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Adaptability grant saves northeastern Montana small business *Glasgow spa uses grant funds to recover from Corona shut-down*

GLASGOW, Mont. – A business grant recently assisted a young woman’s dream of helping people relax and feel good while adapting to the Coronavirus-pandemic induced new regulations.



“I knew at 13 that I wanted to be a massage therapist,” said Kristi Feit, owner of the Mirror Image Day Spa, located at 423 First Avenue in Glasgow, Mont. “I would practice on my family and enjoyed making people feel better.”

Feit earned her massage therapist license in 2001 and became a licensed nail tech in 2005. She opened her own business three years later, in 2008. The Mirror Image Day Spa offers massage

therapy, pedicures, manicures, cosmetology services, esthetician, and more.

“We offer the whole works,” said Feit. “We usually have a constant flow of traffic going through the spa daily. I’d see five to six people myself and some of the hair stylists saw up to 16 people a day.”

That flow halted in late March, when COVID-19 restrictions forced Feit to close her spa and left six people unemployed.

“They rent booths from the spa, so they are self-employed with no unemployment benefits,” she explains. “We were left on our own with no income; we had to close the spa until the end of April.”

Feit didn’t let COVID-19 squash her dreams of owning and operating a successful small spa business. She used the time off to improve and adapt her business to the new COVID requirements.

“We built another room for the esthetician; so, she wasn’t working so closely to others, and we could meet the space requirements, which made room for another pedicure station,” said Feit. “Then, we had to replace the flooring, and put in new vinyl flooring throughout so it is easier to clean.”

In addition, Feit had to purchase more capes and cleaning supplies, as well as masks for her customers and staff to meet the COVID-19 requirements for business.

“I had no income; and then, I had to come up with the money to make those improvements and fix things,” she said. “I paid for a lot of things out-of-pocket.”



When she heard of the Montana Business Adaptability Grant, Feit applied with hopes of recapturing some of the unexpected expenses; she was a successful applicant for grant funding.

“To be able to receive the reimbursement was a lifesaver, a job saver and business saver,” she said. “Since then, I have been able to hire and employ three more people, and a local lady makes handmade masks to sell through our spa.”

The Montana Business Adaptability Grant reimburses expenses associated with protecting staff, customers and operations and customers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Montana-based businesses of all sizes and types that are registered with the Montana Secretary of State are eligible to apply. Eligible expenses include communications equipment to remote workers, tools and materials to enhance social distancing, sanitation and travel costs for quarantining workers, cleaning supplies and other expenses. Itemized receipts and proof of payment are required for reimbursement.

The cap for Business Adaptability Grants has been increased from \$5,000 to \$10,000. Businesses that have already applied may re-apply for a second grant; total reimbursements for both grants cannot exceed \$10,000.

The Montana Business Adaptability Grant was made possible through the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The CARES Act is federal legislation to stabilize the economy through the Coronavirus Pandemic. It received bipartisan support and was signed President Donald Trump.

For more information or to apply, visit covidrelief.mt.gov.

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