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MEDIA RELEASE

TEN NEW SMALL BUSINESSES LAUNCHED WITH MENTORSHIP OF STRATFORD PERTH CENTRE FOR BUSINESS

Provincial Summer Company Grants of \$30K Aid Student Summer Start-ups

Stratford, Ontario – August 18, 2025 ... **Today the Stratford Perth Centre for Business announced that 10 new student-run small businesses launched this summer with the assistance of the Summer Company program which includes mentorship and provincial grants totaling \$30K for young, local entrepreneurs in Stratford and Perth County.** The Summer Company program is primarily funded by the Province of Ontario, and the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, and under mentorship of the Stratford Perth Centre for Business, helps students start their entrepreneurial business dreams. This year, additional support was received from Perth County, allowing 2 additional students between the ages 15 and 29 to start their own summer business and turn their ideas into a reality with financial grants of up to \$3,000.

Program graduates include:

Makenzie Bartlett, Belle with a Bow: Makenzie brings elegance and emotion to special events with live violin music. A 15-year-old performance violinist with over a decade of experience, she offers customized set lists across a variety of genres to suit the mood and style of any occasion, from weddings and memorials to private gatherings Book via belle.withabow02@gmail.com or through Instagram @belle_withabow

Navan Simmons, N7slens: Navan captures the energy and intensity of sports through high-impact photography and video. Specializing in social media marketing for athletes and teams, Navan offers game-day coverage, highlight reels, and custom content tailored for youth and college athletes across Southwestern Ontario. With firsthand experience as both athletes and photographers, Navan delivers dynamic visuals that help players get noticed by scouts, coaches, and programs. Book at 519-801-9440 or through Instagram @n7slens

Valentine Adeseiye, Zenthra Labs: Valentine runs a cutting-edge additive manufacturing company in Stratford, specializing in 3D printing and custom product creation. Serving clients locally and across the province, he helps bring ideas to life through prototypes, small product runs, and unique designs. With a focus on quality, speed, and the latest technology, Valentine delivers innovative solutions tailored to each customer's needs. Contact Valentine via email adeseiyeval@gmail.com

Brody Schoonderwoerd, Schoonderwoerd Window Washing: Brody provides expert interior and exterior window cleaning services, including screens and sills. Using advanced equipment like a deionization water filtration system, Brody ensures every window is spotless and streak-free. Equipped with ladders and telescopic poles, Schoonderwoerd can reach windows up to the third level. Backed by a 7-day satisfaction guarantee, he is committed to delivering the flawless "Schoonderwoerd Shine" every customer can trust. Book via schoonwc@gmail.com or call 519-301-7767

Joel Heida, Joel's Patio Revival: Joel owns and operates Joel's Patio Revival & Landscaping, offering garden bed restoration, property maintenance, interlocking brick restoration, and pressure washing. Equipped to handle a wide range of landscaping and outdoor projects, Joel is happy to discuss your unique needs. Proudly serving Stratford and the surrounding area. Book via joelspatiorevival@gmail.com or call 226-584-0933

Michael Ewing, Designs by Michael: Media by Michael specializes in dynamic sports photography and bold graphic design that capture the energy and emotion of every moment. From game-day action shots to custom visuals for athletes and teams, Michael delivers high-impact content tailored to elevate your brand. Book via designs.by.michael13@gmail.com, call 519-281-6474, or connect on Instagram @media.by.michael.

David Lambert, Stratford Yard Works: David is a reliable and hardworking local neighbour offering affordable yard work and general home help. From lawn care and garden cleanup to light maintenance and lifting, he provides one-time or ongoing support with flexible scheduling to fit your needs. Book via david.stratford.yardwork@gmail.com or call (226) 808-6298.

Brooke Wilhelm, Brooke Wilhelm's Simply Spotless Cleaning: Brooke offers detailed and dependable interior cleaning services to keep your home spotless and comfortable. From routine tidying to deep cleans, she handles the mess so you can focus on what matters most. With a reliable, personalized approach, Brooke creates a fresh and welcoming environment every time. Book via brookewilhelm07@icloud.com.

Grace Slater, Cents and Sensibility: Grace created Cents and Sensibility to help teens develop confident money habits early. Through her engaging online course, Money Basics 101, teens learn practical financial skills like budgeting, saving, and investing. Grace's mission is to empower teens to build smart habits and a future they're excited about. Contact Grace via centsandsensibility.info@gmail.com or visit www.moneybasics101.ca

Quotes:

Matthew Rae, MPP Perth-Wellington: Matthew Rae, MPP Perth-Wellington: The Summer Company program has helped spur the entrepreneurial spirit of so many Youths here in Stratford and across Ontario," said Matthew Rae, MPP for Perth-Wellington. "With the advice, support, and funding provided by the Government of Ontario through this program, recipients will have the tools necessary to succeed in their business ventures. Congratulations and best of luck to this year's recipients as they build their businesses.

Martin Ritsma, Mayor, City of Stratford: So excited to be part of another Summer Company Launch and celebrate an investment in 10 local students and an opportunity for our youth to experience the small business world. Thank you to the Stratford Perth Centre for Business for supporting this program and our youth entrepreneurs.

Joani Gerber, CEO, investStratford: "It's always inspiring to see young people turn their ideas into reality. Through Summer Company, these students gain confidence, skills, and the experience of building something of their own — and that's a foundation they'll carry with them for years to come."

Meredith Forget, Director of Economic Development and Tourism, Corporation of the County of Perth: Perth County is proud to support the Summer Company program. These young business owners are not only gaining valuable skills, but they're also contributing fresh ideas and energy into our local economy.

Holly Mortimer, SPBC Business Advisor: Each year, I'm increasingly inspired by the creativity and resilience of the students in this program. At a time when traditional employment opportunities are uncertain, these students are boldly exploring entrepreneurship by investing their time, energy, and resources into building something of their own. They're proving that the next generation of entrepreneurs will not only adapt, but lead the way in redefining how small businesses grow and succeed.

The Stratford Perth Centre for Business operates as a department of investStratford in partnership with the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

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About the Stratford-Perth Centre for Business

The Stratford Perth Centre for Business is committed to helping small business owners achieve their business goals. The Centre offers local small business support and complimentary consultation and easy access to resources, including business start-up services to support the development of new and already established small businesses. In addition to advisory services, events, seminars, and training opportunities are held throughout the year to meet small business essentials.

www.stratfordperthbusiness.ca | info@stratfordperthbusiness.ca

About investStratford:

investStratford is committed to advancing the economic future of Stratford, Ontario, Canada through investment in arts, education, and industry. Globally Connected | Community Driven For more info visit: investStratford.com

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