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Goldman Sachs small business program accepting applications

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Miami Dade College will accept applications for the Goldman Sachs' 10,000 Small Businesses program.

The deadline for applications for the three-month long free program is June 12. The program is open to 40 individuals and their cohort and is scheduled to begin Sept. 4 at the college's Wolfson Campus.

Participants will learn to identify and evaluate opportunities; understand financial statements; hire, retain and lead employees; negotiate successfully and create a comprehensive growth plan.

"To date, this program has served over 482 businesses, and those businesses represent aggregate revenue of a little over \$780 million and employed just 7,900 individuals," said Maurice Gray, executive director of the Miami Dade College program. "So the primary goal of our program is to do just that: to help the business that's participating in the program to generate more revenue—obviously by virtue of a very structured curriculum where we help them identify new opportunities."

Curriculum includes one-on-one advice clinics and workshops. Goldman Sachs (NYSE: GS) professionals serve as panelists and judges for "Rocket Pitches," which allow participants to practice their business pitches in true Shark Tank fashion.

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

Be an owner or co-owner of a business

Their business has been in operation for at least two years

Revenue of at least \$150,000 in most recent fiscal year

A minimum of four employees, including the owner

"Ironically, everyone who goes through our program says 'I should have done this sooner,' Gray said. "This is really an opportunity for business owners to step back from their business. It's suited for any business owner that feels like there are areas of their businesses they would like to have better command of—regardless of where they are on the maturity spectrum."

The program was initially launched at the Miami Dade College's Freedom Tower on Oct. 2013 when Goldman Sachs and the college entered a five-year, \$5 million contract to host the program. Another grant agreement of roughly \$1 million covers this year, and the two parties have already initiated discussions for next year.

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