



For Immediate Release

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**Elizabeth City Puts More Juice in 2017 Jump-Start
Downtown Business Plan Competition
\$12,000 in incentive packages to be awarded**

(Elizabeth City, N.C., Nov. 2, 2016) – Beginning today, entrepreneurs may apply to win up to \$12,000 in incentive packages, by entering Jump-Start Downtown, an Elizabeth City business plan competition, sponsored by Elizabeth City Downtown, Inc. (ECDI), the Elizabeth City Area Committee of 100 and the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank County Economic Development Commission.

“This is a great opportunity for start-ups to realize their dream of opening a business with the support from our Jump-Start partners and Elizabeth City’s downtown business community,” said ECDI Director Debbie Malenfant. “The Committee of 100 has sweetened the pot in 2017, contributing an extra \$1,000 for a cash prize for the runner-up business.”

Applicants, who must be 18 years or older, may apply at www.harborofopportunity.com. They have until Jan. 27, 2017 to submit their business plan, to include an executive summary, market analysis, marketing and financial plans and other documents. Any type of business is eligible to enter, so long as the proposed business location is within the boundaries of downtown Elizabeth City. Occupancy of a street-level, street-facing storefront is preferred. If a business is located in Pasquotank County, the proposed downtown location must be an expansion. In addition, the winners must have their businesses up and running by Nov. 17, 2017.

“With the excitement generated in downtown by the rehabilitation of the Southern Hotel and the planned conversion of the Fowler Building into Elizabeth City Brewing Company, we expect this year’s field of applicants to be the strongest yet,” said Wayne Harris, director of the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank County Economic Development Commission.

Judges with small business experience will rate the submissions, and two prizes will be awarded. A first-place winner will receive: a \$5,000 cash prize to use for start-up capital, \$3,500 worth of additional services including a free advertising package in the *Daily Advance*

newspaper, a free one-year Chamber of Commerce membership, a free one-year Downtown Business & Professional Association membership and one set of business cards from MMT Printers.

A second-place winner will receive a \$1,000 cash prize (new this year) to use for start-up capital, \$2,500 worth of business services including a free advertising package in the *Daily Advance*, a discounted one year Chamber of Commerce membership, a free one-year Downtown Business & Professional Association membership and one free set of business cards.

The 2016 Jump-Start winners, Carrie Hays and Talia Krites, opened the Flour Girls Café and Bakery earlier this year. Featuring designer cakes, fresh-baked pastries and breads and deli sandwiches, the eatery occupies a prime downtown location at 102 Water Street. Nestlerode Orthopedic and The Photography Company, 2015 winner and runner up, occupy store-front locations along Main Street.

ECDI, the Elizabeth City Area Committee of 100 and the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank County Economic Development Commission are the presenting sponsors of the Jump-Start competition, with support from the *Daily Advance*, MMT Printers, Inc., College of The Albemarle's Small Business Center, Small Business Technology Development Center and the Elizabeth City Downtown Business & Professional Association.

Elizabeth City is located in northeastern North Carolina, situated halfway between the Outer Banks and Norfolk, Va. Additional information about the Jump-Start competition and the online application are located at www.harborofopportunity.com.

The Elizabeth City | Pasquotank County Economic Development Commission

The Elizabeth City | Pasquotank County EDC markets business opportunities in the City of Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County to prospective employers throughout the United States. Its location in the center of northeastern North Carolina makes the area ideally suited for business development, expansion and relocation. For information go to www.harborofopportunity.com or call 1-888-338-1678 or (252) 338-0169.

Elizabeth City Downtown, Inc.

[Elizabeth City Downtown, Inc.](http://www.elizabethcitydowntown.com) is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to be a catalyst of revitalization, acting as a central source for potential investors, visitors and residents interested in Elizabeth City's historic downtown waterfront. Since 1988, it has administered the Main Street Program, a revitalization program created by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Elizabeth City Area Committee of 100

The [Elizabeth City Area Committee of 100](http://www.elizabethcityarea.com) has been backing business ventures in the Elizabeth City area since 1981. This private, non-profit organization works in concert with Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County government leaders to enhance and help fund economic development activity which municipal budgets alone cannot cover. From the development of Elizabeth City's scenic and accommodating Mariners' Wharf Marina to the launch of the bustling Downtown Waterfront Market, the committee cultivates sustainable projects that will have long-term economic value for the city and county.