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National Small Business Week concludes locally with inaugural Tri-Cities Small Business Festival

Northeast TN & Southwest VA: The speakers have been chosen and the schedule is set as entrepreneurs gear up for a weekend just for them. The 2018 Tri-Cities Small Business Festival, held in conjunction with sister events in Austin, TX and Sacramento, CA, features three days of exciting speakers, events, and networking opportunities. The focus of the Small Business Festival is to help new businesses get started, help existing ones grow, and to connect the region together in a celebration of the successes of our local entrepreneurs. National Small Business Week runs from April 29th through May 5th, and the Small Business Festival will serve as its finale here in our region.

Free presentations by local entrepreneurial leaders and a number of community events will take place from May 3rd through the 5th across the Tri-Cities. Featured events include a special kickoff breakfast hosted at Bristol Motor Speedway on Thursday morning at 9:00 AM, as well as the Bristol Chamber of Commerce's monthly First Friday Business Briefing, including a presentation by Food City President and CEO, Steve Smith. The remainder of the Thursday and Friday schedules include sessions hosted at numerous locations in Bristol, Kingsport, and Johnson City, such as the ETSU Innovation Lab, Sync.Space, and the Kingsport Chamber of Commerce. On Saturday, the Small Business Festival takes over Downtown Bristol with events happening from one end of State Street to the other.

Presentations over the course of the festival will highlight topics such as "Hiring Help without Breaking the Bank," "Making Money Doing What You Love," "How to Attract an Investor's Attention," and "The Entrepreneur Mindset: Becoming a Rainmaker" along with startup basics such as financing, legal, permitting, and marketing. There is something for each demographic of entrepreneur at nearly every stage in the process of owning and operating a small business.

To bring this festival to life, the Cities of Bristol and the Bristol Chamber of Commerce have teamed up with Startup Tri-Cities, a local entrepreneur organization based in Johnson City. The festival is a collaboration between small business owners, entrepreneurs, and the many supporting organizations that bring innovation and growth to our region. "The energy surrounding this event has been truly remarkable," said Tom Anderson, Economic Development Director for the City of Bristol, TN. He added, "The festival presenters and the members of this project team eat, sleep, and breathe small business every day of their lives. To miss out on this event would be to miss out on an opportunity to learn from the absolute masters of what it means to turn a startup dream into reality."

Small Business Festival events are free to attend, but participants are asked to register in advance. For the full schedule of events including times and locations, as well as to register, visit startuptri.com/sbf2018.