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## **HARLINGEN EDC Notifies HELP for Small Business' First Round of Recipients**



**HARLINGEN, TEXAS (May 18, 2020)** – The Harlingen Economic Loan Program (HELP) for Small Business committee convened on Wednesday, May 13 to review and consider the more than 60 loan applications that had been submitted.

The committee took a closer look at applicants that had seen a more than 25% economic loss during the current crisis versus last year's revenue. The committee also evaluated the required documentation, including financial information, in order to make a fair decision.

In April the Harlingen EDC board set aside \$1,000,000 to be used to fund the loan program that launched on May 1. The loan will be awarded in up to five rounds with the first round to be awarded this week.

"In the end, we hope to help at least 100 businesses," Raudel Garza, Harlingen EDC CEO, said.

"We went through the completed applications and selected nine business owners who met all the requirements and had submitted the proper documents."

Business owners who applied provided narratives and shared their sudden economic hardships brought on by COVID-19.

One applicant wrote about having their credit cards, mortgage and insurance deferred for 90 days to stay afloat for the time being. Others wrote about not receiving any funding from the Small Business Administration, left waiting for assistance.

*"This loan would allow us to pay on our past due bills we were unable to pay during our forced closure and continue to pay our employees..." – Bloomer's Flower and Gifts*

“I am extremely happy that I was selected,” Melinda Mendoza, First Class Nails owner, said.

“When he [Garza] called me to tell me, I was so happy. The process was very easy, and everyone has been so nice and helpful to work with and answer my questions.”

Garza has personally reached out to each of the nine selected loan recipients. The loan amounts awarded ranged from \$3,000 up to the maximum amount of \$10,000.

As news begins to spread of HELP for Small Business, Garza encourages Harlingen business owners to visit the [website](#), review the terms and required documents.

“To me it’s a lot of help as far as getting back on track and I am really thankful to the City and EDC for this opportunity.” Jaime Rodriguez, owner of Rodriguez Body Shop, said.

“Anybody in my shoes should take advantage of this program – it’s not a hard process. I wasn’t even sure I’d get it, but I did and thank you so much – this is going to help my business.”

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