



Advance

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ADVANCE BROWN COUNTY MICROLOAN PROGRAM APPROVES FIRST LOANS

Green Bay, Wis.- (May 17, 2011) – The Brown County MicroLoan Program, introduced in March by Advance, the economic development arm of the Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, is pleased to announce it has approved its first loans for the Eggs n' Bacon Wagon and ABS Environmental LLC of De Pere.

The Eggs n' Bacon Wagon sought a loan to purchase an Airstream Caraval trailer so Owner Ben Michiels could offer a mobile food vending operation that produces and sells semi-gourmet breakfast and lunch items made from local foods.

ABS Environmental LLC , which provides roll-off collection containers and solid waste transportation services, sought a microloan to purchase 10 additional containers, allowing the company to grow the business. The owner attempted to purchased the assets of his former employer and instead decided to establish his own company in March 2010.

"Eggs n' Bacon Wagon and ABS Environmental LLC, the recipients of our first microloan, are prototypical of the very reason that we created this program for companies located in Brown County," said Fred Monique, interim president, Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce. "They are challenged by limited resources but exhibit the entrepreneurial spirit and planning required to make their businesses a success."

Michiels, for example, was unable to obtain a loan through traditional channels; he had pursued a loan with three banks but was turned down because he didn't have sufficient capital. A graduate of e-Hub and NWTC, he attended the Chamber's Business Expo in March, where he learned about the soon-to-launch microloan program and seriously pursued it. He is excited to be

launching the wagon business this season with a presence at both downtown Green Bay farmers' markets. "I needed the microloan to take me to the next level," said Michiels, who has been working in restaurants and the food industry since he was 14 years old. "It's an Advance program and that's what it's doing – advancing me and my business."

The microloan program exists to boost the local economy through funding of entrepreneurs, emerging businesses and small businesses seeking to establish or grow their businesses.

The program is available to for-profit businesses of all sizes and in all industries in Brown County. Businesses must be active – passive businesses owned by individuals who are not directly involved in the business's day-to-day operations are not eligible. Loans are available for \$5,000 to \$100,000 and may be used for the purchase of machinery and equipment to be used in the business, inventory and working capital (including payroll), down payments for leased space, supplies, insurance premiums, legal and accounting expenses.

For a complete list of eligibility requirements, a loan application documentation checklist or to obtain an application, please contact Marianne Dickson, director of the Advance microloan program, at 920.496.2111 or mdickson@titletown.org or visit <http://bit.ly/1On5AN>.

Established in 1882, the mission of the Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce is to promote economic and community development. Chamber programs include Advance, the economic development arm of the Chamber. Advance is a partner in the Business Assistance Center, a partnership of organizations providing assistance and resources for growing businesses in the New North. Other partners include: Northeast Wisconsin Technical College Center for Entrepreneurship, SCORE, UWGB Small Business Development Center, Wisconsin Business Development Finance Corporation, Wisconsin Entrepreneurs Network, and Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership.

For more information about Advance, contact Fred Monique, 920.496.2118, or visit advancegreenbay.org. For more information about the Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce and its programs, call 920.437.8704 or visit titletown.org.

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