

BREW: Building Resilient Entrepreneurs in Winterville

The Winterville Chamber of Commerce proudly presents the BREW Program (Building Resilient Entrepreneurs in Winterville) presented by NCInnovation — a multi-week, cohort-style program designed to equip aspiring entrepreneurs and early-stage business owners with the tools, skills, and local connections needed to launch and grow a successful business.

BREW is a Winterville Chamber of Commerce initiative, offered in collaboration with the Pitt Community College Small Business Center (SBC) and the Town of Winterville as supporting partners, sponsored by NCInnovation.

In the “Building Resilient Entrepreneurs in Winterville” Program, participants learn key skills and insights to run a profitable business, from financing options and taxation to marketing. At the end of the twelve-week program, participants will be prepared to launch their business as well as have gained valuable connections within the local business community.

Program Overview

Participants will gain hands-on experience and expert guidance in key areas of business development, including:

- Market research and business planning
- Financing options and bookkeeping
- Taxation and legal considerations
- Marketing, branding, and growth strategy
- How to pitch your business concept

Classes are held **in person in Winterville** on **Mondays from 6-8pm**.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to participate, applicants must:

- Plan to start a new business **or** have started a business within the last 12 months and need additional assistance.

- Be located in **Pitt County** and intending to serve the **Winterville area**.
- Be committed to attending all sessions and completing required activities.

Program Fee and Class Size

- There is **no fee to apply**.
- Upon acceptance, participants must pay a **\$50 program fee**, payable to the **Winterville Chamber of Commerce**.
- Space is limited to **10 participants** per cohort.
- Not all applicants will be accepted; admission is competitive and based on application strength.

Participant Expectations

To successfully complete the program, participants must:

- Attend **100% of the ten core classes plus intro session and graduation**.
- Submit a **completed written business plan**.
- File your business structure with the NC Secretary of State
- Complete **two (2) documented counseling hours** with the **PCC Small Business Center** or **Small Business Technology Development Center at ECU**
- Meet with their assigned **mentor at least twice** during the program.
- Demonstrate readiness to start an actual business, including registration and compliance with applicable local, state, and federal requirements.
- Adhere to the **Winterville Chamber of Commerce Code of Conduct** and maintain professionalism throughout the program.
- Complete end of program surveys.

Mentorship and Support

Each accepted participant will be **paired with a mentor** from the local business community for one-on-one guidance and support.

Participants will also receive counseling opportunities through the **Pitt Community College Small Business Center**.

Completion & Benefits

Graduates who complete the program in full and demonstrate a viable business model will:

- Be **eligible for consideration** of additional funding opportunities through program collaborators. *(Funding is not guaranteed and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.)*
- Receive a **complimentary one-year membership** to the **Winterville Chamber of Commerce**, activated when their business officially launches or when the participant chooses.
- Present their business plan during the **final pitch showcase**, where judges will evaluate participants' progress, participation, and business concept.

Program Policies

BREW is developed, organized, and operated by the **Winterville Chamber of Commerce**. The Pitt Community College Small Business Center and the Town of Winterville serve as **supporting partners**, providing resources and expertise to contribute to the betterment of the program.

The Winterville Chamber reserves the right to:

- Dismiss participants who fail to meet attendance, conduct, or participation requirements.
- Modify program dates, content, or expectations as needed.

- Withhold certificates, funding eligibility, or Chamber membership benefits from participants who do not complete all program requirements.

Participation in BREW does not guarantee business success, funding, or future Chamber support beyond stated program benefits.

BREW Program Syllabus

Class Schedule

February 2 – ONE: Information Session & Mentorship Introduction

February 9 – TWO: Building a Business Plan

February 16 – THREE: Market Research & Understanding Your Customer

February 23 – FOUR: Legal & Regulatory Considerations

March 2 – FIVE: Credit, Financing, & Budgeting Basics

March 9 – SIX: Bookkeeping & Financial Projections for Your Business Plan

March 16 – SEVEN: Tax Essentials for Businesses

March 23 – EIGHT: Insurance & Risk Management

March 30 – NINE: Storytelling, Branding & Building a Resilient Business

April 6 – TEN: Marketing Your Business (Branding, Website, and Social Media)

April 13 – ELEVEN: Pitch Workshop

April 27 – TWELVE: Mock Pitches & Group Feedback

May 4 – THIRTEEN: Final Pitches & Graduation

Application Timeline

Application Deadline: January 9, 2026

Participants Selected and Notified:

- **Interviews: By January 16, 2026**

- **Final Selection: By January 23, 2026**

CLASS ONE: Information Session & Mentorship Introduction

February 2, 2026 | 6–8 PM

This session will introduce participants to the BREW program, expectations, and requirements. Attendees will meet representatives from the Winterville Chamber of Commerce, the Town of Winterville, and the Pitt Community College Small Business Center, along with their assigned mentors. Participants will receive a program checklist and have the opportunity to discuss goals, resources, and networking strategies with peers and mentors.

CLASS TWO: Building a Business Plan**February 9, 2026 | 6–8 PM**

Speaker: *Corey Pulido (Proven Business Plans Consulting)*

This foundational session covers how to transform a business idea into a workable plan. Participants will learn to evaluate feasibility, establish goals, and identify the key components of a strong business plan. The session will also explore how lenders, investors, and partners use business plans in decision-making and will provide tips for writing a plan that stands out.

CLASS THREE: Market Research & Understanding Your Customer**February 16, 2026 | 6–8 PM**

Speaker: *Halle Nobles (PCC Small Business Center)*

This session focuses on discovering and defining your target market. Participants will learn to conduct market research using demographic data, competitor analysis, and customer feedback. The discussion will explore how to use data to position your business effectively and align your products or services with customer needs.

CLASS FOUR: Legal & Regulatory Considerations**February 23, 2026 | 6–8 PM**

Speaker: *Brad Piner (Colombo Kitchin Attorney)*

Participants will gain insight into essential legal aspects of starting and operating a business. The session will cover choosing a business structure, registering with appropriate agencies, understanding local zoning and permitting, and protecting intellectual property. Attendees will also learn about contracts, compliance, and employer obligations to help avoid costly mistakes down the road.

CLASS FIVE: Credit, Financing & Budgeting Basics

March 2, 2026 | 6–8 PM

Speaker: *Corey Barbour (Barbour Companies)*

This session focuses on the financial essentials every entrepreneur needs to start strong. Participants will learn the fundamentals of credit, how to prepare for financing, and how to build a realistic startup and operating budget. Corey will also cover lending readiness, common financial pitfalls, and how to position your business for future funding opportunities.

CLASS SIX: Bookkeeping & Financial Projections for Your Business Plan

March 9, 2026 | 6-8 PM

Speakers: *Jennifer Syers (Proof + Balance Bookkeeping) & Everett Kelly (Southern Bank)*

This session provides a practical foundation in bookkeeping and introduces the financial projections required for a strong business plan. Jennifer will guide participants through recording transactions, understanding financial statements, and managing cash flow. Everett will then explain how to create clear, lender-ready financial projections that demonstrate feasibility and support funding applications.

CLASS SEVEN: Tax Essentials for Businesses

March 16, 2026 | 6–8 PM

Speaker: *Debbie Davis & Karen Spruill (Down South Accounting & Tax)*

This key session focuses on the tax obligations every entrepreneur must understand. We'll walk through required federal, state, and local business filings, common tax forms, important deadlines, and how different business structures impact your tax responsibilities. You'll also review what records you're expected to maintain for compliance purposes. This class builds on the foundational knowledge gained in earlier financial and accounting sessions.

CLASS EIGHT: Insurance & Risk Management

March 23, 2026 | 6–8 PM

Speaker: *Saul Horowitz (Horowitz State Farm) & David Allen (Winterville Insurance Agency)*

This session will focus on understanding the different types of insurance small businesses may need and how to assess and mitigate risks effectively. Participants will learn to identify coverage gaps, compare policy options, and implement strategies to protect their business and assets. This class builds on the financial and tax knowledge gained in earlier sessions.

CLASS NINE: Storytelling, Branding & Building a Resilient Business

March 30, 2026 | 6–8 PM

Speakers: *Rebecca Caveness (Winterville Chamber of Commerce) & Tristyn Daughtry (Town of Winterville Economic Development)*

This combined session connects your “why” and business story with the strategies needed for long-term sustainability and growth. Participants will learn how to craft a compelling narrative, strengthen their brand, and build confidence in networking and relationship-building. The class then explores how that story becomes the foundation for a resilient, scalable business - covering operational sustainability, adapting to change, responsible growth, and financial resilience.

CLASS TEN: Marketing Your Business (Website and Social Media)

April 6, 2026 | 6–8 PM

Speakers: *Clarence Augustin (Clarence Web Design) & Kate Ker (Kate Ker Digital Communications, People of Greenville)*

This class provides a comprehensive look at how to create and promote your brand across traditional and digital platforms. Participants will learn to define their brand identity, design effective marketing campaigns, and develop an online presence through websites and social media. The session will include practical tools for reaching customers and maintaining consistent messaging.

CLASS ELEVEN: Pitch Workshop

April 13, 2026 | 6–8 PM

Speaker: *April Kelly (Tavi)*

This interactive session focuses on building confidence and refining communication skills ahead of the final presentations. Participants will learn how to structure a compelling business pitch, convey their value proposition, and tailor their message to different audiences. With guidance from mentors and Chamber leaders, attendees will practice techniques for engaging delivery, visual aids, and Q&A preparedness. The goal of this session is to ensure each participant feels confident and polished when presenting their business concept.

CLASS TWELVE: Mock Pitches & Group Feedback

April 27, 2026 | 6–8 PM

In this session, participants will deliver a full run-through of their business presentations before mentors and program partners. Each participant will receive constructive feedback on content, delivery, and clarity to help fine-tune their pitch for the final showcase. This session serves as a

dress rehearsal, allowing participants to make final adjustments and gain confidence ahead of graduation night.

FINAL: Final Pitches & Graduation

May 4, 2026 | 6–8 PM

The program culminates in the final presentation night, where participants will deliver their business pitches before a panel of judges and invited guests. Presentations will be evaluated based on feasibility, presentation quality, and progress demonstrated throughout the program. The evening will conclude with recognition of graduates, certificate presentations, and a celebration of their achievements.