



Public Invited to Launch Local Business Incubator & Food Hub

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Alton, Illinois - Tuesday, May 13th, at 11:30 a.m., the North Alton/Godfrey Business Council will host a luncheon benefitting the Alton Area Business Development Association (AABDA), a local non-profit organization launching a local food hub and business incubator. The event will take place at the Alton VFW Post 1308 at 4445 N. Alby St. in Alton with doors opening at 11:00 a.m. and program beginning at 11:30a.m. The luncheon buffet is \$15.00 per person. Advance registration is required and payment will be expected at the door.



GREAT RIVERS MARKET FRESH

N E T W O R K

The featured presentation will outline the Great Rivers Market Fresh Network, three interconnected components designed to sustain each other. One is a food hub that connects producers of fresh, locally grown food products to local wholesale buyers, such as restaurants, education and community service institutions and grocers. The center-piece is a business incubator, which will support start-ups and existing companies with a network of business tools, back office support, space for lease, and/or expert advisors, and business plans to meet performance milestones. The third element, commercial kitchen rental space, will generate revenues to run the incubator and serve as a complementary source of income for kitchen owners, all of which are non-profit community service or charitable organizations.

“This event celebrates nearly two years of research and planning,” explained past Board President, Ann Bromaghim. “We can help all types of businesses, but our specialty is to serve entrepreneurs in the business of food, hospitality, retail, and artisans who want to enhance their business skills.”

The special buffet menu was planned and coordinated by Great Rivers Market Fresh Network Partners: Jim Newton of Mississippi Half-Step in Grafton, Ryan Gentelin of Gentelin’s Restaurant in Alton, and Michael Dewes, Director of Nutrition at Senior Services, with help from Jeff Venardos, Director of Catering at LCCC, and local entrepreneurs and clients of the Great Rivers Market Fresh Network. The fund-raiser buffet is \$15.00 per person. Reservations can be made at altonabda2012@gmail.com.

AABDA is run by a volunteer board. Doug Schneiderheinze, a business professor and the business department coordinator at LCCC, is President; Ann Bromaghim is V.P. of Training & Education; Ron Tanner is V.P. of Operations; Dave Fingerhut is V.P. of Administration and Secretary. Karen Gunter is Treasurer. This team will coordinate management of the organization until a Director can be hired. Additional administrative support will be provided by SCORE, the Service Corps of Retired Executives, to help screen potential candidates and applicants for the incubator.

“This kickoff luncheon is an opportunity to actively participate in an exciting new approach to our community’s growth,” said Ron Tanner, AABDA Board member. “This event is an ideal way for everyone to support local business. With that support we will sustain the business investments that are made each day in this community. We like what’s possible and know what needs to be done, but we need a lot of help to get there.”

Initial leadership and financial support was provided by Lewis & Clark Community College, Liberty Bank, River Bend Growth Association, Current Realty, David Fingerhut Consulting, Alton Main Street, SCORE, Heavenly Scent Popcorn, Bonnie Fox, Jan DeYoung, and ATCOM.

For more information and reservations, email altonabda2012@gmail.com, or call 618-551-5020.

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