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## Rockland Trust Charitable Foundation Awards \$60K to Cape Cod Blue Economy Foundation to Support Local Entrepreneurs

(Centerville, Mass. February 12, 2024) - The Cape Cod Blue Economy Foundation has been awarded \$60,000 from the Rockland Trust Charitable Foundation for its Entrepreneurs Forever peer-support and education program. The Blue Economy Foundation is a regional initiative to promote and sustain a maritime-focused economy on Cape Cod, the islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. The Entrepreneurs Forever program is designed to strengthen cohorts of small businesses past the start-up stage.

"Our Charitable Foundation is honored to support the 12 small businesses that will start in the Cape Cod Blue Economy Foundation's cohort," said Andrea Borowiecki, Vice President of Charitable Giving & Community Engagement at Rockland Trust and Executive Director of Rockland Trust Charitable Foundation. "As a bank founded by a group of business owners, it is important that we continue to support initiatives that support small businesses during their most difficult years."

"We see this partnership with Entrepreneurs Forever as a major value add to our member businesses and an important part of the growth of our region's blue economy," said Paul Niedzwiecki, CEO of the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce and Blue Economy Foundation. "This effort builds on existing tourism industries, marine research and technology clusters, and sustainable use planning entities dedicated to preserving the Cape's environment and quality of life."

The three-year program will teach a cohort of 12 small business owners from Cape Cod how to respond to challenges and sustainably grow their businesses. Using Entrepreneurs Forever's peer learning program, a facilitator will guide Cape Cod businesses through monthly meetings. These meetings are designed to encourage the entrepreneurs to problem-solve challenges together and in turn build the skills needed to grow their business.

"There has been a persistent and significant gap in the resources available to businesses in that critical phase between startup and becoming a thriving enterprise," said AJ Drexler, CEO of Entrepreneurs Forever. "While ample support exists for those at the ideation stage or for well-established businesses, the journey in between has often been neglected. Entrepreneurs Forever is dedicated to filling this void and helping small businesses seeking more sustainable growth."

Join us on February 27th to Ramp Up for Your Best Season Ever! [Register here to learn more about this free program.](#)

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#### **About Entrepreneurs Forever**

Entrepreneurs Forever is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization actively supporting established business owners beyond the startup phase, helping them to grow their businesses. Our mission at Entrepreneurs Forever is to empower all small business owners, enabling them to cultivate thriving enterprises that sustain their families and contribute to their communities. According to our most recent member data for 2022, an impressive 67% of program participants experienced a 10% growth in revenue—surpassing the national average by over 300 times. Additionally, more than 50% of businesses in our program hired their first employee. After just 2.9 years in our program, 55% of members more than doubled their annual owner compensation, increasing from an average of \$20,551 to \$48,415. For additional information, please visit [EntrepreneursForever.org](https://EntrepreneursForever.org).

#### **About Rockland Trust Charitable Foundation, Inc.**

The Rockland Trust Charitable Foundation's mission is to strengthen the communities served by the Bank. We enable individuals and their families to access opportunity and improve the quality of their lives. To date, the Foundation has distributed more than \$27 million in grants to qualified non-profit organizations in the communities served by Rockland Trust. For information about the Rockland Trust Charitable Foundation, please visit [www.RocklandTrust.com/CharitableGiving](http://www.RocklandTrust.com/CharitableGiving).

#### **About Cape Cod Blue Economy Foundation, Inc.**

Established in 2017, the Cape Cod Blue Economy Foundation supports the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce initiative to promote and sustain a maritime-focused economy on Cape Cod. The Foundation produces and hosts the annual WaterWORKS career showcase to connect high school students to Blue Economy and STEM career opportunities, and the Big Blue Conference, a two-day conference featuring business, policy, and education leaders discussing relevant topics pertaining to the regional Blue Economy and overall economic outlook. For additional information please visit [bluecapecod.org](http://bluecapecod.org).