M&T Bank Announces Winners of the Baltimore City Multicultural Small Business Accelerator Program

Shakura Miller received the $2,000 grand prize to support Miku Beauty

Baltimore, MD – November 21, 2024 – Shakura Miller, owner of Miku Beauty, won the $2,000 grand prize at the pitch competition for the Multicultural Small Business Accelerator Program in Baltimore, MD, hosted by M&T Bank (NYSE:MTB). This program aimed to equip entrepreneurs with the knowledge and skills to build successful businesses, drive economic growth in Baltimore, and create generational wealth for their families.

Miku Beauty is a Brow Care and Beauty Studio dedicated to enhancing natural beauty and restoring client confidence. The studio offers a variety of beauty services and training sessions for those seeking to learn more about the beauty industry.

“The program was incredibly informative, and I greatly appreciated the resources and connections I gained,” said Shakura Miller. “This experience has helped shift my business toward the direction I envision for the future. I’ve already started using the program’s resources and have seen positive changes in my business. The $2,000 prize will be invested in developing a keratin-based brow treatment product for my clients.”

The pitch competition marked the conclusion of a 10-week program that began on September 19. Held at the Baltimore City Small Business Resource Center, the program featured in-person courses covering business planning, sourcing capital, managing financial statements, marketing, and branding. The program ended on November 21 with the pitch competition and prize announcements, funded by M&T Bank.

Linnita Hosten, owner of Vocal Value, earned the second-place prize of $1,000, while Sulena Reece, owner of So Unique Concierge, won the third-place prize of $500.

To participate, entrepreneurs had to meet several criteria: they needed to be based in Baltimore, represent a multicultural small business (e.g., Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, or Asian American), have operated for at least two years, and have annual revenues of $350,000 or less.

“M&T Bank, in collaboration with Baltimore City, is honored to host the Business Accelerator Program, designed to provide local entrepreneurs with the tools and resources they need to grow their businesses,” said Jim Peterson, Vice President and Small Business Ambassador at M&T Bank. “As the #1 SBA lender in Baltimore, we are committed to supporting small business growth in the region. This year’s participation was outstanding, and we are proud to celebrate the achievements of all participants.”

M&T Bank also offers similar accelerator programs in Montgomery, Howard, Frederick, and Prince George’s counties, including programming specifically for Spanish-speaking entrepreneurs. These initiatives continue to empower diverse entrepreneurs by providing expert guidance and financial support.

About M&T Bank
M&T is a financial holding company headquartered in Buffalo, New York. M&T's principal banking subsidiary, M&T Bank, provides banking products and services with a branch and ATM network spanning the eastern U.S. from Maine to Virginia and Washington, D.C. Trust-related services are provided in select markets in the U.S. and abroad by M&T's Wilmington Trust-affiliated companies and by M&T Bank. For more information about M&T Bank, visit www.mtb.com.

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