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Chamber will present small-business summit Conference prompted by Triad economic study

By Fran Daniel
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The Greater Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce will hold an entrepreneurial conference for small businesses in Northwest North Carolina on May 27.

The conference grew out of recommendations in an economic study for the Triad that was presented last fall by Angelos Angelou, the president of AngelouEconomics in Texas. Its report urged economic groups to work together as a region.

"One of the big pieces of that was business development and entrepreneurial development, and to work together as a region to try and do some things to help people to get started in business and to help those people who already are in business," said Jill Atherton, the director of economic development for the chamber. "So this is our initial effort to try and do that."

The chamber has teamed up with the small-business centers of Davidson County Community College, Forsyth Technical Community College, Surry Community College and Wilkes Community College; Davie County Chamber; Elkin-Jonesville Chamber; Mount Airy Chamber; Yadkin Chamber; and the Small Business Center Technology Development Center at Winston-Salem State University.

Dennis Lowe, the director of the small-business center at Surry Community College, said that the intent of the conference is to set up a regional meeting where people can come to learn about being an entrepreneur and what help is available.

The conference, which will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Yadkin Center at Surry Community College, will offer seminars about starting a business, doing market research, budgeting, finance and marketing a business. Business leaders, from corporate executives to small-business owners, will conduct the seminars. A representative from the Small Business Administration will be on hand to provide information about SBA programs, and loan and finance information.

Sue Marion, the director of the small-business center at Forsyth Technical Community College, said that people recognized, based on the Angelou study as well, that there is a need in North Carolina for large numbers of new, high quality jobs.

"If that's going to happen, then they will have to rely on the small-business sector to provide them because this sector is currently driving the economy and creating most of the net job growth in the state," Marion said. "So we want to just offer this entrepreneurial conference to be able to let prospective and existing small businesses in this area know the resources that are available to them."

The cost is \$15. The payment and registration deadline is May 21, and space is limited. For more information, call 728-9206.