

New course helps build budding businesses

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What do recycled radios, African spice blends and an Ethiopian chicken farm have in common? Each is the brainchild of a budding businessperson enrolled in the Entrepreneurial Training Program at the Northern Essex Community College.

Developed by the college's Division of Continuing Education, the program helps students prepare and implement a specific, comprehensive business plan tailored to each entrepreneur. It also provides skills and knowledge to successfully carry on the plan.

NECC is currently recruiting students for the January 2003 class. Information sessions will be held Nov. 18 at 10:30 a.m. and Dec. 2, at 10 a.m. on the Haverhill campus. This program is designed for anyone who is serious about starting a new business. All interested individuals must attend an information session prior to registration.

Each of the eight students enrolled in this fall's training program are retired or displaced workers who have opted to become their own boss rather than become an employee of a larger company. In many cases, they are turning their avocation into their new vocation.

For example, Jordan Melaku of North Andover, a displaced worker, hopes to launch a business specializing in imported African spice blends. She has used these spices in her own cooking for years. She says they should sell well in the vegetarian market. She hopes to market them both online and through a distributor.

Her husband, Makonnen, also a displaced worker, wants to open a mechanized chicken farm in Ethiopia. The theory is to develop high volume at low cost. He plans on visiting Ethiopia next year to buy four acres of land for a chicken farm. He expects that by year's end, the farm will be producing 130,000 chickens per month.