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**Vicksburg Warren Chamber of Commerce announces the conclusion of the “2023 Vicksburg Entrepreneur Bootcamp” and reveals Business Plan competition Winner.**

Vicksburg, Mississippi – (December 8, 2023).- "The Vicksburg Warren Chamber of Commerce announced today the conclusion of the 2023 Vicksburg Entrepreneur Bootcamp. The six-week program trains small businesses and entrepreneurs in skills needed to start and grow a business, including market research, accounting, legal, and finance, among others. The program is a partnership between the Vicksburg Warren Chamber of Commerce and Hinds Community College and received financial support from the Cadence Bank Foundation.

The program holds a business plan competition at the end of the coursework, and the winner receives a \$1,500 seed grant to support their business. The prize for the Business Plan Competition is sponsored by the Vicksburg Chamber of Commerce, the City of Vicksburg, Cadence, Delta Bank, Guaranty Bank, Mutual Credit Union, Regions, River Hills Bank, and Trustmark. Seventeen participants completed the Bootcamp class this year, and eight of them participated in the business plan competition.

At a graduation ceremony held on December 6, Mrs. Janita Stewart, Mississippi District Director with the U.S. Small Business Administration, was the keynote speaker who delivered a heartfelt congratulatory message to the graduates. Chamber and elected officials, including Incoming Chamber President Buddy Dees, Mayor Flaggs of the City of Vicksburg, Ed Herring of the Warren County Board of Supervisors, State Representative Oscar Denton, and State Senator Briggs Hopson, joined family members of the class to celebrate their graduation. At the same ceremony, Pablo Diaz, Executive Director of the Chamber, announced that graduate Seth Lloyd of Lloyd Forge & Finish had won the business plan competition held the night before.

The instructor for the Entrepreneur Bootcamp was Rob Burnham, Director of Venture Incubator, assisted by a team of experts, including Jim Harper with the Small Business Development Center, Ryan Gilbreth with the Mississippi State University E-Center for Entrepreneurship, as well as volunteers from the business community who mentored the students throughout the class. Local businesses also participated by donating food and refreshments for the class. Sponsoring businesses included Newk's Eatery, KFC, McAlister's Deli, Vicksburg Food Truck, Fit Chef Catering, Kelle Barfield of Delta Warren Properties, and Happy Hands Charcuterie."

For more information on the 2024 Entrepreneur Bootcamp, please contact Chris Rials at the Vicksburg Warren Chamber of Commerce at 601-636-1012 or sign up for the email list online at: <https://bit.ly/3Kuj86p>

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*The Vicksburg Warren Economic Development Partnership brings together the Vicksburg Warren County Chamber of Commerce, the Warren County Port Commission, and the Warren County Economic Development Foundation to lead Warren County's and the City of Vicksburg's Economic Development Efforts. Pablo Diaz is the President & CEO of the Vicksburg Warren Economic Development Partnership.*