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DAWG Tank Pitch Competition scheduled for March 26 at 1:00 p.m. at MCITY

Vicksburg, MS - (March 12, 2026) - Launched through Leadership Vicksburg, **Team Empower has partnered with the Vicksburg Warren School District and developed a new six-week Entrepreneurship Bootcamp.** This new program currently underway is equipping local high school students with the tools and confidence to explore business ownership and innovation. Each session explores a key component of entrepreneurship — from identifying problems and validating ideas to understanding customers, revenue models, and effective pitching. Students also hear directly from local entrepreneurs and business leaders who share real-world lessons from their own entrepreneurial journeys.

“This bootcamp is about exposure, confidence, and possibility,” said **Tasha Bibb, member of Team Empower and Program Manager at MSU@MCITY.** “We are proud to support the important work the Vicksburg Warren School District is already doing to prepare students for entrepreneurship. By connecting students with local business leaders and equipping them with practical tools, we are helping them see that building something of their own is both possible and achievable.”

Pablo Diaz, President & CEO of the Vicksburg Warren Partnership, emphasized how initiatives like this reflect the mission of the Chamber and the purpose of the Leadership Vicksburg program. *“One of the core missions of the Chamber of Commerce is to strengthen our local economy by supporting the entrepreneurial spirit within our community and helping grow homegrown jobs. Programs like this demonstrate how Leadership Vicksburg participants are turning ideas into action by creating meaningful connections between education, business, and community leadership. By investing in our young people today, we are helping cultivate the entrepreneurs, business owners, and civic leaders who will shape Vicksburg’s future.”*

Bootcamp participants will have the opportunity to compete in MSU@MCITY’s annual DAWG Tank Pitch Competition on March 26 at 1:00 p.m. at MCITY in Vicksburg. This

event is free and open to the public. At DAWG Tank, high school students will compete for cash prizes and may advance to Mississippi State University's Startup Summit in Starkville, where participants compete for a share of a \$100,000 prize pool.

For more information about the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp or DAWG Tank, contact Tasha Bibb at tasha.bibb@msstate.edu or Dr. Terence James @ tjames@vwsd.org.

The Entrepreneur Bootcamp program is a project of the **Leadership Vicksburg Program**, a nine-month, project-based initiative offered through the Vicksburg-Warren County Chamber of Commerce. Each year, 20 participants are selected to explore key community issues, develop leadership skills, and implement solutions that create lasting impact.

For more information about Leadership Vicksburg, visit <https://vicksburgusa.com/chamber-of-commerce/programs/leadership-vicksburg/>.

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The Vicksburg Warren Partnership serves as the leading advocate for business growth and economic development in Vicksburg and Warren County. By fostering collaboration and innovation, the Partnership works to create a thriving business environment and a stronger community. The Vicksburg - Warren County Chamber of Commerce is housed under the Vicksburg Warren Partnership. Pablo Diaz is the President & CEO of the Vicksburg Warren Economic Development Partnership.