

IDEAS



Columnist Kathleen Parker: Confronting riddle of war. Page E3

E

ScaleUp WNC selects 15 companies with innovative ideas into Asheville-based business building program

BY CAITLIN BYRD AND MIKE CRONIN
CBYRD@CITIZEN-TIMES.COM; MCRONIN@CITIZEN-TIMES.COM

After 13 years of raising and selling plants like native rhododendron, mountain laurels and azaleas in Yancey County, Bill Jones will soon be getting a little help making his entire company grow — not just the plants.

“We’re on the verge of really having an opportunity to grow our nursery substantially,” said Jones, the owner of Carolina Native Nursery. “I’ve been in business myself, as an entrepreneur, for over 25 years, and this is my third company. But this opportunity for growth is unprecedented.”

Sitting on 12 acres of land, Carolina Native Nursery houses 80,000 plants, which it sells on both a wholesale and retail basis. Some of the plants can be seen in Central Park, Monticello and The Biltmore Estate.

But as the rural business has looked to increase its production capacity, it has also looked to a new program that could help the nursery achieve its big-time goals by springtime.

Carolina Native Nursery is one of 15 companies recently chosen to participate in the inaugural cohort of ScaleUp WNC, an initiative which is being spearheaded by AdvantageWest, the nonprofit economic development partnership for the state’s 23 westernmost counties.

ScaleUp WNC focuses on high-growth small businesses that have been in operation in Western North Carolina for more than two years, and that have annual revenues between \$150,000 and \$750,000.

The mission is to provide business owners with the education and support needed to grow their ventures in the region.

Though these businesses are no longer in the make-it or break-it startup phase, their challenges are far from over.

“It’s a range of needs, both operational and financial,” said Matt Raker, the vice president of entrepreneurship at AdvantageWest. “It’s not just the founders wearing all of the hats anymore. They have to figure out which hats to take off.”

Identifying which market to focus on next, understanding how to raise capital and determining the appropriate order of operations are examples of what Kim Celentano looks forward

See SCALEUP, Page E2

THE FIRST COHORT OF SCALEUP WNC:

- Carolina Native Nursery
- Farm to Home Milk
- Mother Earth Produce
- New River Organic Growers
- Brightfield Transportation Solutions
- Strivven Media LLC
- Dieseljobs.com LLC
- Dolci di Maria
- Hi-Wire Brewing
- The Filling Station Deli and Sub Shop Inc.
- Lusty Monk LLC
- Ultimate Ice Cream Co.
- Outrider USA
- Simple Shot Shooting Sports
- Equinox

Founder of Mojo Coworking leaving for New York

‘Couldn’t pass up’ job; son will run business

BY CAITLIN BYRD
CBYRD@CITIZEN-TIMES.COM

ASHEVILLE — The man who brought coworking to downtown Asheville announced he has accepted a new job and will be moving to New York City in coming months.

Craig McAnsh, the owner of Mojo Coworking, posted the news in a public status update on his Facebook page Feb. 15.

McAnsh, an Asheville resident since moving to the region from Atlanta in 2008, said he has accepted the position of chief creative officer with Red Peak, a global agency that helps businesses transform their brands in the 21st century.

McAnsh will be departing for New York April 1 — four years to the date when he started Mojo Coworking above Mayfel’s Restaurant.

“It’s something I just couldn’t pass up,” he said. “I grew up in Michigan and my wife and I got married in Michigan. We had two big dreams: bike Europe and, being in advertising, live in New York.”

McAnsh, who is also the president and marketing director at Native Marketing, said he will be splitting his time between the Big Apple and Asheville in the coming months.

There’s no question, though, that Mojo Coworking will continue.

His 27-year-old son, Ian McAnsh, will be taking the reins at the coworking space and another individual has also been hired.

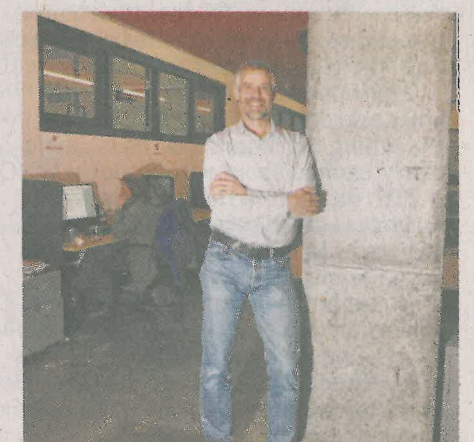
“Mojo is still on track to keep rolling with its current location, as well as a possible second location in the Triangle. I’m even going tomorrow to look at another location in Asheville,” Craig McAnsh said.

McAnsh founded Mojo Coworking in 2011 to meet a demand he saw for Asheville’s creative, collaborative and entrepreneurial spirit.

First located on Wall Street above Mayfel’s Restaurant, Mojo Coworking would move into a 4,500 square-foot space at 60 N. Market St. in 2012.

Since its inception, the coworking space has been host to a growing mem-

See MCANSH, Page E2



WILLIAM WOODY/WWOODY@CITIZEN-TIMES.COM
Craig McAnsh in the offices of Mojo Coworking in late December. He recently accepted a job in New York City. His son, Ian McAnsh, will be taking over the business.



LET'S GET GROWING



CITIZEN-TIMES FILE PHOTO

Hi-Wire Brewing co-owners Chris Frosaker and Adam Charnack celebrate being named best new brewery in North Carolina by Rate Beer magazine.



CITIZEN-TIMES FILE PHOTO

From left, Megan Cox and Mary Tantillo of Dolci di Maria help Nancy Kool sample their gluten-free and dairy-free cakes and desserts during the Blue Ridge Food Ventures Holiday Marketplace.



CITIZEN-TIMES FILE PHOTO

Jonathon Flaum decided to leave his desk job to become a milkman, starting Farm to Home Milk, a delivery service that brings fresh milk, eggs, poultry and bread to people’s doorsteps.



CITIZEN-TIMES FILE PHOTO

Outriders USA co-owner Jesse Lee poses with one of his Alpha Trikes at his facility in Fletcher. The company builds electric-powered trikes.

... away from Mojo Coworking.

"My internal being is all about this idea of creativity and collaboration, but we're keeping a residence here (in Asheville) and we'll certainly be keeping an eye on things," he said. "One of the other

... and become a part of the community," he said. "Mojo is going to be better than ever."

A going-away party will be held for McAnsh at Mojo Coworking in late March. A date for the send-off has not yet been determined.

ScaleUp

Continued from Page E1

to learning from ScaleUp WNC.

"We're definitely excited about knowing the steps to take to do all those things," said Celentano, who co-founded the Asheville-based company, Strivven Media LCC, in 2012 with her husband. "We're going to get the tools that will show how you keep growing without collapsing."

Celentano and her team brought their product, VirtualJobShadow.com, to market two years ago.

Geared toward K-12 students, Virtual Job Shadow is exactly what it sounds like: a job-shadowing video that captures the duties a person performs to do his or her profession.

Students have the opportunity to view videos of about 150 different jobs across a spectrum of industries, including health care, advanced manufacturing, energy and tourism.

The videos also show students what educational background each job requires, where students may obtain that education, what positions are most needed in different parts of the country and the "soft" skills — like attitude and communication — employees should master for a specific profession.

"The idea is to keep as much information in front of students so they don't have to hunt for it on Internet," Celentano said.

About 500 school districts in roughly 35 states already use Virtual Job Shadow, she said.

Purchasing a license for the product ranges in cost from \$595 to \$995, which amounts to less than \$1 a student, she said.

Led by AdvantageWest with help from the Sequoyah Fund, Ascent Business Network, and Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College's Entrepreneurial Development Foundation, ScaleUp WNC will offer two cohorts a year and works with groups of 15 businesses at a time.

Over the course of eight weeks, entrepreneurs attend six sessions, with topics that range from helping business owners understand financial models, different sources of capital and how to hone in on their target customers. The first session for the first cohort begins Feb. 27, with a special kick-off event scheduled for March 12.

"Sometimes, it's just perception," Raker said. "But it's totally doable across Western North Carolina to build these very successful growth-oriented companies. You just have to be connected to the right sources and resources."

This opportunity to connect with other entrepreneurs like himself is something that Jones said he is particularly excited about with ScaleUp WNC.

"It's difficult to find mentors — much less other successful business owners — to talk to just in the day to day of going about your work. Even with that being said, finding some expertise to help your business grow rapidly can be even more difficult," Jones said. "There's lots of problems that small business people run into that are universal."

The opportunity to learn how to grow in the right direction and analyze one's own business particularly appeals to Celentano.

"Confronting everything you've never done before is intimidating," Celentano said. "But we're going to find it's learnable, it's manageable."

AdvantageWest received a five-year \$1.2 million contract to develop ScaleUp WNC. AdvantageWest is also one of eight entities in the nation selected by the U.S. Small Business Administration for this contract. The local partnership will be serving the most rural entrepreneurial ecosystem in the batch.

Raker said AdvantageWest had hoped to receive 45 applications for the first cohort.

They exceeded that goal, receiving 67 applications.

"If folks didn't get into the first (cohort), there's a good chance that they could make it into the next group," Raker said. "We're honored to be able to have the ability to work with these entrepreneurs. At the end of the day, they're the ones who are driving the success here."



CITIZEN-TIMES FILE PHOTO

Kelly Davis with her Lusty Monk Mustard at Green Man Brewing. She was working at Green Man when she developed the mustard product, serving her first jars to her Green Man customers.

THE FIRST COHORT OF SCALEUP WNC:

Carolina Native Nursery — A native plant nursery in Yancey County that has been growing and supplying landscape and garden center quality native shrubs to wholesale and retail markets for 13 years.

Farm to Home Milk — An artisan milk distribution company based in Asheville.

Mother Earth Produce — Food artisans who provide locally grown, organic produce and other edibles to communities in Western North Carolina.

New River Organic Growers — A local food distribution company based in Watauga County, whose mission is to connect old Appalachian values, traditions and skills to new Appalachia markets through distribution, marketing and education.

Brightfield Transportation Solutions — Develops and owns a growing network of grid-connected and solar-integrated public charging stations. The business also sells a line of patent-pending products to meet the consumer needs when it comes to electric charging stations and sustainability marketing needs.

Strivven Media LLC — The main product of Strivven Media LLC is VirtualJobShadow.com, a multimedia career-readiness platform to help bridge the gap between workforce and education in engaging ways.

Dieseljobs.com LLC — Dieseljobs.com is the largest niche job board of its kind for the heavy equipment and trucking industry.

Dolci di Maria — Produces Italian-inspired, gluten-free desserts sold in natural food markets and served in restaurants. The products are also dairy-free, and many products are vegan.

Hi-Wire Brewing — An Asheville-based beer company that embraces its craft from start to finish — from its hand-produced beers to artwork drawn by a local artist. Hi-Wire Brewing was also awarded the most medals at the 2014 N.C. Brewer's Cup and was named the Best New N.C. Brewery for 2013 by Rate-Beer.

The Filling Station Deli and Sub Shop Inc. — A locally driven deli and sweets shop. It offers deli style, hot pressed and frozen sandwiches.

Lusty Monk LLC — Makes spicy, fresh-ground, small-batch mustards. Lusty Monk is a family-owned, quality-conscious company, devoted to the idea that condiments should never be boring.

Ultimate Ice Cream Co. — An Asheville shop that uses locally sourced dairy to hand-crafted ice cream. Ultimate Ice Cream may be found in two Asheville locations and many local restaurants.

Outrider USA — Since 2009, Outrider USA has designed, assembled and shipped its electric bikes directly from its Asheville shop.

Simple Shot Shooting Sports — Makes slingshots using 21st-century materials and manufacturing techniques.

Equinox — A consulting, planning and design firm that focuses on conservation, sustainability and environmentally responsible land-development projects.

ScaleUp WNC plans to serve a total of 150 businesses during its five-year contract period.

Jones said he is honored to be a part of the first class.

"We have a really good company, and we've done some really good things. We're poised, finally, for growth after 13 years of struggling to blow the thing up," Jones said. "If the first six weeks are indicative of the year we're going to have, it's going to be phenomenal."

HEALTH BRIEFS

Ayscue named to foundation board

ASHEVILLE — Charles Ayscue, of Asheville, has been named to the Board of Directors of the N.C. Foundation for Advanced Health Programs. The foundation is a Cary-based independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that develops and supports innovative programs that advance affordable and sustainable quality health services to improve the health for people of North Carolina.

Ayscue is currently the senior vice president, finance, and chief financial officer at Mission Health.

Ayscue was chief financial officer at University of North Carolina Health-Care System in Chapel Hill and its predecessors, University of North Carolina Hospitals and the North Carolina Memorial Hospital. In addition, he served as comptroller and associate director of financial services for the Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital in Greensboro.

He has published numerous journal articles on computer applications in medical care. In 2013, Ayscue received the Order of the Long Leaf Pine.

Physician assistant earns national recognition

WAYNESVILLE — David Wangerin-Lile, who is employed at Haywood Regional Medical Center, Waynesville Family Practice and Meridian Behavioral Health Services, is one of only 240 certified physician assistants nationally to earn a specialty credential called a Certificate of Added Qualifications from the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants.

Wangerin-Lile was awarded a CAQ in psychiatry, a distinction earned by meeting licensure, education and experience requirements and then passing an exam in the specialty. He is one of only 34 certified PA's in North Carolina and about 800 nationally to earn a CAQ since the program's inception in 2011.

Baker joins AllCare Clinical Associates as CRNA

ASHEVILLE — Ryan H. Baker, certified registered nurse anesthetist, has joined AllCare Clinical Associates, 76 Peachtree Road. Prior to his nurse anesthesia training, Baker was employed by Mission Hospital as a registered nurse in the Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit.

CRNAs are advanced practice reg-

ies at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. He will begin his duties on July 1. **Kacy Crabtree**, the current vice president of academic affairs, will assume the role of associate provost on July 1 and report to the provost.

istered nurses who are certified to administer anesthesia after completing anesthesia graduate school programs and a rigorous national exam.

Helper joins AllCare Clinical Associates

ASHEVILLE — Dr. Donald L. Helper II has joined AllCare Clinical Associates, 76 Peachtree Road. Prior to joining AllCare Clinical Associates, Helper was the clinical director of anesthesia services at the San Juan Regional Medical Center in Farmington, N.M.

Visit www.allcareclinical.com for more information.

Mincey joins Angel Primary Care

FRANKLIN — Mission Health announced the addition of Dr. Betty Anne Mincey to Angel Primary Care, 190 Riverview St.

Mincey joins Angel Primary Care from IPC-The Hospitalist Company where she served as a hospitalist for Community Hospice

of Northeast Florida's inpatient facilities in Jacksonville, Fla.

Mincey is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine. She has many years of volunteer physician work and has been published numerous times in journals and abstracts.

Mincey joins Jason D. Creel, DO, Dr. Clayton H. Davis, Lawson Z. Hunley, DO, physician assistant Caroline Brown, and Tina M. Coffey, NP.

Stiwinter receives CNA Award

FLAT ROCK — Melissa Stiwinter, of Four Seasons Compassion for Life, received the 2014 Georgia Crump Certified Nursing Assistant Recognition Award.

Georgia Crump, Dr. Margaret Noel, and communications director Chad Conaty attended on behalf of MemoryCare via videoconference. Stiwinter was awarded a plaque and monetary gift during the ceremony. MemoryCare provides care for older adults with memory disorders as well as educating and supporting their caregivers and the community.

Established by MemoryCare in 2003, the competitive annual award recognizes the heroic daily efforts of nursing assistants in Western North Carolina. It honors Georgia Crump, a licensed practical nurse passionately dedicated to improving work conditions and educational opportunities for nursing assistants in the region.

Stiwinter has been employed by Four Seasons as a CNA for four years.



DICK KENNEDY
Listing Leader



ROBIN BOYLAN
Sales Leader



GREG HEARNE
Top Producer

naibhcommercial.com 828.210.3940