

**For Immediate Release**

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**Media Contact:** Penny Martin at (614) 644-8774[Penny.Martin@development.ohio.gov](mailto:Penny.Martin@development.ohio.gov)**State Helps Small Business Improve Energy Efficiency**

Raphael's School of Beauty Culture, Inc., (Mahoning County) will use a state loan to save energy, reduce electricity costs and increase its building sustainability. The low-interest loan from the Ohio Development Services Agency will allow Raphael's to incorporate new light controls and use solar energy to power and heat water at its Boardman campus.

"Improving energy efficiency allows small businesses to reinvest the savings in the business, which can lead to growth long-term," said David Goodman, director of the Ohio Development Services Agency.

A family-owned business with six campus locations, Raphael's School of Beauty Culture, Inc., is moving to more sustainable, environmentally friendly products to align with its students' interest in living consciously. An energy audit determined that Raphael's could reduce energy use by 88 percent by incorporating energy efficiency and renewable energy. The energy upgrades will save up to \$16,000 a year.

"As a business owner, it is important to understand the trends and new practices in your industry, especially if you're working in the ever changing beauty industry. Once I was able to determine the right technologies to use, Development Services Agency's Energy Loan Fund was the perfect fit for this project," said owner Ralph P. Delserone III. "These investments will give Raphael's School of Beauty Culture a competitive edge over other cosmetology schools. Using renewable energy aligns with our goals to keep on the cutting edge of the beauty industry."

The Energy Loan Fund offers low-interest financing to businesses, manufacturers, public entities and nonprofits for energy efficiency and advanced energy projects. For more information about the program visit [http://development.ohio.gov/bs/bs\\_energyloanfund.htm](http://development.ohio.gov/bs/bs_energyloanfund.htm) or call (614) 644-6797.

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