



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **INSTITUTE FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP & GREATER NEWARK ENTERPRISES CORPORATION CREATE SMALL BUSINESS INITIATIVE TO HELP AREA BUSINESSES IMPACTED BY COVID-19**

*The Small Businesses Need Us Program Is The Lifeline Needed To Help Entrepreneurs Recover & Grow*

**NEWARK, NJ, March 23, 2021** — The [Institute For Entrepreneurial Leadership \(IFEL\)](#) and [Greater Newark Enterprises Corporation \(GNEC\)](#) announced today a partnership to assist COVID-19 impacted businesses through the Small Businesses Need Us initiative. The program directs help to small businesses in the region who need it the most and are struggling to survive and to navigate the devastating and crippling effects of the pandemic.

“The majority of small businesses are ill-equipped to sustain through a crisis the magnitude of the COVID-19 pandemic. Government aid and grants are not enough,” states IFEL CEO Jill Johnson. “Small business owners need hands-on support to address the business challenges they are facing. The volunteers we bring to the table through Small Businesses Need Us provide the lifeline that small enterprises need to stay afloat.”

The Small Businesses Need Us initiative pairs small business owners with seasoned business professionals organized into cross-functional teams. The teams, which are formed based on the needs of the entrepreneurs, will help the businesses address their most pressing issues. Volunteers have a broad range of expertise including technology, legal, financial, marketing, operations, business planning, and more. All work is done through phone and video conferencing. There is no cost to the business for these resources. Businesses do not have to be located in Newark to receive assistance as the program extends throughout the region.

“The pandemic, civil unrest, high number of COVID-19 deaths, and the lack of stimulus funds have produced an extremely challenging environment for businesses. The barriers, particularly to entrepreneurs of color, are more evident than ever before,” noted GNEC Executive Director Victor Salama. “The Greater Newark Enterprises Corporation is excited to be partnering with the Institute

For Entrepreneurial Leadership. Like so many small business owners in our communities, GNEC clients have faced tremendous challenges during the pandemic. Having access to expert technical assistance through IFEL and its volunteers is precisely what our clients need to sustain and grow their businesses during these difficult times.”

The Institute for Entrepreneurial Leadership and Greater Newark Enterprises Corporation will work together with businesses not only in Newark but also those in the surrounding region. For more information on the Small Businesses Needs Us initiative or to apply as a business owner, visit [www.gnecorp.org/small-businesses-need-us](http://www.gnecorp.org/small-businesses-need-us). Questions may be emailed to [info@gnecorp.org](mailto:info@gnecorp.org).

#### **ABOUT THE GREATER NEWARK ENTERPRISES CORPORATION**

The mission of the Greater Newark Enterprises Corporation is to help communities build businesses and to create long-lasting wealth for their families through business ownership. GNEC is a boutique economic development organization that works with businesses to provide financing, consulting, and business coaching. The GNEC carries out that mission by working within community facilities throughout New Jersey. Our sole purpose for existence is to help entrepreneurs to start or to grow their businesses by providing the resources and capital solutions critical to business success. We believe that entrepreneurs who leverage the limited resources available to them are the ones who ultimately succeed.

#### **ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP**

Founded in 2002, the [Institute for Entrepreneurial Leadership](https://www.weareifel.org) (IFEL) is an independent, not-for-profit organization that supports economic development through entrepreneurship. We are experts in creating and implementing small business programming in support of larger economic development objectives. Our mission is to eradicate the systemic barriers that prevent entrepreneurs of color from being able to access the knowledge, networks, and capital required for business success. Visit us at <https://www.weareifel.org>

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