



## NEWS RELEASE

### Local, Independent Bank and Business Accelerator Launch Scholarship Program Targeting Entrepreneurial Talent in Underserved Populations

***Scholarship Applications Open for Low and Moderate Income, Minority and Women Entrepreneurs  
Ready to Enroll in Proven Business Training Program.***

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**(Cincinnati, OH, January 6, 2020)** – Heritage Bank is teaming up with OCEAN Programs, a Cincinnati-based business accelerator, to expand access to a proven entrepreneur training program to talent pools currently underrepresented in the local business community.

To cap off 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, Heritage Bank is investing in an initiative rooted in its founding mission, ensuring local entrepreneurs have access to the financing and business expertise necessary to succeed. Today, the region's ninth largest bank announced a partnership with OCEAN Programs to ensure one of its most effective programs is available to low and moderate income entrepreneurs. With the help of community partners, Heritage Bank and OCEAN will emphasize outreach to minorities and women. Each scholarship will offset \$400 of the \$500 Genesis enrollment fee.

OCEAN has created programming for thousands of entrepreneurs throughout the region in recent years. The Genesis Program, combining business training, mentorship, inspiration and coaching tailored to the students' needs over eight weeks, has produced more than 200 graduates since 2017. Today, more than 85 percent of those graduates' businesses have launched or expanded, and 90 percent of those ventures remain in business.

"To mark 30 years in business, we're launching the Heritage Bank/Chris Caddell Scholarship Fund with a \$30,000 matching grant," said H. David Wallace, Esq., Heritage Bank CEO and Chairman. "OCEAN is reaching out to local business organizations and businesspeople for matching grants of \$1,000 each, and we are working with organizations and influencers throughout the region to get the word out about this opportunity.

"Heritage Bank will also be available to discuss financing needs and business banking services customers use to reduce operating costs, improve accuracy, save time and manage cash flow so where they bank in the future, they understand the role banks play in business," Wallace said. "Economies that offer opportunity to a wide range of talented, passionate people are the economies that flourish most long term. Our board of directors and senior management team is eager to see the fruit of our investment throughout Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky over the next 30 years."

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According to Luke Dooley, OCEAN Programs President, the timing for launching the scholarship program couldn't be better. "The challenges to operating in COVID-19 inspired innovation across our organization, but especially in training. In 2021, Genesis will incorporate world-class online learning and digital engagement opportunities to tear down barriers erected by COVID-19, distance and time-starved entrepreneurs. Applications are open to anyone in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky."

The following community partners have signed onto generate awareness of the scholarship program among their stakeholder groups and to collect applications for review by OCEAN Programs:

(insert the names of community partners secured by launch)

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### **About Heritage Bank**

In September 1990, Heritage Bank was chartered by a group of local businesspeople alarmed about the shrinking access to community banks able and eager to respond to regional consumer and business banking needs. Now the region's ninth largest bank serving Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky, Heritage Bank remains family owned. In an age of ongoing consolidation, Heritage Bank is resolute about remaining an independent bank, rooted in the communities where we operate. Heritage Bank, Member FDIC.

### **About Ocean Programs**

OCEAN Programs, is a 501c3 not-for-profit organization based in Cincinnati, Ohio. Founded in 2013, OCEAN serves entrepreneurs by providing access to training, community, and Biblical principles on which to launch new organizations. OCEAN seeks to transform the marketplace by building into entrepreneurs who create economic health and positive cultural impact. OCEAN serves a wide range of entrepreneurs, from high-tech to main-street, with digital programming designed to help them launch, lead, and grow new businesses while mitigating founder loneliness, and engaging in healthy practices for life and business.