



## **MTEC SmartZone to host FastTrac® business planning training workshops**

HOUGHTON – Starting your own business could be a step closer with training available for interested entrepreneurs. MTEC SmartZone, Michigan Economic Development Corp. (MEDC), and Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Centers are partnering to offer FastTrac New Venture, a business startup program of the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation.

During the 30-hour course, entrepreneurs evaluate their business concept, identify and assess market opportunities, build specific plans to start up their business, and begin setting operational processes. Participants also develop a peer network of resources and mentors, learn how to attract clients and customers, develop employees, and improve product and service offerings.

Normally costing \$700 per participant, MEDC is underwriting the program's cost, reducing to cost to \$100 per participant.

This will be the second FastTrac program offered through MTEC SmartZone. In 2009, 17 participants completed the FastTrac program with 100% success rate. According to Jonathan Leinonen, MTEC SmartZone program director, “The FastTrac program undoubtedly increases the survival rate of startup businesses. The State’s initiative to offset our entrepreneurs’ startup costs to take FastTrac training will help individuals add invaluable business planning skills on top of their individual entrepreneurial interests for starting a business.” Although MTEC SmartZone works primarily with technology-based businesses, the FastTrac New Venture program is open to all entrepreneurs.

The schedule for the training sessions is currently being organized. Interested persons should visit the MTEC SmartZone website at [www.mtecsz.com](http://www.mtecsz.com) and click on the FastTrac link for more information or otherwise contact Jonathan Leinonen at 906-487-7004.

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