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Alaniz Sponsors New Henry County Entrepreneur Award

Mount Pleasant, IA - A new Henry County Entrepreneur Award will be available this year thanks to the generosity of Alaniz, LLC. The Award will provide seed capital grants of \$1,000-\$5,000 to entrepreneurs interested in starting new or expanding current businesses in Henry County. "We are extremely excited about this new award," said Jennifer Daly, Executive Vice President of the Mount Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce. "The award will help us identify and support innovate entrepreneurs in the area."

The idea for the Award began during a brainstorming session at a Chamber Entrepreneurial Support Committee meeting. "We knew we needed a way to spur business development in Henry County and funding is often an issue for new entrepreneurs," said committee member Michelle Rosell. Rosell and Daly approached Randy Seberg at Alaniz to see if Alaniz would be willing to sponsor the new program. "Randy is a true entrepreneur with the spirit and innovative thinking that we are hoping to find and grow in Henry County," said Daly. "We thought he might be interested in helping us identify and support individuals who have a similar passion and potential."

Seberg was very supportive of the concept and agreed to contribute \$5,000 to the award fund for 2004. He also helped the committee iron out the details for the program. "We were really impressed with Randy's suggestions for how the award should be structured," said Rosell. "We will be accepting applications through July 15 and presenting one or several awards at the Chamber's Annual Banquet in October if we have strong applicants."

Applications for the new Henry County Entrepreneur Award will be available beginning May 1 at the Chamber Alliance Office. Applications are due July 15.

Entrepreneurs who are interested in applying for the new Henry County Entrepreneurs Award, but need some help polishing their idea or business plan should consider taking the Fast Trac Class, being offered by Iowa Wesleyan College this spring. The course is designed to assist entrepreneurs in developing and writing feasibility, operation, marketing, and business plans in a condensed period of time.

The class will be held on Thursday evenings from 5:30 – 9:00 PM, May 6-June 10 in the Iowa Wesleyan College Library International Room. To register for the Fast Trac program, please contact Iowa Wesleyan College's Extended Learning Office at 319-385-6245 and ask to register for the Fast Trac Class. The class cost is \$179 per person.

Scholarships for the class are available by contacting the Chamber office at 319-385-3101.

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