



# ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM IMPACT REPORT

## //2019

AIDA LOUGH, FOUNDER OF AIDA'S FOOD COMPANY (VENETA)

**RAIN**  
OREGON

ACCELERATING ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN OREGON



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# accelerating rural entrepreneurial economies

**W**hat an honor it has been over the past two years to work together with entrepreneurs, Oregon RAIN's talented team of Venture Catalysts, and all of our partners across Oregon's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Together, we have collaborated to help overlooked entrepreneurs launch and grow their wide-ranging startups—from delicious chocolatiers to augmented reality technology innovators.

Since our founding, Oregon RAIN has evolved to meet the demands of small and rural communities seeking to build their entrepreneurial economy (see "Timeline" on pages 26-27). The demand for Oregon RAIN's Rural Entrepreneurial Development Program is growing and already we've been invited to serve 20 rural and small cities across 5 counties, (see "Rural City Spotlights" on pages 34-39). We deploy a toolkit to build inclusive regional entrepreneurial ecosystems that are community-based and entrepreneur-led.

The work we are doing is vital since new and young companies are the primary source of job creation in the American economy, with new businesses accounting for nearly all net new job creation. Not only that, but these startups are also contributing to economic dynamism in their communities by injecting competition into markets and spurring innovation.

Through our partnerships with the State of Oregon, local governments (cities & counties), community organizations, foundations, and private corporations, Oregon RAIN has helped drive innovation, business creation, and job growth in small and rural Oregon communities. Our work has successfully reduced barriers to entrepreneurship for more than 300 rural entrepreneurs (see "Faces of Rural Entrepreneurship" on pages 6-18).

In this Impact Report, we highlight some of the important advances that Oregon RAIN has made over the past few years. I hope you will take a few minutes to read and

share it. Contact me if you'd like help building your community's entrepreneurial culture and economy.

Thank you to everyone who has played a role in supporting Oregon RAIN's work and for all that you do to help reduce barriers for Oregon's entrepreneurs.



**CAROLINE CUMMINGS,**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OREGON RAIN

**"THE WORK WE ARE DOING IS VITAL SINCE NEW AND YOUNG COMPANIES ARE THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF JOB CREATION IN THE AMERICAN ECONOMY."**

# who we are

Oregon RAIN is a non-profit organization that reduces barriers for overlooked entrepreneurs and communities to help advance the formation of local-impact startups that generate jobs, wealth, and opportunities regionally and statewide.

## MISSION

Oregon RAIN's mission is to partner with Oregon communities to catalyze entrepreneurial ecosystems, connect entrepreneurs to resources (including overlooked entrepreneurs), and contribute to the creation of prosperous economies.



## PROGRAMS

We host and promote educational workshops, accelerators, and other educational events that are customized to meet the needs of each community's entrepreneurs.

## PEOPLE

We connect entrepreneurs to mentors, industry experts, and other stakeholders in the entrepreneurial ecosystem to help accelerate their success.





## WE SEE A FUTURE WHERE:

- Communities support, value, and celebrate entrepreneurs.
- Regional leaders recognize entrepreneurs as a primary creator of net new jobs.
- Small and rural communities in Oregon have thriving economies.
- A culture of possibilities is embraced.

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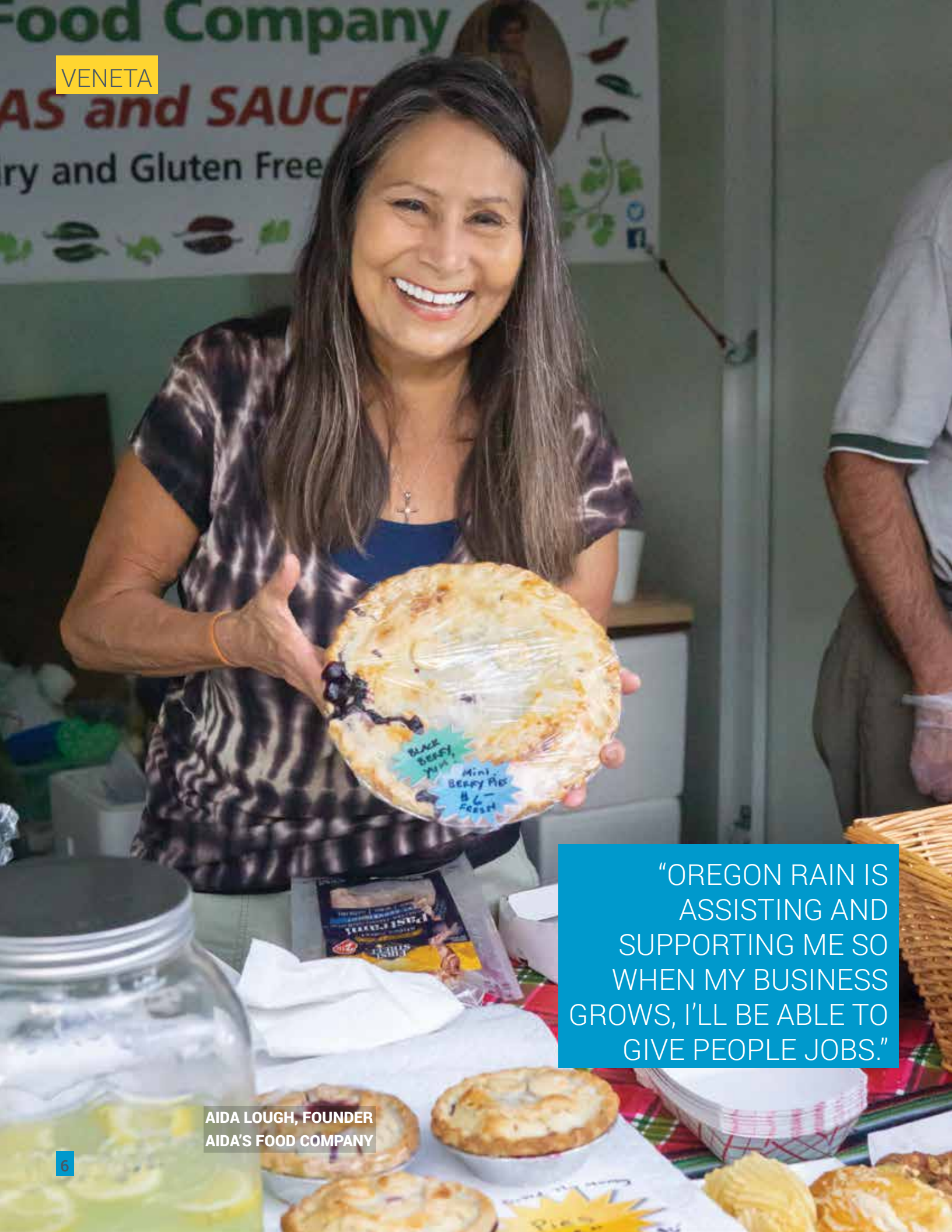
## PHYSICAL ASSETS

We help entrepreneurs find space, tools, equipment, labs, and other physical assets they need to grow their companies.

## CAPITAL

We prepare entrepreneurs to raise capital and connect them to various financing resources in the state.

4



"OREGON RAIN IS ASSISTING AND SUPPORTING ME SO WHEN MY BUSINESS GROWS, I'LL BE ABLE TO GIVE PEOPLE JOBS."

AIDA LOUGH, FOUNDER  
AIDA'S FOOD COMPANY

# hustle is her main ingredient

Out of adversity springs opportunity. That's the way **Aida Lough** looked at not being chosen for a teaching position. "When I didn't get a job I applied for, I went into my kitchen cave and just started creating," said Aida.

"I have a design background, so I like to create. One day, a lady came to my door to do a survey. While she was conducting the survey with my husband, I gave her a sample of my baked goods to eat. She loved them and even offered to pay me for them," said Aida. "Then it hit me...I can give myself a job. That's when I decided I'm launching my business right here and right now."

After a visit to the Oregon Country Fair in Veneta, Aida met a restaurateur who ordered her baked goods. Inspired, Aida started talking in earnest to more people, making more sales, and getting the necessary licenses.

At that point, Corum Ketchum, the former Coordinator of VenetaWorks, and Raj Vable, Oregon RAIN's Venture Catalyst, met Aida and have been helping her launch and grow her startup in Veneta.

"All I can say is Corum and Raj have been very supportive and that support has given me the positive push I needed," said Aida.

RAIN provides educational events like programs covering community lending and packaging. RAIN also gives advice and support to entrepreneurs in rural Oregon that they otherwise might not have received.

"If I hadn't had any help from Corum and Raj, I think that my confidence level would have been a lot lower," said Aida. "It's given me confidence and a boost knowing that if I have questions I can call them. That's been really, really important to me knowing that I have someone other than my husband to go to for support."



Aida has since expanded her products and created delicious salsas, including one made without tomatoes, for people with dietary restrictions. She's using RAIN's resources and network to take her business to the next level. RAIN is helping Aida find marketing and design support, pop-up store locations in communities who support early-stage companies, and the funding she needs to grow.

"Oregon RAIN is assisting and supporting me so when my business grows, I'll be able to give people jobs and help the whole area."

Aida's confidence and entrepreneurial skills are growing quickly. She's well on her way to building a thriving food company in Oregon. "Without RAIN, I would be lost."

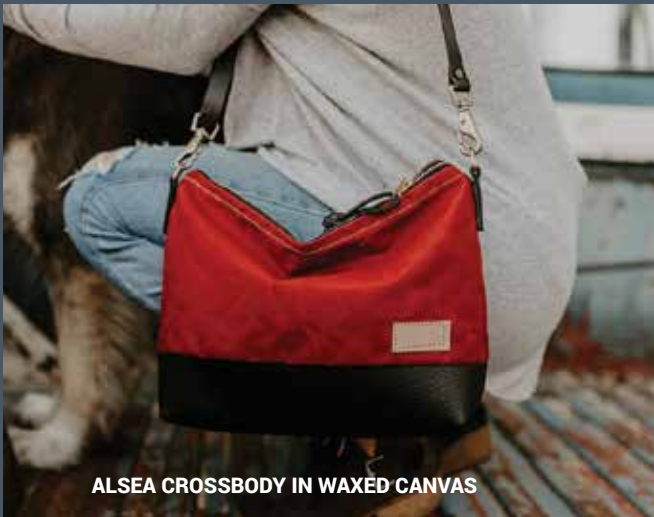
## WHAT'S NEXT?

Move into a production kitchen, raise capital, and hire more people.



# success is in the bag

**T**he Founder and Lead Designer of Meant Manufacturing, **Lindsey Phillips**, is excited about the future. Coming off 4 quarters of exponential growth, she was happy to look back and share how Oregon RAIN has helped her from the beginning.



ALSEA CROSSBODY IN WAXED CANVAS

"I would say the single most important thing they gave me was confidence. By the end of our bootcamp, they had me believing in myself more than I ever had before," said Lindsey. "I was surprised at how invested they were in seeing us all succeed. I understood what they were there to do, but they really went above and beyond. They made contacts with other businesses and mentors, introducing them to my company and the other companies in the bootcamp. They were totally invested in seeing me succeed. That just blew me away."

She was also happy about the way RAIN works with startups.

"RAIN does a really great job of listening," said Lindsey. "They like to hear out your idea, see what your plan is, see what you want, and then they just provide you with a set of tools, best practices so to speak, of how you can draw up your business plan. They also give you access to a network of mentors that can get you to that next stage, whether it's looking for funding or simply doing market research to see if your idea is worth pursuing. They're just constantly available. Emails, phone calls, coming over and sitting down with you, getting you in touch with the right people. They just offer that support, that person to bounce ideas off of."

RAIN's Venture Catalyst also gave Lindsey a very important piece of advice to combat a mindset that most entrepreneurs have when they are first starting out.

"I had this picture in my brain of what my perfect business looked like and I was afraid that I couldn't launch or I couldn't put myself out there to people until that was already achieved. I learned from RAIN that 'done is better than perfect.' You can always make adjustments, you can always shift, and you can always pivot along the way."

## WHAT'S NEXT?

Raise capital, move to a small manufacturing facility, and hire more people.





"THE BIGGEST THING THAT'S  
BECOME CLEAR TO ME IS THAT  
I WANT TO KEEP PRODUCTION  
IN FLORENCE SO THAT I CAN  
PROVIDE JOBS AND  
JOB TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES  
HERE IN MY HOMETOWN."  
– LINDSEY PHILLIPS,  
Founder Meant Manufacturing





PHILOMATH

"IF IT WASN'T FOR  
RAIN, I WOULDN'T  
HAVE BEEN ABLE  
TO RAISE \$300,000  
AND HIRE MY FIRST  
EMPLOYEES."

# augmenting the art world

The founder of Varlio, **John Marr**, was lucky he already had a personal connection to Oregon RAIN when he started his business. “I have a friend named Corey Wright, he took on a role as a Venture Catalyst with RAIN and I always thought that title was interesting,” said John. “And then when I became interested in launching my own venture, I remembered what he was doing and the fact that they were creating resources for entrepreneurs.”

John soon found out what RAIN had to offer a startup business.

“First off, there’s a wealth of information they provide that helps,” said John. “Especially for novice entrepreneurs like myself. They can help anyone, but especially beginner entrepreneurs. It’s quite a niche that they’re serving. They’re specifically geared for people who have limited access to important information and support structures that can actually help them get up and running.”

He learned that RAIN also offers training in how to communicate with consumers and investors.

“They offered a lot of training around how I should share the vision for my company and how I should coalesce the tenets of what I believe versus what I’m trying to accomplish. They helped me develop and fine-tune my investor pitch by focusing on the need to tell a story and not focusing on the technical aspects of my business. As a result, I raised my first \$300,000 from an angel investor. I couldn’t have done this without RAIN’s help.”

For John, two things stood out about RAIN: their experience and their motivation to help entrepreneurs succeed.

“Both Caroline (RAIN’s Executive Director) and Corey are entrepreneurs who have had some measure of success in the entrepreneurial world. So, they’re not just teachers teaching something out of a book. They’ve experienced it and they become filters for what is usable content, because they know what works and what doesn’t work.”

“RAIN has taken nothing from me—no equity—and they’ve only helped me accelerate faster than I would have if I’d done this on my own. Everything they’ve given has been altruistic. Of course, they are raising support to build RAIN itself and make RAIN grow and I’d love for them to do that because the kind of help they give to entrepreneurs is actually valuable. More importantly, they can be trusted as real experts because they’re truly coming from a place of service to others.”



## WHAT'S NEXT?

Hire more staff and secure  
national sales.



# a LUVing push in the right direction

**T**he founder of Bella's Luv Butter, **Annie Molnar**, has gotten a big push from working with Oregon RAIN. "With the help of RAIN and Raj (my Venture Catalyst), I've done things I didn't think I could do. Raj and I are working on new packaging. He's running his own product company, so he's been through this process before. He's been helping me apply for a grant for an event I host every year. I never thought I could do that, either. I'm just learning so much. Raj pushes me when he needs to and he always comes from a place of compassion. It's phenomenal."

As a successful entrepreneur himself, Raj brings his sales expertise to bear when advising RAIN's clients. "I'm pitching to New Seasons in October and Raj has been working with me on that," said Annie.

Raj and the RAIN team are able to give clients the guidance they need to determine the strategic direction of a business.

"Through the workshops that I've taken, I've been able to fine-tune what I need to accomplish to get to where I want to go," revealed Annie. "I had so much going on in my mind, I couldn't focus and pull out the pieces that I needed and put them in the correct order. Now, I've got a roadmap to success."

RAIN is a resource for best practices in some activities that might not immediately spring to mind. "I wanted to do a focus group and Raj was really helpful because I've never led one before. Putting that together and making sure I had all the right questions is something I've experienced now, with RAIN's help. Because of RAIN, I'm experiencing a lot of new things to grow my business," said Annie.



While the idea of being your own boss and starting your own business might lead people to think they have to do it all themselves, Annie—like most successful business owners—disagrees. "There's no need to start a business alone. Don't try and carry the burden all by yourself. Get involved with RAIN. I wholeheartedly recommend RAIN because they are there to help you at every turn. Even if you just need somebody to listen to you and discuss ideas with you, you'll see what a great resource they are," said Annie.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

Hire more staff and secure national sales.

"WITHOUT RAIN, I WOULD NOT FEEL PREPARED TO TALK TO NEW SEASONS."

ANNIE MOLNAR, FOUNDER  
BELLA'S LUV BUTTER





"THANKS TO RAIN, I LANDED MY FIRST SALE AND THAT HELPED BUILD MY CONFIDENCE."

AILAH ALTEMUS, FOUNDER  
PADDLE SHACK



# inspiring young entrepreneurs

When talking to 15-year-old entrepreneur **Ailah Altemus** about her stand-up rental business in Oakridge (Paddle Shack) and her relationship to Oregon RAIN, the first thing you sense is how RAIN's approach to helping entrepreneurs appeals to her pragmatic approach to business.

"RAIN and their Venture Catalyst, Raj Vable, have helped me a lot. I'd say the most important thing they did was lay out the steps for turning my idea into a business; they showed me that it was possible. Knowing what you need to do to get started is probably the most difficult part of anything, but once you know what the steps are, everything becomes a lot easier."

"It became more of a reality for me," said Ailah. "RAIN surprised me with their friendliness by not making it a big scary thing...it's a welcoming experience. You can have fun in the environment they create. That was really nice. RAIN is a unique program in my community and I'm so glad they're here," she continued.

Central to RAIN's mission is connecting entrepreneurs to a network of mentors that can help businesses reach their potential. "I think my mom discovered RAIN. She told me about it and then I started attending their free educational and networking events. Since then, I've gone to everything that they offer in my community. I love not feeling alone as I launch my business," stated Ailah.



Ailah also knows the importance of finding help when you need it. "RAIN comes in and they see your situation and they're like, 'Okay, how can we fill the gaps?' They make sure that you recognize your weaknesses and they match you with people to fill your gaps. Not everyone is good at everything. They make it easy to see around corners and get the help you need to take your business to the next step."

"Without RAIN, I probably wouldn't have had the opportunities that I now have or be doing the type of things that they're helping me do. I feel like RAIN is really rooting for me," said Ailah.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

Growing her business & advocating  
for entrepreneurship at  
her high school.

# lifting spirits

The founder of Lifts of Love, **Frank Herrera**, has been a barber for 43 years and one of the recurring challenges he has experienced is cutting the hair of his customers who use a wheelchair. The necessity that was the mother of his invention was Frank's desire to have a device that would allow him to easily raise his customers up to the appropriate height without any embarrassment. And so, Lifts of Love was born.

As a practicing barber, Frank knew that other barbers would be interested in this device. The problem was, Frank didn't know very much about running a manufacturing company. That's when he heard about Oregon RAIN.

"The person who I work with most is Corey Wright. Corey is the RAIN Venture Catalyst for my region and he mentors me," said Frank. "He's helped me understand the business, including doing market research to see if there is a market for my product and testing value propositions. Corey's helped me with the whole gamut of launching and running a manufacturing business."

"The most important thing Corey helped me with is developing a business model. He helped me think about the viability of my product and market. He also showed me how to put together a business plan on one page."

While Frank has had setbacks and redirects, with the help of RAIN, he has been able to pivot and move closer to production.

"My advice to other entrepreneurs is to be coachable and open minded. People have a tendency to try and stick with their original idea, their way of doing things. But, you've got to be able to adjust, be realistic, be flexible, and be able to be honest with yourself and say, 'I've got an ugly baby here. What can we do to pretty it up or redo it?'" advises Frank.


One of the most valuable benefits of working with RAIN is gaining access to RAIN's network of business experts. RAIN brings decades of experience to the table to help entrepreneurs succeed.

"What surprised me most about working with RAIN are the investors and mentors that I've been introduced to. I was surprised by how willing people in the business community are to help someone get a business established by sharing their knowledge and time with total strangers. Everyone has been generous with their time and advice, for that I'm eternally grateful."



## WHAT'S NEXT?

Secure funding to build a prototype and hire a team.

A photograph showing a man with long dark hair sitting in a black wheelchair. He is wearing a black protective cape over his clothing. A man in a light blue short-sleeved button-down shirt and khaki pants is leaning over him, using a pair of scissors to cut his hair. In the background, another man is getting a haircut, and a third man stands nearby. The setting appears to be a community center or a similar indoor space with tables, chairs, and a magazine rack visible.

"WITHOUT RAIN, I WOULD  
HAVE SPENT A WHOLE  
LOT OF MONEY AND  
GONE NOWHERE."



# Our Impact on Rural Oregon's Economy

Since July 2015

# of Startups Assisted:

**319**



Jobs Created:

**386**



Pre-Accelerator Grads:

**27**



Revenue Generated:

**\$9.45M**



Capital Raised:

**\$3.53M**



Capital Still Needed:

**\$14.95M**



# Partners in the ecosystem

## RURAL LANE

1. Brewers Union Local 180
2. Business Oregon
3. Cascade Seed Fund
4. Casey's RV Park
5. City of Coburg
6. City of Lowell
7. City of Oakridge
8. City of Veneta
9. Community Lending Works
10. Deep Woods Distillery
11. Dexter-Lowell Farmers' Market
12. Eugene Accelerator (formerly RAIN Eugene)
13. Fern Ridge Library
14. Governor's Regional Solutions Office
15. Lane Council of Governments
16. Lane County
17. Lane County Community College Small Business Development Center
18. Lion Mountain Bakery
19. Lowell Economic Development Committee
20. Lowell RFPD Fire Station 1
21. Lowell School District
22. Maggie Osgood Library/Kingdom Hall
23. Oakridge Chamber of Commerce
24. Oakridge Economic Development Advisory Committee (OEDAC)
25. Oakridge Green Waters Park
26. Oakridge High School
27. Oakridge Lodge
28. Oakridge School District
29. Oakridge/Westfir Area Chamber of Commerce
30. Oregon Farmer's Market Association
31. Our Daily Bread Restaurant
32. Resource Assistants for Rural Environments (RARE)/AmeriCorps
33. Robbie's Windowbox Café
34. Rural Development Initiative (RDI)
35. The Ford Family Foundation
36. The University of Oregon
37. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
38. Uptown Business Revitalization Association (UBRA)
39. U.S. Economic Development Administration
40. Veneta Economic Development Committee
41. Veneta Farmer's Market
42. Veneta-Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce
43. VenetaWorks
44. Westfir Lodge

## LINN-BENTON

1. Amanda Loman Photography
2. Bella Vino Gifts
3. Bellwether Legal
4. Benefit Corporations for Good
5. Benton County
6. BloxSpace
7. Boson Hub
8. Brownsville Art Association
9. Business and Quality Process Management, LLC
10. Business Association of Monroe
11. Business Oregon
12. Cascade Seed Fund
13. Christiansen Law
14. City of Albany
15. City of Brownsville
16. City of Halsey
17. City of Harrisburg
18. City of Lebanon
19. City of Monroe
20. City of Philomath
21. City of Sweet Home

22. Community Lending Works
23. Corvallis Benton Economic Development Office
24. Corvallis Foundry
25. CO.STARTERS
26. Governor's Regional Solutions Office
27. Kelley Nonprofit Consulting
28. Lebanon Chamber of Commerce
29. Linn Benton Community College - Lebanon Center
30. Linn Benton Community College - Sweet Home Center
31. Linn Benton Small Business Development Center
32. Linn County
33. Long Timber Brewing
34. Monroe Community Library
35. Nectar Creek
36. Nerds Abroad
37. Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments
38. Oregon State University Advantage Accelerator
39. Oregon Venture Fund
40. Palo Alto Software
41. Philomath Chamber of Commerce
42. Philomath Citizens Bank
43. Portland Seed Fund
44. Rational Unicorn Legal Services
45. Rogue Ventures
46. Sweet Home Chamber of Commerce
47. The Ford Family Foundation
48. The Grassland Cafe
49. Tri-County Chamber of Commerce
50. U.S. Economic Development Administration
51. Willamette Innovators Network

## MID-COAST

1. Beachcomber Pub
2. Business Oregon
3. Cascade Seed Fund
4. City Lights Cinemas
5. City of Florence
6. City of Newport
7. City of Toledo
8. First Interstate Bank
9. Florence Area Chamber of Commerce
10. Florence Maker Space
11. Governor's Regional Solutions Office
12. Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce
13. Hatfield Marine Science Center
14. Jayne Smoley Design Studio
15. Lane County
16. Lincoln City Chamber of Commerce
17. Lincoln County
18. Oregon Coast Community College Small Business Development Center
19. Oregon Community Foundation
20. Oregon Entrepreneurs Network
21. Oregon Pacific Bank
22. Rogue Ale & Spirits
23. Siuslaw High School
24. The Ford Family Foundation
25. U.S. Economic Development Administration
26. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

## GRANT COUNTY

1. Canyon City
2. Cascade Seed Fund
3. City of John Day
4. Grant County
5. Grant County Economic Development
6. Prairie City
7. The Ford Family Foundation
8. U.S. Economic Development Administration



# entrepreneurial ecosystems drive economic vibrancy



## **TechStars (Brad Feld)**

"Entrepreneurs must lead the startup community and leaders must have a long-term commitment [to the entrepreneurial ecosystem]."



## **Kauffman Foundation**

"Entrepreneurial ecosystems drive local economic vibrancy and national economic growth."

"Policymakers often think of small business as the employment engine of the economy. But when it comes to job-creating power, it is not the size of the business that matters as much as it is the age. New and young companies are the primary source of job creation in the American economy. Not only that, but these firms also contribute to economic dynamism by injecting competition into markets and spurring innovation."



**Harvard  
Business  
Review**

### **Harvard Business Review**

"Fostering entrepreneurship has become a core component of economic development in cities and countries around the world."



### **Babson University**

"The goal is stimulating economic growth, meaningful employment, development, and prosperity by creating measurably more entrepreneurship in a given locale."



### **IGI Global**

"[An entrepreneurial ecosystem] is a system composed of a range of stakeholders, public and private, individual and collective, as well as the full set of policy measures defined and adopted to enhance their action, articulation, and co-development, in order to promote entrepreneurship, value creation, and economic development."



Governors and state policymakers need to "build ecosystems with strong networks of entrepreneurs, including leaders of incubators, accelerators, and entrepreneur support organizations, who can help entrepreneurs across the state navigate issues related to starting a business, accessing capital, and finding talent."

-- America's New Business Plan, Start Us Up  
(powered by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation)

# CHARACTERISTICS OF A THRIVING ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM

"Oregon RAIN Venture Catalysts participate in and monitor a region's entrepreneurial ecosystem. They help catalyze programs and initiatives needed to fill critical ecosystem gaps and through partnerships, increase the capacity of characteristics needed to build and sustain a thriving entrepreneurial economy."

Caroline Cummings,  
Executive Director, Oregon RAIN



Entrepreneurs & Innovators



Government Buy-in & Policy



Local & Global Markets



Investment Capital



Physical Assets

# RAIN

OREGON



“Entrepreneurial ecosystems are spurred by people with drive, courage and grit and those that can constantly adapt but also drive disruption. These people get things done and are innovative!”

Rosemarie Truman,  
Founder & CEO  
The Center For Advancing Innovation



**Human Capital & Workforce**



**Education & Training**



**Mentors & Support Systems**



**Culture & Media**



**Ecosystem Leadership**

ENTREPRENEURIAL  
ECOSYSTEMS ARE  
DEFINED AS A SET OF  
INTERDEPENDENT ACTORS  
AND FACTORS COORDINATED  
IN SUCH A WAY THAT THEY  
ENABLE PRODUCTIVE  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP WITHIN  
A PARTICULAR TERRITORY.

# oregon venture catalyst network

**S**everal regional economic development organizations in Oregon hire Venture Catalysts—**entrepreneurs who bring their experience and networks to the startup ecosystem to help build and grow a region's entrepreneurial culture and economy.** They conduct various activities to help find and serve that region's entrepreneurs and innovators.

Oregon's Venture Catalyst Network was launched by EDCO (Economic Development for Central Oregon) in 2010 with federal funds championed by Senator Ron Wyden. There are now 7 Venture Catalysts in Oregon serving entrepreneurs across 12 counties and counting. In 2019-20, the Venture Catalyst Network will expand into Grant and Lincoln Counties, adding 2 new Venture Catalysts.

## Organizations in Oregon with Venture Catalysts:

### Economic Development for Central Oregon

[edcoinfo.com](http://edcoinfo.com)



### Oregon Entrepreneurs Network

[oen.org](http://oen.org)



### Oregon RAIN

[oregonrain.org](http://oregonrain.org)



### Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development

[soredi.org](http://soredi.org)



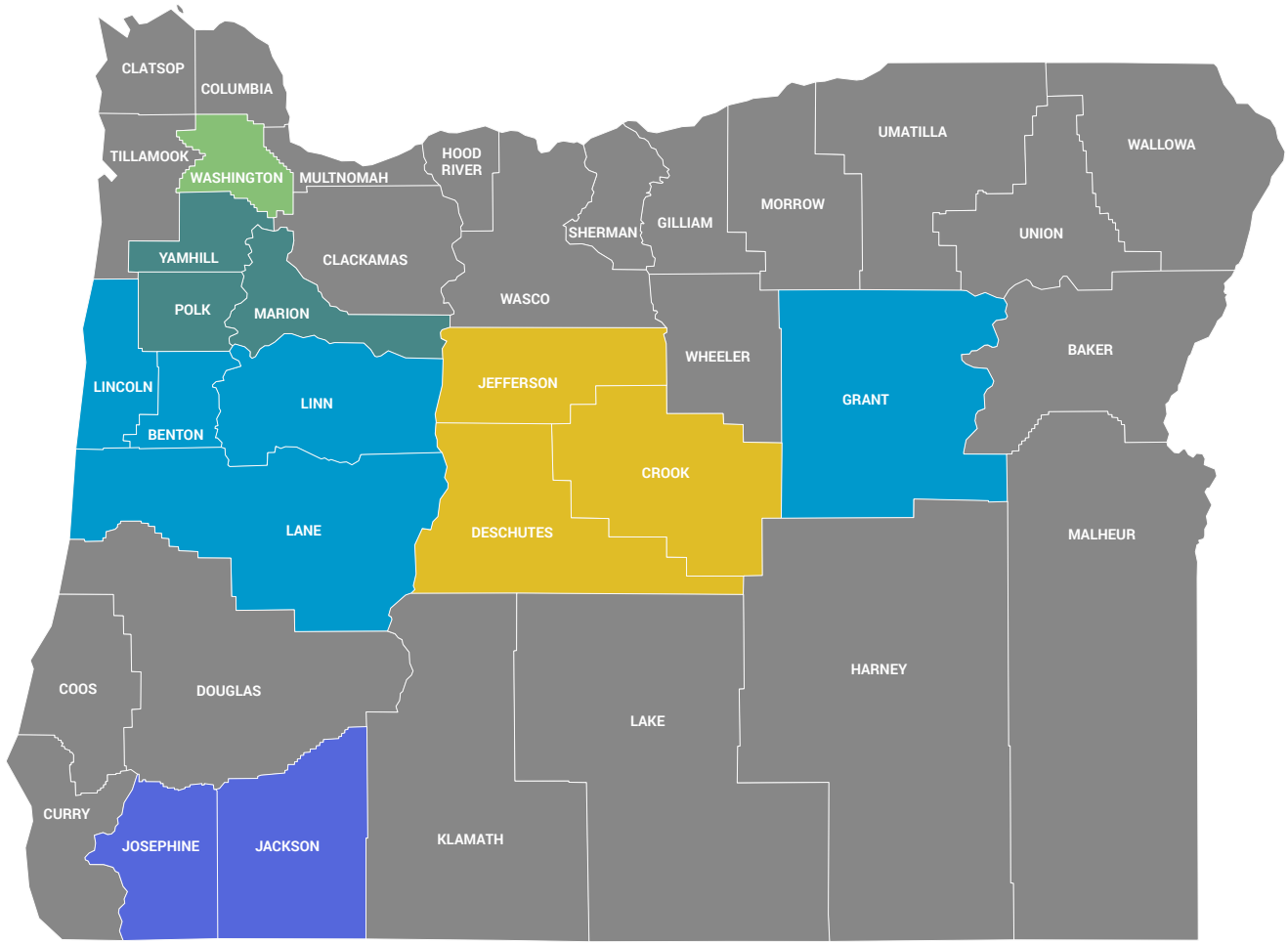
### Strategic Economic Development Corporation

[sedcor.com](http://sedcor.com)



Portland-based Oregon Entrepreneurs Network (OEN) leads the coordination of the expanding Venture Catalyst Network by bringing the Venture Catalysts together to discuss initiatives happening in their regions and receive guidance from each other about ways to reduce barriers for entrepreneurs and accelerate startup growth. Some of the ways the Oregon Venture Catalyst Network supports the statewide entrepreneurial ecosystem:

- Supporting and promoting signature events (e.g., Startup Weekends, Angel Conferences, pitch competitions, and industry-specific events)
- Advocating at the Oregon State Capitol for legislation to support the state's entrepreneurial economy
- Sharing mentors who have specific expertise
- Activating capital
- Finding talent for startups
- Sharing best practices



**COREY WRIGHT** / Linn & Benton Counties



**ARIEL RUBEN** / Rural Lane County



**RAJ VABLE** / Rural Lane County



**COMING SOON** / Grant County

**COMING SOON** / Lincoln County

**MIKE WHITE** / Marion, Polk & Yamhill Counties



**LAURA KUBISIAK** / Washington County



**ALEX PALMER** / Jackson & Josephine Counties



**BRIAN VIERRA** / Deschutes, Jefferson & Crook Counties





# a journey well begun

Oregon RAIN was formed in 2014 by the communities and universities in the South Willamette Valley, led by the Governor's Regional Solutions team and the cities of Corvallis and Eugene, to create a vision and plan for a system that addressed the specific economic development needs of the region. RAIN raised funds to help catalyze and scale two regional accelerators (Oregon State University's Advantage Accelerator and the Eugene Accelerator, formerly RAIN Eugene). In 2017, RAIN pivoted to respond to the demand from small and rural Oregon communities that invited RAIN to help them build their rural entrepreneurial economies.



OREGON RAIN WON OCWCOG'S  
"2019 PARTNER OF THE YEAR" AWARD.



ANIELIS RAAS, FOUNDER OF ZENPUI,  
AT 2019 WINTER PITCHFEST



FIRST-EVER TECHSTARS STARTUP WEEKEND HELD ON  
OREGON'S COAST (FLORENCE, 2018)

## 2013-2014

- Approved by the Oregon State Legislature
- Formed as a 501(c)(3) Oregon Public Benefit Nonprofit
- Raised state funds to launch Eugene Accelerator
- Raised state funds to expand OSU Advantage Accelerator

## 2015-2016

- Hired 2 Venture Catalysts
- Invited to serve Mid-Coast communities (Florence was the 1st community served)
- Won the Oregon Economic Development Association (OEDA) "Outstanding Collaborative Partnership" award

## 2017

- Invited to serve Linn & Benton rural communities
- Launched 1st Pre-Accelerator
- Hosted 1st Startup Showcase
- Invited to serve East Lane rural communities
- Secured EDA funds to launch regional-focused seed fund

## 2018

- Invited to expand services in Linn & Benton communities
- Hired dedicated Linn-Benton Venture Catalyst
- Hosted 1st TechStars™ Startup Weekend
- Selected Cascade Seed Fund to manage EDA seed fund support grant
- Board approved statewide expansion with a focus on rural communities
- Won Florence Area Chamber of Commerce "Innovation in Business" award

## 2019

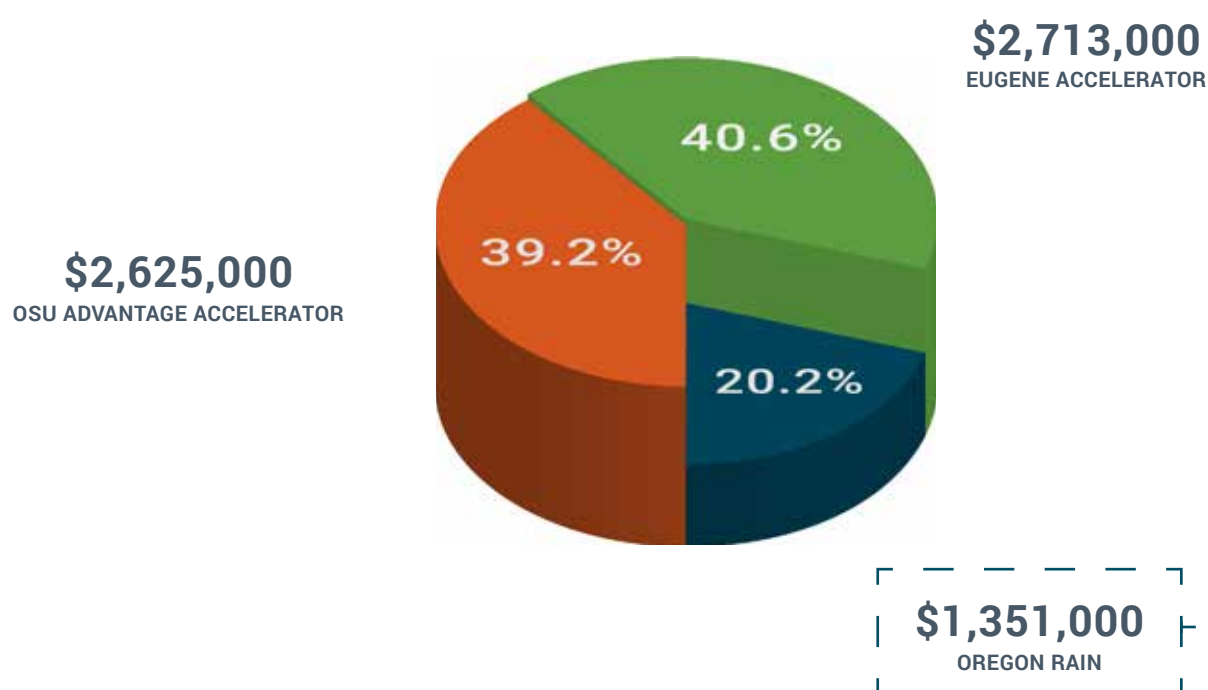
- Hired 2 dedicated Rural Lane Venture Catalysts
- Hosted 2nd and 3rd Startup Showcases
- Launched Last Founders Standing™
- Invited to serve more Rural Lane communities
- Invited to provide entrepreneurship curriculum to Oakridge High School
- Invited to serve Grant County communities
- Invited to serve Lincoln County communities
- Won Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments "2019 Community Partner of the Year" award

# THE FUNDING STORY

## \$5.35M RAISED TO CATALYZE TWO REGIONAL ACCELERATORS

Since its inception, Oregon RAIN has raised \$6.7M from the Oregon State Legislature to help catalyze the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Benton, Lane, Lincoln, and Linn Counties, including developing and scaling two new regional accelerator programs—Oregon State University's Advantage Accelerator and the Eugene Accelerator (formerly RAIN Eugene). Eighty-percent of the funds raised (\$5.35M) were passed through to the 2 regional accelerators.

## USE OF STATE FUNDS (2013–2019)



## USE OF STATE FUNDS (by biennium)

BIENNIUM	USE OF FUNDS	EUGENE ACCELERATOR	OSU ADVANTAGE ACCELERATOR	OREGON RAIN	TOTAL
2013-2015	CAPITAL	\$1,250,000	\$1,250,000	\$0	\$2,500,000
	OPERATIONS	\$436,000	\$475,000	\$278,000	\$1,189,000
2015-2017	OPERATIONS	\$727,000	\$700,000	\$573,000	\$2,000,000
2017-2019	OPERATIONS	\$300,000	\$200,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000
TOTALS		\$2,713,000	\$2,625,000	\$1,351,000	\$6,689,000



# leveraging state investment & diversifying funding sources

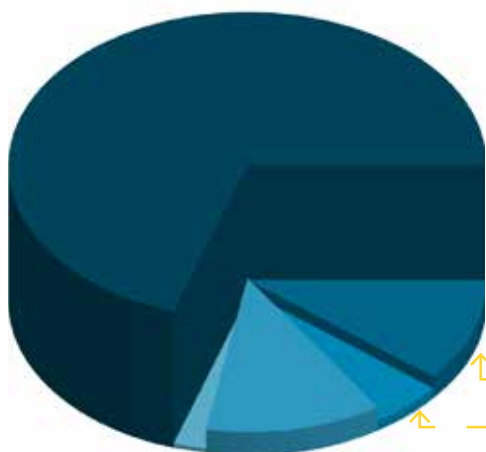
In 2016, Oregon RAIN pivoted from catalyzing accelerators to responding to the demand coming from rural Oregon communities. So far, RAIN has been invited to help 20 rural communities build their entrepreneurial economies. Each of these cities, and the 5 counties they are in, are helping to fund the program.

The funding charts on this page tell the story of how RAIN has leveraged State of Oregon funds by raising funds locally and from the federal government. RAIN has added new communities each year and increased the number of entrepreneurs it serves, all while reducing its reliance on State funds.

2013-2015

**TOTAL FUNDING: \$278,000**

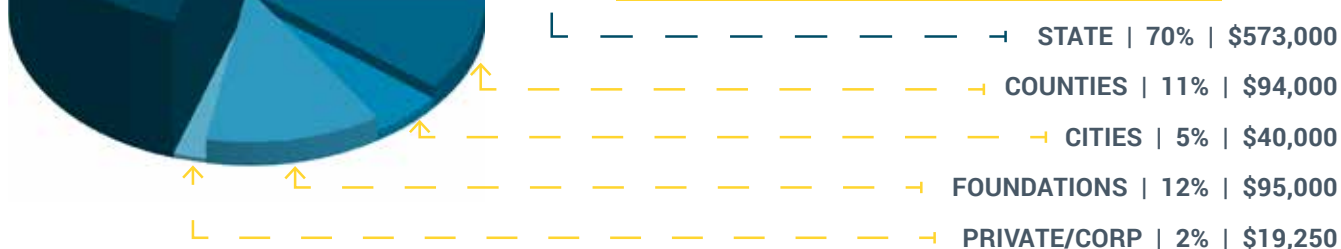
STATE | 100% | \$278,000



2015-17

**TOTAL FUNDING: \$821,250**

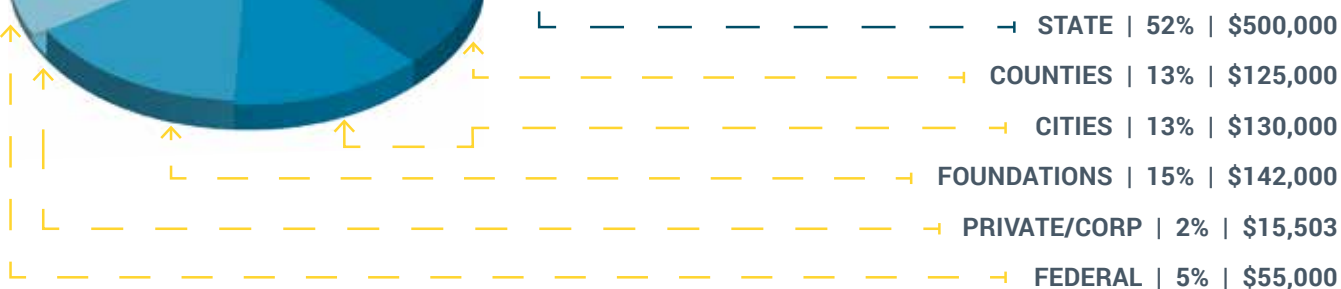
**STATE FUNDS LEVERAGED:  
43¢ raised for every State dollar**



2017-19

**TOTAL FUNDING: \$967,503**

**STATE FUNDS LEVERAGED:  
94¢ raised for every State dollar**



# our model



## INVITED

Oregon RAIN only provides services in communities that invite us. We typically get invited into a community by city leadership (e.g., City Administrator, City Manager, Mayor, City Councilor, County Commissioner), an economic development organization, or an entrepreneur from the community. See “Contact Us” on page 50 for information about requesting Oregon RAIN’s services.

Since 2015-16, Oregon RAIN has been invited into 20 rural communities and 5 counties to help them build their regional entrepreneurial cultures and economies (see page 33 for full list of cities and counties).

## JOIN

Once a community invites Oregon RAIN to provide services, our team begins rolling out our Rural Entrepreneurial Development Program. Our approach is to join the conversation already happening in a community. We never “swoop in” with a solution, we join in and meet the unique needs of the community’s entrepreneurs. Our approach is investigative, not prescriptive.



## LISTEN

One of Oregon RAIN's key tenets is *"Shut up and listen,"* adopted from a TED Talk given by Ernesto Sirolli, a noted authority in the field of sustainable economic development. Before RAIN's Venture Catalysts make any recommendations, they listen to a community's entrepreneurs through a series of events we host in the community. RAIN also trains mentors who will work with entrepreneurs on this approach.



## SHARE

Oregon RAIN tracks and reports metrics to funders that measure our impact on regional entrepreneurial ecosystems. RAIN surveys startups in the communities we serve by asking them about jobs created, capital raised and still needed, revenue generated, mentors assisting them, milestones they've achieved, barriers they are experiencing, and more.



## SERVE

Oregon RAIN Venture Catalysts promote community participation and support of the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem by matching entrepreneurs with **people** (mentors, talent), **programs** (workshops, accelerators), **physical assets** (space, equipment), and **capital** (access to loans and equity) to help them start or scale their ventures.

RAIN's Venture Catalysts are experienced entrepreneurs and/or investors who are well-connected and have strong working relationships with local businesses, municipalities, elected officials, economic and community development organizations, and other institutions. Venture Catalysts promote community participation and support of the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem.



"THE AMOUNT OF MENTORSHIP AND GUIDANCE I'VE RECEIVED FROM OREGON RAIN IS PRICELESS. THEY MADE ME BELIEVE IN MYSELF AND ENCOURAGED ME TO GO FOR IT!"

JULES ARIOSIA WITH HER MOM ,KATHY ARIOSIA, AT THE OAKRIDGE BIKE FAIR IN JUNE 2019, WHERE JULES LAUNCHED HER FOOD CATERING BUSINESS, JULES JOINT.

# our ecosystem funders

## CITIES

Adair Village  
Albany  
Brownsville  
Canyon City  
Coburg  
Creswell  
Florence  
Halsey  
Harrisburg  
John Day  
Lebanon  
Lowell  
Monroe  
Newport  
Oakridge  
Philomath  
Prairie City  
Sweet Home  
Toledo  
Veneta

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGS

Oregon Entrepreneurs Network  
Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce  
Economic Development Alliance of Lincoln County

## COUNTIES

Benton County  
Grant County  
Lane County  
Lincoln County  
Linn County

## FOUNDATIONS

Oregon Community Foundation  
The Collins Foundation  
The Ford Family Foundation

## STATE & FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Economic Development Administration (EDA)  
State of Oregon (via Business Oregon)  
United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

## PRIVATE CORPORATIONS

First Interstate Bank  
Oregon Pacific Bank  
Palo Alto Software  
Peak Internet

**THANK YOU FOR BELIEVING  
IN THE POWER OF RURAL  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP**



"LARGER ORGANIZATIONS  
AND DONORS ARE  
WILLING TO INVEST  
BECAUSE THEY KNOW  
THEIR DOLLARS ARE  
GOING TO BE RETURNED  
TENFOLD AND MORE  
TO FLORENCE."

KELLI WEESE, CITY RECORDER/ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR (CITY OF  
FLORENCE); ERIN REYNOLDS, CITY MANAGER  
(CITY OF FLORENCE); AND MOLLY ROGERS,  
FOUNDER (LOLA'S FRUIT SHRUBS).



# a city in motion

In early 2015, when **Erin Reynolds** was first tasked with launching an economic development program in Florence, she and her team quickly realized there were aspects to economic development that required outside expertise. That's when they contacted Oregon RAIN.

"RAIN came to Florence as a capacity-building organization bringing entrepreneurial and innovation best practices that we didn't have," said Erin. "We brought RAIN to our community, supporting and growing that aspect of our business development program."

When asked what types of businesses have benefited from Florence's association with RAIN Erin said, "It's manufacturing on a small scale, like manufacturers of candles, a line of personal care products, and high-end handbags that have resulted from RAIN's work. We have other people dabbling in a variety of innovations and we're excited to see what other companies launch here in Florence in the coming months and years."

"RAIN has brought two wonderful cohorts through what we call pre-accelerators, each with about 12 different companies," said Erin. "It's a program that helps people take their idea through a validation process before spending lots of money to build and sell a product. Oregon RAIN has helped several companies grow from an infancy stage into a viable business."

"RAIN takes the dreams of Florence's entrepreneurs and helps them navigate the system so that their dreams become a reality. And we're not talking small dollars. In our region, we're talking about building companies with a target of \$1 million in sales per year," said Erin. "The fact that I can say that about just one of the businesses supported by RAIN tells me that this has been a worthy investment and a very valuable partnership. That's why we continue to do it."



ERIN REYNOLDS, CITY MANAGER, CITY OF FLORENCE

# unique partner in economic development

Working with rural communities, Oregon RAIN provides expertise and opportunity to underserved entrepreneurs. **Chris Workman**, City Manager of Philomath, shared the impact RAIN is having on his community.

"As the City Manager of a small city, I wear a lot of different hats," said Chris. "The additional economic development resources RAIN brings have been impactful in Philomath. RAIN is providing entrepreneurial development services that our city was formerly unable to provide. RAIN's customized approach to entrepreneurial development is tailored to each community they serve. I really like that part of their program."



**CHRIS WORKMAN, CITY MANAGER  
CITY OF PHILOMATH**

RAIN hosted the first PitchFest in the region in February 2019. "The PitchFest was a great event for our community," said Chris. "Several Philomath entrepreneurs participated and the winner was from our town. We were glad to have been selected to host the event in our community."

RAIN's Venture Catalysts, like Corey Wright, are instrumental in creating a local culture of entrepreneurship by organizing events and workshops that benefit rural entrepreneurs. "Corey spends hours in Philomath meeting one-on-one with entrepreneurs and people thinking about starting a business. RAIN's background brings a level of expertise to our region that is much needed," explained Chris.

"Corey helped organize a workshop training that was held at Eats and Treats Cafe," remembered Chris. "At the event, people played Last Founder Standing™, a fun game that simulates what it takes to be an entrepreneur and start a new business. This event attracted people from our community who I've never met before. It was exciting to see new faces and hear about new potential business ideas."

Chris also appreciates RAIN's style of being a collaborative partner in the community. "RAIN does a great job of networking with other partners in the area who care about economic development. If anyone wants help furthering entrepreneurial efforts in their community, they should reach out to RAIN because they bring a unique service that helps cities advance their economic development goals," advises Chris.

**"RAIN IS PROVIDING  
ENTREPRENEURIAL  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
THAT OUR CITY WAS  
FORMERLY UNABLE TO  
PROVIDE."**



## PHILOMATH



LINN-BENTON WINTER PITCHFEST 2019  
"SCALE YOUR STARTUP" GRADUATES 2018-19

## LEBANON

FALL 2018 PITCH WORKSHOP  
ATTENDED BY ENTREPRENEURS  
FROM HALSEY, HARRISBURG, LEBANON,  
MONROE, PHILOMATH, AND SWEET HOME.





## LOWELL



THE LAUNCH OF STOMPING GROUNDS COFFEE SHOP IN LOWELL, WITH OWNER KRISTEN PRENVOST (RIGHT) AND MANAGER DARCI ROAT (LEFT).

## VENETA



VENETA'S FIRST POPUP RETAIL DISTRICT



# big resource for small town

**W**hen we sat down with **Jared Cobb**, from the City of Lowell, it was clear he greatly valued Oregon RAIN's contributions to his community's economic well-being.

"For us, the most important thing was we needed technical assistance with mentoring, funding, and small business training," said Jared. "With only 6 employees, we don't really have the time or the capacity to provide that kind of assistance to entrepreneurs, home-based businesses, or even our brick-and-mortar stores. RAIN made it easy to decide to bring their much-needed entrepreneurial expertise to our community by bringing critical program funding with them from Lane County, The Ford Family Foundation, and partner cities."

Jared talked about the benefits they quickly experienced as a result of working with RAIN's Venture Catalyst, Raj Vable. Raj is an experienced entrepreneur who runs his own startup company. So, he knows the ins-and-outs of growing a business.

"RAIN has been the first real resource that we've been able to provide to our businesses and entrepreneurs," said Jared. "We started an economic development committee in the city. As part of that, we wanted to see if there was some way of creating a business association where folks could start to network locally instead of having to go into Eugene or Springfield. I'll tell you that I think it was huge having Raj and RAIN involved because they understand what businesses need."

Putting experienced Venture Catalysts in touch with rural entrepreneurs is at the core of RAIN's mission. And, it's what's most important to Jared as he tries to grow businesses in his community.

"Smaller communities, even towns of 10,000, oftentimes don't have an economic development director. They may not even have a very active Chamber of Commerce or economic development organization. So, being able to put businesses directly in touch with someone who can provide assistance, whether that be through finding mentors or small business training, is extremely valuable. At the end of the day, you can put information online, you can provide handouts and other printed resources, but putting a business owner in touch with an expert who honestly takes an interest in their business and is willing to help them—step-by-step—is just awesome. This is so important to a town of our size."



JARED COBB, CITY MANAGER, CITY OF LOWELL

"RAIN HAS BEEN THE FIRST REAL RESOURCE THAT WE'VE BEEN ABLE TO PROVIDE TO OUR BUSINESSES AND ENTREPRENEURS."

# investing in the overlooked

One of Oregon RAIN's programmatic partners who is also elevating entrepreneurs in rural Oregon is the Cascade Seed Fund. Led by Managing Directors **Julie Harrelson** and **Robert Pease**, the Cascade Seed Fund looks to both invest in and advise overlooked entrepreneurs beyond major metropolitan centers in Oregon, as well as the surrounding states. As a smaller fund, Cascade Seed Fund is able to make investments more nimbly that can be impactful on the growth of a small company.

"Cascade Seed Fund is a regional early-stage investment fund that brings angel and institutional investors together to back great entrepreneurs and strengthen the regional economy in Oregon and the Pacific Northwest," said Robert.

While new entrepreneurs might think all sources of capital have the same goals and requirements, Robert says that is just not the case.

"The difference among angel investors, small funds, giant venture capital funds, and massive private equity funds," explained Robert, "are each of those sources of money have different return expectations, different ways they want to work, and different types of investments that they'll make." This is why one of the most valuable benefits entrepreneurs receive from the Cascade Seed Fund isn't capital, it's the initial meeting with experienced entrepreneurs who have navigated both growing businesses and raising money.

"Startups that meet our investment qualification criteria are welcome to apply during our application periods," said Robert. "Our target average investment size—\$250,000—fills the gap between individual angel investment amounts—\$25,000 to \$50,000—and larger institutional funds that have minimum investment amounts of \$500,000+. Being located in Bend, we have always had a state-wide view. Companies in our portfolio from our former Cascade Angels Fund are based in Bend, Eugene, Hood River, and the Portland metro area."

The programmatic partnership between RAIN and the Cascade Seed Fund ensures that overlooked entrepreneurs who are market disrupters, minorities, or located outside major metropolitan areas have access to capital. Cascade Seed Fund just closed its first round of funding and announced a \$5,350,000 raise.



"We open 3-4 application periods a year where companies seeking funding can apply to be considered for investment," says Robert. "Every company that meets our published criteria will get an initial conversation to evaluate their business for investment. Those application periods are announced via press/media and through our network of entrepreneurs and community allies. "Our fund size also gives us flexibility in the stage, industry, and return potential of our investments that is aligned with our regional entrepreneurial ecosystem."





MILENA JOHNSON, ROBERT PEASE, AND JULIE HARRELSON  
CASCADE SEED FUND

"A SMALLER FUND HAS A  
LITTLE MORE AGILITY TO MAKE  
INVESTMENTS IN COMPANIES  
THAT DON'T NECESSARILY  
NEED TO BE THAT LARGE IN  
TERMS OF EXIT."

**OREGON RAIN SECURED  
\$300,000 EDA SEED FUND SUPPORT GRANT  
TO CATALYZE REGIONAL SEED FUND  
THAT PRIORITIZES OVERLOOKED ENTREPRENEURS.**



# mentoring startups together

One of the many entrepreneurial ecosystem resources Oregon RAIN connects entrepreneurs to are experienced advisors, mentors, and instructors. These individuals have real-world experience in starting and/or growing a business.

One such advisor is **Roger Wong**. Roger was part of the food service industry for 40 years. He was Director of Training for North America and Head of Operations for 175 pizza restaurants in Canada and North America. Like most accomplished business people, he knows what he doesn't know.

"One of the ways I work with RAIN is we refer entrepreneurs back-and-forth to each other," says Roger. It depends on the type of support an entrepreneur is seeking. For example, RAIN is highly skilled at helping technology companies launch, so I refer my student entrepreneurs to RAIN," says Roger.

As an instructor and advisor at Lane Community College's Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Roger helps RAIN's clients write a business plan that works in the startup world, where things change quickly. Recently, Roger partnered with RAIN's Venture Catalyst, Raj Vable, to advise clients in Veneta who are building a **food manufacturing business** (see "hustle is her main ingredient" on pages 6-7 about Aida's Food Company) and a **consumer product business** (see "a LUVing push in the right direction" on pages 12-13 about LuvBar Butter).

Roger and Raj make a great advising pair for these startups because Raj brings his manufacturing experience while Roger brings his business planning and operations experience to the table.

It's RAIN's partnerships in the entrepreneurial ecosystem that help rural entrepreneurs find the skills and knowledge they need to succeed.



ROGER WONG, INSTRUCTOR & ADVISOR LANE SBDC

"ONE OF THE WAYS I  
WORK WITH RAIN IS WE  
REFER ENTREPRENEURS  
BACK-AND-FORTH TO  
EACH OTHER."





CAROLINE CUMMINGS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (OREGON RAIN) WITH MAYOR ERIC NIEMANN (CITY OF PHILOMATH) AT OCWCOG AWARD CEREMONY WHERE RAIN WAS NAMED THE "2019 COMMUNITY PARTNER OF THE YEAR."



# our team

## CAROLINE CUMMINGS

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Caroline Cummings provides strategic leadership for the organization, guiding development, stakeholder relations, and community partnerships. Cummings oversees the execution of Oregon RAIN's Rural Venture Catalyst programs, providing outreach and support to small and rural communities; coaching and mentoring regional entrepreneurs, building strategic local partnerships, and leading educational workshops.

Cummings has contributed to the founding and growth of entrepreneurial programs across Oregon. She's regularly invited to guest lecture and serve as a judge at business, marketing, and entrepreneurship classes and events at several universities and accelerator programs around the globe.

Cummings co-founded and served as the CEO of 2 technology startups. She's raised close to \$1 million for her own startup ventures and \$4 million for non-profits she's passionate about.



She's personally invested in 8 Oregon-based startup companies (most of which are women-led). Cummings serves on the Oregon Economic Development Association (OEDA) board of directors, representing the voice for entrepreneurs and innovators from around the state. She was a recipient of Eugene's 20 Under 40 Award in 2008. Her passions are mentoring women and young girls and helping entrepreneurs see the magic in stepping outside of their comfort zones.

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## JENNIFER DAMIANI

### DEVELOPMENT & OPERATIONS DIRECTOR

Jennifer Damiani leads Oregon RAIN's grant writing and stewardship. She works closely with the Executive Director to ensure that the organization's day-to-day operations run smoothly and efficiently.

With a bachelor's degree in journalism and a law degree, Damiani brings a unique skill-set to the job. As the founder of Scout Consultants, she has secured more than \$11 million in grant funding over the past decade for her clients. Damiani has helped RAIN raise \$1.17M in funding over the past 2 years.



## COREY WRIGHT

LINN-BENTON  
VENTURE CATALYST

Corey Wright supports regional entrepreneurs in Linn and Benton Counties. Wright is an inventor and entrepreneur with strong local roots. He graduated from Oregon State University with a degree in chemistry. He is the founder and CEO of Massif Games, a game publishing startup making innovative 3D products and accessories for customers around the globe. Wright successfully raised money for Massif Games through multiple crowdfunding campaigns and is currently

known as having the most successful Kickstarter funded in the Corvallis area (\$145,148 from 1,686 backers). In his tenure with Oregon RAIN, Wright added to our toolkit by developing Last Founders Standing™, an interactive, fast-paced game about the entrepreneurial journey that teaches entrepreneurs important startup concepts.



## ARIEL RUBEN

RURAL LANE  
VENTURE CATALYST

Ariel Ruben is a dedicated Venture Catalyst for Rural Lane County (currently serving Florence, Coburg, and Creswell). Ariel used to help run the San Diego Venture Group, an organization similar to Oregon RAIN and has a background with food startups. Ariel understands what it takes to build a successful company that is both

scrappy and scalable. She is a passionate supporter of entrepreneurship and innovation, and has served as a mentor and instructor for the Eugene Accelerator and Oregon RAIN since returning to the community two years ago.



## RAJ VABLE

RURAL LANE  
VENTURE CATALYST

Raj Vable is a dedicated Venture Catalyst for Rural Lane County (currently serving Oakridge, Lowell, and Veneta). Raj hails from a small town in Michigan, and since his early years, he's been convinced that rural towns have enormous untapped potential. He started his company, Young Mountain Tea, to explore that potential; it all began with a promise—if remote Himalayan communities would grow tea, Raj would set up a company in the US to sell it. At the time, he was in Northern India on a Fulbright Fellowship, working

to create sustainable rural livelihoods. Prior to that, he worked on a variety of entrepreneurial projects to introduce renewable energy to rural Indian communities.

Raj is a graduate of the Eugene Accelerator. He serves on the board of Wild Gift, a nonprofit dedicated to supporting early-stage social entrepreneurs. He holds an MS in Environmental Studies from the University of Oregon and a BS in Electrical Engineering from the University of Michigan, and was nominated for a 20 Under 40 Award in Eugene in 2019.



# BOARD MEMBERS

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## EX-OFFICIO DIRECTORS

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**BIFF TRABER**, Mayor of Corvallis

**LUCY VINIS**, Mayor of Eugene

**BRIAN WALL**, Assistant VP for Research, Commercialization, and Industry Partnerships at Oregon State University

**DAVID CONOVER**, VP of Research and Innovation at the University of Oregon

## ELECTED PRIVATE SECTOR DIRECTORS

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**SABRINA PARSONS**, CEO of Palo Alto Software

**SKIP RUNG**, President and Executive Director of ONAMI

**DANA SIEBERT**, Interim Executive Director of Eugene Accelerator

**NICK FOWLER**, Owner of Orion Ventures

## NEW BOARD MEMBERS (AS OF DEC 2019)

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**AUSTIN RAMIREZ**, Interim Economic Development Manager for Lane County

**ERIN REYNOLDS**, City Manager for the City of Florence



"TWO VALUABLE TOOLS IN WORKING WITH OREGON RAIN WERE THE DIGITAL MARKETING AND PROFIT & LOSS STATEMENT WORKSHOPS."





**"October Momentum Continues with RAIN"**  
—Siuslaw News (October 11, 2017)

As we begin our third year as partners with RAIN, we can't wait to see how this startup community will continue to grow and flourish", said Florence City Manager Erin Reynolds.



**"RAIN Wins Florence Area Chamber of Commerce's Innovation in Business Award"**

—Siuslaw News (February 9, 2018)

Upon receiving the Innovation in Business Award on behalf of Oregon RAIN venture catalyst David Youngentob said, "Innovation brings something new to the table. I define it as when something new meets mass adoption, and you have very wonderful people here in the community that I'm honored to get to work with who want to see that happen from Florence outward."



**"First Oregon Coast Startup Weekend to Explore New & Innovative Ways of Doing Business on the Coast"**

—KPPT 1230 AM (July 9, 2018)

On behalf of Oregon RAIN David Youngentob and Matt Hollander said, "We work with the municipal and economic community leadership to stimulate entrepreneurship at the very earliest stage of a company's lifecycle. We do everything we can to support and activate the entrepreneurial community."



**"Hi, My Name is Entrepreneur"**

—Siuslaw News (July 25, 2018)

"The only hope we have is that we grow our own people who are entrepreneurial enough to hire one, two or three people. We need people who want to live in these wonderful places and have a vision and idea about building something," said Oregon State Senator Arnie Roblan.



**"Oregon Entrepreneurial Network Planning Rural Lane County Expansion"**

—The Register-Guard (August 29, 2018)

"Oregon RAIN's Rural Venture Catalyst program has assisted 214 companies and created 285 jobs. Those companies have attracted \$2.7 million in investments over that time, generating \$8.4 million in revenue."





### **"Area Small Towns Banking on Oregon RAIN Program"**

**—Albany Democrat-Herald (August 1, 2018)**

"I am excited about this effort," said Latta, Harrisburg city manager. "Small cities like ours all want economic development. The entrepreneurs are here. They just need resources and expertise to grow in our communities."

"Oregon RAIN's Rural Venture Catalyst program has assisted 214 companies and created 285 jobs. Those companies have attracted \$2.7 million in investments over that time, generating \$8.4 million in revenue."



### **"Oregon RAIN Feeds Entrepreneurs"**

**—Business Tribune (October 18, 2018)**

"RAIN's Venture Catalysts scout rural communities looking for businesses worthy of investment and growth. The group encourages entrepreneurs to scale up without relying on big-city resources."



### **"RAIN Seeks Applicants for Business Accelerator Program"**

**—Siuslaw News (September 13, 2018)**

"The Coastal Pre-Accelerator was awesome! Since working with RAIN, I consistently double my sales goals and I have the confidence to close bigger accounts," said Phillips."



### **"Meant MFG, Small Market Triumph Award"**

**—The Register-Guard (November 15, 2018)**

"I have such a regard for the bravery and the tenacity and the stick-to-itiveness that has brought Lindsey to this position and where she's actually having an economic impact on our community," said Bettina Hannigan, Florence Area Chamber of Commerce.



**contact  
us**



Please visit our Facebook page to track our events, see what's next, and engage with us:

[facebook.com/pg/OregonRain.org/events/](https://facebook.com/pg/OregonRain.org/events/)



Visit our website: [www.oregonrain.org](http://www.oregonrain.org)

Connect with our team: [oregonrain.org/about/team/](http://oregonrain.org/about/team/)

**If you're an ENTREPRENEUR, and would like to seek assistance from Oregon RAIN's network, please complete our easy online form:**

**[oregonrain.org/rain-for-entrepreneurs/](https://oregonrain.org/rain-for-entrepreneurs/)**



**If you're a COMMUNITY LEADER and would like help growing your region's entrepreneurial spirit and economy, please complete our online form:**

**[oregonrain.org/rain-for-communities/](https://oregonrain.org/rain-for-communities/)**





Accelerating Entrepreneurship in Oregon

[www.oregonrain.org](http://www.oregonrain.org)