



‘Pitch Factory’ gives St. Johns entrepreneurs the tools needed to scale business

By Colleen Jones
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The first cohort of an entrepreneurial workshop offered by the St. Johns Chamber of Commerce went so well last fall, that the chamber has partnered with Jax Bridges for a second installment beginning in February.

The six-week “Pitch Factory” is geared toward small business owners and startups looking to take their ventures to the next level by fine-tuning their business models and pitches; networking; and growing their customer base.

“I feel like all the participants who went through the program in the fall came out feeling more confident in being able to communicate the benefits of their service or products to potential customers,” said Karen Everett, manager of economic development for the St. Johns Chamber of Commerce.

One of those participants is Julie Fuller, who credits her experience with the Pitch Factory with helping perfect the pitch that landed her the opportunity to launch a franchise of Fast Signs in St. Augustine.

The workshops are offered through Jax Bridges, an arm of the Jax Chamber devised to bring together small businesses with larger companies for potential investment or contracts. Begun by Jacksonville business leader Carlton Robinson in 2014, the program has generated dozens of success stories.

Everett said one of the goals of the St. Johns Chamber of Commerce is to create more of a sense of community among fellow entrepreneurs across the county.

“We know there is a void; but we also know there is a lot of entrepreneurial activity out there,” Everett said.

The course is free but registration is required. About six of 22 slots remain. Classes meet on Thursday evenings beginning Feb. 21. To apply, email Bethany.Taylor@SJCChamber.com, or call 904-829-5681.