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## **Federal stimulus dollars to aid minorities/women in business startups**

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New Opportunities, Inc., a private, non-profit organization, and the Waterbury Regional Chamber have launched a Business Development Program targeted specifically to minorities and women. Sponsored by New Opportunities, Inc., with funding support provided through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the program's goal is to increase business ownership for minorities and women in the community. To qualify for a start-up grant an individual's income can not be more than 200% above the poverty level and he/she must reside within the program's designated service area: Barkhamsted, Beacon Falls, Berlin, Bethlehem, Colebrook, Cheshire, Goshen, Hartland, Harwinton, Litchfield, Meriden, Middlebury, Morris, Naugatuck, New Hartford, Norfolk, Prospect, Southbury, Southington, Thomaston, Torrington, Wallingford, Waterbury, Watertown, Winchester, Wolcott, and Woodbury.

The program is targeted to qualified individuals who would like to bring a hobby or skill to market or go 'commercial' with an existing business by getting properly licensed. Applicants will be assessed to determine if they have the necessary skill-sets to launch or expand their business and must be approved prior to receiving assistance.

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