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Director**For Immediate Release**

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Ohio Assists Ex-Offenders with Starting a Business*Empowering Restored Citizens with the Tools Needed to become Entrepreneurs*

Columbus –The Ohio Department of Development’s Entrepreneurship and Small Business Division, in partnership with the Ohio Small Business Development Centers will host a seminar *How to Start a Business as a Restored Citizen* on Monday, May 16th. The free, all day entrepreneurship workshop is designed for ex-offenders and people with felonious records who desire to start their own business.

People with felonious records often face barriers when trying to seek employment, this workshop provides these potential entrepreneurs with the tools they need to start a business in today’s global economy.

“We are continually trying to make Ohio more business friendly for all of our business owners,” said Karen Shauri, State Director of the Small Business Development Centers of Ohio. “Providing Ohioans with the tools and resources they need is the first step to building a strong entrepreneurial foundation and a solid business portfolio.”

Representatives from the Small Business Development Centers of Ohio, the Minority Business Assistance Program, Capital Law University, Telhio Credit Union, Artsafe, and professional business owners will give in-depth overviews of small business programs and services available to assist potential entrepreneurs and business owners in all stages of starting a business. The workshop will provide information on establishing and operating a business, funding opportunities, computer technology, and marketing options.

There is no charge to attend and the event is open to the public. The workshop will be held on Monday, May 16 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Ohio Department of Transportation, 1980 West Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43223. For more information or to register, visit www.development.ohio.gov/WorkshopsRSVP/ or call (800) 848-1300 extension 4-8025. Registration begins at 8 a.m.

Sponsors of the Workshop include Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Fusion Bakery and Café, the Minority and Business Assistance Program, the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Food Bank, the Ohio Poverty Law Center, and The United Way of Central Ohio.

*The **Entrepreneurship and Small Business Division** provides innovative programs and services to Ohio entrepreneurs and small business owners through effective communication, collaboration, creativity, and technology support to encourage sustainable growth.*

*Working with our partners across business, state and local governments, academia, and the nonprofit sector, the **Ohio Department of Development** works to attract, create, grow, and retain businesses through competitive incentives and targeted investments. Engaged every day in marketing, innovating, investing, and collaborating, the **Ohio Department of Development** works at the speed of business to accelerate and support the teamwork that is necessary for success by providing financial, informational, and technical assistance to those making an investment in Ohio’s future.*

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