

News Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: Aaron Reimler

Phone: 608-797-5746

Email: aaron.reimler@couleecap.org

Couleecap Inc. Receives \$62,000 State Grant to Support Entrepreneurship

January 25, 2018 – Couleecap, Inc. has been awarded a \$62,000 grant from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) to help fund the organization’s efforts to advance the climate for entrepreneurship throughout Western Wisconsin.

Couleecap is one of 11 Wisconsin organizations to receive grants under WEDC’s Entrepreneurship Support Program, which helps fund activities such as the promotion of entrepreneurship; entrepreneurial education, mentorship and training; and business development and financial services. WEDC awarded \$500,000 in matching grants statewide.

“WEDC congratulates Couleecap for developing an innovative proposal that resulted in this grant,” said Mark Hogan, secretary and CEO of WEDC, the state’s lead economic development organization. “We look forward to working with Couleecap to further increase the availability of resources for entrepreneurs and innovators in Western Wisconsin.”

Funds from this grant will allow Couleecap to expand its delivery of the nationally renowned CO.STARTERS entrepreneurial education program to a third site in Sparta, as well as maintaining its presence in La Crosse and Viroqua. It will also help Couleecap launch Pop-Up Shop programs in 5 different retail centers throughout the Coulee Region to support retail entrepreneurship, and put a focus on downtown development. Those 5 centers are Downtown La Crosse, Uptowne La Crosse, Viroqua, Bangor, and Sparta.

While WEDC has a variety of programs to support the formation, development, growth and financing of technology-based and growth-oriented startup and early-stage businesses, the



Lt. Governor Kleevisch announces Couleecap is one of 11 organizations to receive grants under WEDC’s Entrepreneurship Support Program.



Couleecap Executive Director Hetti Brown spoke about Couleecap’s CO.STARTERS entrepreneurial education program which serves La Crosse, Viroqua, and in 2018 Sparta.

Entrepreneurship Support Program provides funding to organizations and communities whose efforts may not meet the eligibility criteria for existing programs.

Couleecap identified an area in which it could expand its services, but its budget would not support the additional activity and could not be covered by other WEDC programs.

The Entrepreneurship Support Program, now in its second year, is the latest addition to WEDC's suite of entrepreneurship resources, which includes support for startup accelerators, seed capital funds, investment tax credits and technology development loans. In addition, WEDC supports and engages an existing statewide network of partners that offers business training, mentorship and financing to aspiring entrepreneurs.

Other grant recipients include: BizStarts, Milwaukee; BrightStar Wisconsin Foundation, Milwaukee; Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) 3, Fennimore; Indianhead Community Action Agency, Ladysmith; Green County Development Corporation, Monroe; Heart of Wisconsin Community Incubator, Wisconsin Rapids; Nicolet Area Technical College, Rhinelander; Oconto County Economic Development Corporation, Oconto; UW-Stout Center for Innovation and Development, Menomonie; and WiSolve Consulting Group, Madison.

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About Couleecap

Couleecap, Inc. is a private non-profit 501c3 charitable organization. Couleecap helps people in need with housing, food, transportation, and more. Created in 1966, we are a community action program that fights poverty and promotes self-sufficiency in Crawford, La Crosse, Monroe, and Vernon counties. Learn more at www.couleecap.org.

About the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) leads economic development efforts for the state by advancing and maximizing opportunities in Wisconsin for businesses, communities and people to thrive in a globally competitive environment. Working with more than 600 regional and local partners, WEDC develops and delivers solutions representative of a highly responsive and coordinated economic development network. Visit www.wedc.org or follow WEDC on Twitter [@WEDCNews](https://twitter.com/WEDCNews) to learn more.

