

FIRST PATH

Brought to you by

southwest michigan **first**
THE GREATEST FORCE FOR CHANGE IS A JOB

2020 Session Dates

October 6 October 27
October 13 November 3
October 20 November 10

Cost

\$150 (Need-Based)
Scholarships are available

In Partnership With



PATH

There is no better time than now to get your business idea off the ground!

Do you have an idea or a problem that needs to be solved? A product that needs to be created? Have you had an idea for a business that you've been itching to make a reality? Do you feel that with a little guidance, you'd be able to finally launch your concept? If this sounds like you, then First Path is the perfect fit!

Join Southwest Michigan First and program partner Plywood People for a six-week journey to help you decide in which direction you should take your idea. This course will give insight into the "who, why and how" to build your business. Designed to help problem solvers and entrepreneurs, you will not only be introduced to a community of support but get a chance to workshop your business idea.

This program has been intentionally created to cultivate a diverse ecosystem that reflects our community. We encourage anyone and everyone with an idea to take the leap to apply.

Are you ready to take the leap? Let's find out together.

LEARN MORE AND REGISTER AT [SOUTHWESTMICHIGANFIRST.COM/EVENTS/FIRST-PATH](https://southwestmichiganfirst.com/events/first-path)



MEET JESSICA THOMPSON

FOUNDER OF BEE JOYFUL SHOP
WINNER OF THE 2019 MAKERS' MART COMPETITION

ONE ENTREPRENEUR'S PATH

Raised in an environmentally-conscious home, Jessica Thompson found that life as a single mom was jam-packed with responsibilities, and, as a result, sustainability had become somewhat of an afterthought. But one day, Thompson did a little math. She realized something alarming: Her family was using 3,600 plastic baggies—none of which could be recycled—every single school year. It wouldn't be so hard, Thompson finally decided, to make a small change and cut down on the single-use plastics. Thompson began to hand-make food wraps from fabric and wax so she could store her family's food in a sustainable way. Jessica found her path and Bee Joyful Shop was born! Today, Bee Joyful food wraps can be found in 25 brick-and-mortar stores across the U.S. In July 2020, she opened a conventional store in downtown Kalamazoo as the first zero-waste, plastic-free store in Michigan.