consultant & Trainer

**Mary Mathews**  
President

**Steve Peterson**  
Senior Business Developer

**Dale Porter**  
Business Developer

**Anita Provinzino**  
Chief Operating Officer

**Brenda Shoberg**  
Business Developer

**Martha van Dyke**  
Administrative Assistant

**Jack Velzen**  
Trainer

**Bob Voss**  
Loan Fund Manager

**Shawn Wellnitz**  
Business Developer

**Lynn Wilson**  
Trainer

# Duluth-Superior Small Business Resource Fair

November 2, 2005 – 8:30 am–3:30 pm  
Duluth Entertainment Convention Center (DECC)  
350 Harbor Drive, Duluth, Minnesota

FREE to attend!

If you are in business or just thinking about starting your own business, this is an event you won't want to miss! Exhibitors will include non-profit organizations, for-profit firms, and government agencies with programs to help you succeed in business!

Come for an hour, come for the day, the cost to attend is FREE. Take advantage of the many workshops offered throughout the day. Workshops are offered every hour, and the Exhibit Hall will be open all day. For more information visit [www.sba.gov/mn](http://www.sba.gov/mn) or [www.sba.gov/wi](http://www.sba.gov/wi).

Sponsored by The SCORE Association, MN and WI Small Business Administration (SBA), MN and WI Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), UMD Center for Economic Development, University of Wisconsin-Superior, and the Northeast Entrepreneur Fund.

**our mission:**

*Creating economic opportunity through entrepreneurship in northeastern Minnesota and northwestern Wisconsin.*

## Creating an Entrepreneurial Community

In a playoff between a World Series Championship baseball team and an All-Star team of ball players, who is more likely to win?

The World Series team, most likely. It isn't too hard to understand why – as is often the case, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. While an All-Star team may have the greatest players in the game, a World Series Team has honed the crucial element of working together as a team, combining their skills and making the most of each player's individual contributions to the big picture.

The world of entrepreneurship isn't much different, according to Dr. Gregg A. Lichtenstein and Dr. Thomas S. Lyons, developers of the Entrepreneurial League System® (ELS), an innovative approach to developing entrepreneurial talent, creating successful companies, and building entrepreneurial communities.

The ELS is modeled after professional sports, one of the most successful processes in the world for systematically developing talent.

The potential impact of the ELS on northeast Minnesota and northwest Wisconsin was outlined in detail recently in a presentation by Lichtenstein and Lyons to a group of area economic development representatives, entrepreneurs, and community leaders.

One of the obstacles facing today's entrepreneurs is, ironically, the vast number of resources available to them. Entrepreneurs can be overwhelmed with choices and may not know which direction to turn to access the resources that will be most beneficial to them.

The ELS works by categorizing service providers by the types of service they offer. Entrepreneurs are then classified into different "league" levels—Rookies, A, AA, AAA, and Major League—according to their entrepreneurial skills and experience. The entrepreneurs are given a "game plan," and matched with a "coach" and service providers who can best meet their needs.

The overall outcomes of the ELS

are structured support for the entrepreneur, a system of coordination among service providers, and the creation of an entrepreneurial community within the region.

The formation of the Arrowhead Entrepreneurial Development System (AEDS) in 2004 was one of the first steps in our region toward more efficient entrepreneurial development services. The AEDS is a partnership of over 25 economic development and educational institutions in northeast Minnesota and northwest Wisconsin who are collaborating to grow more entrepreneurs in the region.

The Northeast Entrepreneur Fund, along with many other agencies in the region, will continue to study the potential benefits of adopting the Entrepreneurial League System® as well as other methods for creating entrepreneurial communities.

For more information on the Entrepreneurial League System® and creating entrepreneurial communities, contact Mary Mathews at 1-800-422-0374.

## ~ Women's Business Network Update ~

### Take Your Business to the Next Level!

Our Women's Business Network (WBN) strives to empower you with options for receiving the support you deserve in moving your business to the next level! In so doing, we aim to offer an environment that is inviting to all, which celebrates your successes with you and shares your achievements as stories of inspiration to others. After all, we believe the hard work and dedication you put into your business deserves a little recognition!

#### Entrepreneurial Workshop Series

The WBN presents a new entrepreneurial workshop series which began this fall. Aimed at suiting the immediate needs of your business, these 90-minute workshops delve with detail into topics related to finances, marketing, public speaking, and more. All workshops are presented by local professionals from the field, and you will gain insights and ideas for enhancing your business. Register for programs individually or as a series.

#### Monthly Networking Luncheons

Monthly networking luncheons are beginning in your area now! Running a business takes guts, determination, and - frankly - a little support now and then. If you have ever felt torn in a million directions by your business, join us each month for a healthy break that will refocus your energies, connect you to people who can relate to your situation, and allow you to learn through someone else's mistakes. Best of all, the first visit is free, giving you the opportunity to see the benefit before investing in it.

#### Business Planning Training

In addition to the new workshops and networking events being offered through our Women's Business Network program, the Northeast Entrepreneur Fund continues to offer classes that will help you plan, start, and grow your own business! These include the Introduction to Business Planning Workshop, the CORE FOUR® Business Planning Course, and CORE FOUR® E-learning. Through partnerships with other organizations and local community education departments, we also offer training in QuickBooks® and a "What Kind of Business Can I Start?" workshop to help aspiring entrepreneurs explore their ideas.

#### Let Us Hear From You!

The future of the Women's Business Network is bright; thanks to people like you. This women's business center is yours. Everyone is invited. Men need not be distracted by our name; we want you too! Once you are here, you WILL be heard. Your ideas for future programs will become realities. If you have input for the WBN, please contact:

Annie Fahrenkrug, Program Director  
 Northeast Entrepreneur Fund Women's Business Network  
[annief@entrepreneurfund.org](mailto:annief@entrepreneurfund.org)  
 1-800-422-0374 ext. 320

*We look forward to serving you!*

# did you know...

#### FACT:

Small businesses represent 99.7% of all employer firms.\*

#### FACT:

Women own 6.5 million businesses in the United States. These businesses generate \$950.6 billion in revenues and employ 7.2 million workers.\*

#### FACT:

Minorities own 4.1 million businesses in the United States. These businesses generate \$694.1 billion in revenues and employ 4.8 million workers.\*

#### FACT:

424 new women-owned businesses start every day.^

#### FACT:

80% of all new businesses in the nation fail within the first 2 years.\*

#### FACT:

95% of the businesses that receive financing and CORE FOUR® training from the Northeast Entrepreneur Fund continue to be in business after 2 years.°

\* Source: US Small Business Administration

^ Source: National Women's Business Council

° Source: Northeast Entrepreneur Fund