



**ACCESS** Growth  
Center

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building business. cultivating community.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Fifth Third Bank awards ACCESS \$50,000 for Immigrant Entrepreneur Development Program**

DEARBORN, Mich. — Fifth Third Bank announced today a \$50,000 grant donation to ACCESS in Dearborn, Mich. to help entrepreneurs start or grow a new business. The grant is made possible by Fifth Third Bancorp’s CRA Enterprise Investment Fund.

The contribution will be used to develop workshops designed to guide immigrants and other business-minded individuals through every step of the planning process facilitated by ACCESS Growth Center’s Immigrant Entrepreneur Development Program.

“We are pleased to make a grant of \$50,000 to ACCESS Growth Center for the Immigrant Entrepreneur Development Program,” said Byna Elliott, senior vice president of Community Development for Fifth Third Bank. “This country was founded on the process of immigrants starting businesses that create jobs and opportunity and we are happy to play a role in helping to perpetuate that cultural cycle here in Southeast Michigan.”

The Immigrant Entrepreneur Development Program offers a wide range of introductory and specialty workshops for entrepreneurs, ranging from Arabic speaking business training and coaching, to marketing strategies, and financial development and bookkeeping. The program also offers specialized training for refugee women to open a home-based childcare business.

Funding for the program will be used to train mentors and facilitators in immigrant communities to provide technical support for business owners, as well as provide microloans to help finance working capital, inventory, supplies, furniture, fixtures, machinery and equipment.

“While immigrant entrepreneurs have demonstrated a unique acumen for enterprise, a number of obstacles hamper their success. Through this program, entrepreneurs utilize a wealth of resources to transcend difficulties such as language barriers, lack of capital or credit history, cultural disorientation and discrimination,” said Michael Ansara, ACCESS Growth Center director.

For more information about ACCESS Growth Center’s Immigrant Entrepreneur Development Program, contact Michael Ansara at 313-584-1673. Applications are available online at <http://www.accessgrowthcenter.org/>.

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**ACCESS is a human services organization committed to the development of the Arab American community in all aspects of economic and cultural life. ACCESS helps low-income families, as well as newly arrived immigrants, adapt to life in America. Its goal is to foster a greater understanding of Arab Culture in the U.S. and in the Arab world. ACCESS provides a wide range of social, mental health, educational, artistic, employment, legal, and medical services, and is dedicated to empowering people to lead more informed, productive, and fulfilling lives. For more information, call 313-843-2844.**

**Photo cutline:**

Members of Fifth Third Bank present a \$50,000 check to ACCESS Growth Center in Dearborn for its Immigrant Entrepreneur Development Program. Pictured are (from left): Suheil Shatara, vice president, Fifth Third Bank; Brenda Massey, CRA officer, Fifth Third Bank; David F. Girodat, president and CEO, Fifth Third Bank Eastern Michigan; Anthony Kallabat, assistant vice president, Fifth Third Bank; Maha Freij, ACCESS deputy executive director; Michael Ansara, ACCESS Growth Center director; Ilesha Morgan; Zahra Shandi, founder of Puabi handmade jewelry; and Asra Shandi. Photo courtesy of Fifth Third Bank.