

CIELO

Community for Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Leadership & Opportunities

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CIELO Client Wins \$2,500 Grant at Access to Capital Workshop *Prize will help advance small swim school business*

HUNTINGTON BEACH, Calif., March 16, 2017 — Tiffany Boykin, a client of the Community for Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Leadership & Opportunities (CIELO), was recently awarded a \$2,500 grant to help expand her business: My Swim Buddy. Boykin, a swim instructor since high school, turned her passion into her full-time profession with the help of CIELO.

CIELO empowers entrepreneurial-minded visionaries, primarily from low-income Orange County communities, to build solid, successful business ventures by surrounding them with a network of experts dedicated to helping cultivate their skills and creativity. CIELO guides clients to a path of financial health by offering high quality entrepreneur development services, with the ultimate goal of helping them achieve economic self-sufficiency.

Boykin was introduced to CIELO through her classes at Golden West College. There she met Elisabeth Pechs, Director of Micro-Enterprise Program for CIELO. Pechs began one-on-one entrepreneurial coaching with Boykin, offering guidance and advice to help Boykin make informed decisions about her business venture and its future success.

Pechs explained, "At CIELO, we provide our clients with the freedom to find creative opportunities for their businesses. We expose them to new ideas, and they decide if and how to use those ideas."

One of the ideas Pechs suggested to Boykin was to attend the Access to Capital: Small Business Workshop – Orange County put on by The Center for Strategic Economic Studies and Institutional Development, Inc. ("the Center") in partnership with CIELO. Boykin did, and it was there she received the grant, which she is using to help cover legal fees and dues associated with staff certifications, recruiting, training, and marketing.

"During and after college, I worked several other jobs, but I always missed swimming and teaching others to swim," said Boykin. "Starting my business, My Swim Buddy, was something I felt like I had to do. It started small; it was just me, but through word-of-mouth from happy clients, it grew quickly. I was overbooked, and I needed help. I wanted to grow my business, but I wanted to do it right, so I turned to CIELO for guidance. They've been amazing! I've learned so much about forecasting, planning, and recruiting. Now, with all of this knowledge, resources, and this grant, I am ready to take My Swim Buddy to the next level."

My Swim Buddy offers private, mobile, community-based swim instruction for all ages, from infants to adults, and every level of experience, from first timers to competitive swimmers. Instruction includes water safety, combining the development of proper swimming techniques with an approach that assures many years of safe enjoyment of the water. My Swim Buddy serves Irvine, Newport Beach and the surrounding areas, and prime swim season runs from March through October each year. Learn more at www.facebook.com/MySwimBuddy.

About CIELO

CIELO was born out of a need to develop initiatives that aid residents in reaching financial prosperity. The *Community for Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Leadership and Opportunities* (CIELO), was founded in 2015 by a collaboration between Oak View Renewal Partnership (OVRP) and Golden West Community College. What began as a vision to create economic impact in the one-square mile community of Oak View in Huntington Beach, Calif., today stands as an example of creative minds and dedicated leaders coming together to develop economic solutions that impact our region. CIELO's first year of operations has proven to be a success by launching five businesses and placing 65 program participants in new jobs. Learn more at www.cielocommunity.org.

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