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### **Local Non-Profit Has Three Major Wins Over the Past Week**

*ECHO wins Small Business Innovation Award, is awarded a \$10k grant with Economic Development, and partners with Visit Loudoun*

**Leesburg, VA** – On May 3, 2023, ECHO Non-Profit was awarded the Innovations Award at the Annual Leesburg Small Business Awards. The Small Business Awards are built to honor outstanding Leesburg businesses and business owners for their yearly successes. The Innovation Award was given to ECHO for executing innovative business ventures and practices through their social enterprise programs.

ECHO's services empower individuals with disabilities to be active members of their community by offering skill-building, day support, transportation, job placement, and more. During the COVID-19 pandemic, ECHO faced a two-month-long shut down, and in response, they reinvented their programming space and employment program to create internal sources of employment. As a result, ECHO now hosts three social enterprises consisting of Blue Elegance, a line of handcrafted jewelry and home décor, Inclusive Solutions, their newest employment solution venture, and the ECHO Barkery.

The ECHO Barkery, located in Ashburn, Virginia produces all-natural dog biscuits from scratch, providing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities through ECHO's Employment Program. Each biscuit is individually handmade and designed with dogs in mind. Their flavor packs include Chicken, Bacon, Peanut Butter, Classic Carrot, and their newest flavor Catch of the Day made with fresh salmon in-house.

The ECHO Barkery was awarded a \$10,000 grant at the Loudoun County Department of Economic Development's Small Business Summit on May 2, 2023. The grant was presented by a nationally recognized speaker, star of CNBC's "The Profit", and CEO of Camping World Marcus Lemonis, used to purchase a 1,000-bag dog biscuit order, which will be distributed to local animal shelters and foster organizations to benefit their dogs in need. Each bag will be given to the families of adopted pets as they take home their new dogs.

The grant was given as part of Economic Development's Launch Loudoun initiative. This program provides experiences and services for Loudoun entrepreneurs through the entire lifecycle of their small businesses to create success for businesses of all sizes.

ECHO's newest social enterprise, Inclusive Solutions, strives to be a community business process outsourcing partner by providing a wide range of administrative solutions such as packaging, scanning, shredding, and more. ECHO values empowering their participants to be engaged in their community while providing the dignity that earning a paycheck has to offer.

Inclusive Solutions partnered with Katie Schneider of TMMG at the Visit Loudoun Annual Meeting as they launched their new Sensory Kits. The kits include noise-canceling headphones, a

weighted lap pad, quiet toys, and non-verbal communication cards. These kits were assembled by Inclusive Solutions participants and will be distributed to hotels, bed-and-breakfasts, wineries, breweries, and restaurants inside the community.

To learn more about ECHO's services, opportunities, and social enterprises, please visit their website at <https://echoworks.org>. To support, participate, or donate in ECHO's Big Day Out fundraiser, please contact [todd.goldian@echoworks.org](mailto:todd.goldian@echoworks.org) or visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/echos-big-day-out-tickets-607692995107> for more information.