

RI's Self-Employment Project

Learn How You Can Start Your Own Business!



Why Choose Self-Employment?

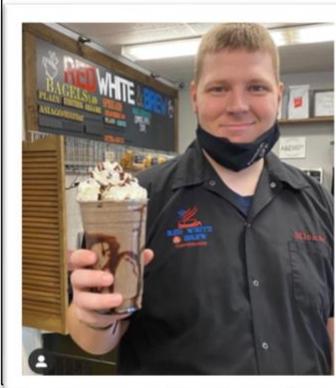
Self-employment offers people with disabilities and others flexibility and control that traditional jobs do not, such as meaningful employment in an area the person has a *real passion* for, setting their own flexible work hours, being their own “Boss”, determining their actual place of employment, working at their own pace, and increasing each person’s self-esteem.

Traditional 9-5 wage jobs and various types of workplace environments may not be the best option for some individuals with disabilities. “*Self-employment and the spirit of individual enterprise*” can match a person’s dreams, hobbies and skills to start their own business earning competitive wages, facilitate diversity and inclusion, and build each person’s financial future!

What does the Project Include?

The Project provides ongoing support for aspiring entrepreneurs to develop their business idea, launch or grow their small businesses, and improve their financial futures. It includes:

- 8 Business Development Classes through ZOOM Meetings in interactive formats people can understand
- Project Staff and Peer Mentor Support
- 1-1 Business Support from Business Advisors for marketing; Business Planning; Business Card, Facebook or Website design; Accounting/Finances, etc.
- Mini-Grants for materials/supplies/equipment
- Weekly Entrepreneur’s Forum with practical information and networking ideas
- Opportunity to participate in various local community Vendor Marketplace Events
- Completion of a Business Planning Portfolio



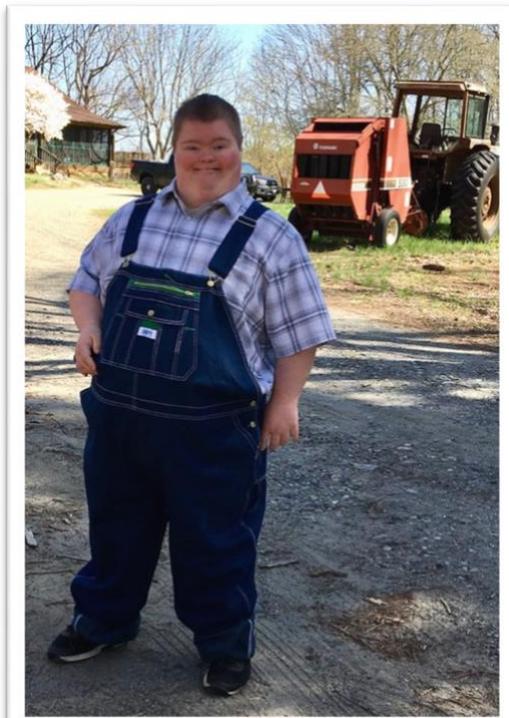
In RI there are many individuals with disabilities who have figured out creative ways to leverage their talents, skills, resources and connections into their ideal job... not through finding jobs, but by creating their own employment and small business!



What Do You Need to Get Started?

- A hobby, talent or skill that you want to pursue as a possible small business
- An interest in learning more about the steps to start a business and necessary ongoing business support
- Ability to connect on a laptop, computer or I-Pad for 8 weekly ZOOM Business Classes
- Family, friends or support staff who can be a part of your Business Team to assist you with the business classes and other business development resources you may need to explore

ANYONE can be a small business owner with the right resources and support!



How Did this Project Start?

The RI Department of Labor and Training (DLT) and “*Real Jobs RI*” has provided funding to the RI Developmental Disabilities Council (RIDDC) since 2018 to administer this Project and organize the ongoing business development support people with disabilities need to successfully start up or grow a small business. The Council provides additional in-kind resources to support the operational components and other activities to help promote entrepreneurs with disabilities and their businesses.

Where Can I Get More Information?

The next round of the Business Development Series and 8 Classes through Zoom starts March 2023.

To see more information on this Project and read about some great success stories of people with disabilities and their individual businesses in RI check out the RIDDC’s website at www.riddc.org and click on the Self-Employment tab. You will be inspired by these entrepreneurs who have made their dreams into reality through business ownership!

You can also contact Sue Babin, Project Director at 401-523-2300, Project Staff Claudia Lowe at 401-738-3960 or the RIDDC at 737-1238 for more information.

