



We are pleased and very proud that one of GCMI's graduate businesses was included to participate in the 2016 Cincy Pop Shop in the Carew Tower Mall, in downtown Cincinnati. Cheryl and Antonio Lackey, owners of Green Box Gift Wrapping Services, LLC., provided quick and creative gift wrapping services for consumers needing a convenient and professionally wrapped gifts. Their unique 100% recyclable and biodegradable gift wraps and ribbon selection is the perfect pair to beautifully wrap any gift package. Recently, graduating from GCMI Ice House Entrepreneur Program (IHEP), she mentioned "You have to believe in yourself, before anybody else will believe in you."

The City of Cincinnati's Department of Community and Economic Development in partnership with Downtown Cincinnati Inc. (DCI) released a Retail Action Plan for the Central Business District. The Cincy Pop Shop program was a vital part of creating opportunities for future business owners who have had trouble finding accessible, affordable, and flexible spaces and that allows them to create, expand, and nurture their small business with relatively low risk. GCMI provided Coaching and Technical Assistance to Green Box Wrapping Services, LLC on their Pop Shop application, application process, and pitch opportunity to the selection committee. During the months of November and December, Green Box Gift Wrapping Services, LLC took advantage of the holiday rush and was able to understand the full extent of operating a brick and mortar location, they used this experience to help them market, create recognition and gain visibility working in close cooperation with other local entrepreneurs to expand and grow their new business venture.

The Greater Cincinnati Microenterprise Initiative, Inc. continues to provide coaching to Green Box Gift Wrapping Services, LLC to help them strengthen their brand, manage their cash flow, and create better efficiencies for maximum profit. Cheryl Lackey expressed how GCMI assisted them a flushing out their idea, saying, "They introduced to us the Opportunity Discover Canvas, this activity was footwork I needed to make my vision - a reality."

The Greater Cincinnati Microenterprise Initiative, Inc innovative entrepreneur program, Ice House (IHEP) will start a new 8-week class on Wednesday, February 8<sup>th</sup> from 12:00pm (noon)-2:00pm at the Community Action Agency Cincinnati-Hamilton County main location in Bond Hill.

GCMI's Ice House Entrepreneur Program (IHEP) provides entrepreneurship education and business development services for low to moderate income clients. The Ice House Entrepreneurship Program (IHEP) brings "Eight Life Lessons from an Unlikely Entrepreneur" in an interactive, online experiential-problem based learning format that will engage participants in the "entrepreneurial mindset". The IHEP is designed to equip participants with the perseverance and determination needed to become more successful. It engages and empowers them to take ownership of their future while developing knowledge skills and behaviors that will enable them to succeed and overcome poverty and/or the obstacles of poverty.

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