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WIR'ED

**Project pairs students and marketing professionals with brick-and-mortar store owners
WIR'ED seeks to improve online presence, marketing for Cleveland shopkeepers**

CLEVELAND – A catering company, barbershop, hair salon, lawn mower repair and aromatherapy store are among the businesses participating in the pilot of Wir'Ed, a program that pairs students and marketing professionals with business owners to improve online operations.

WIR'ED, co-developed by the NeoSTEM Ecosystem and the Old Brooklyn CDC, formed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We realized that many businesses in our community don't have a strong, or in some cases, any, internet presence for marketing their business at a time when customers can't just come in,” said Jeff Verespej, director of the Old Brooklyn CDC.

Alyssa Lenhoff-Briggs, director of the NeoSTEM Ecosystem added, “At the same time, we realized that there are countless students in our community who have great technical skills and who are in need of work.”

Lenhoff-Briggs said the added bonus is that marketing professionals from across the country have volunteered to help coach the students and the businesses.

Students are being paid \$10 per hour for up to 10 weeks of work.

The pilot is being funded, in part, through donations from Remake Learning.

There is already strong interest from other Cleveland neighborhoods and businesses in participating in the program and organizers are seeking additional funding to meet this demand. For more information, please contact Lenhoff-Briggs at AlyssaBriggs@TiesTeach.org