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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SORED I's Business Innovation Group, SOBIG, Reorganizes to Offer More Benefits

Medford, OR. - January 11, 2017

Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development Inc, (SORED I) is starting off the new year by reorganizing its peer-to-peer leadership group, SOBIG. Membership dues for Southern Oregon Business Innovators Group, (SOBIG), are now included with SORED I membership.

SOBIG was created to give Southern Oregon business leaders an opportunity to network, brainstorm and problem-solve with one another. Local leaders are invited to a no-host Leadership Breakfast every month, alternating between Elmer's in Grants Pass and Punky's Diner in Medford. Speakers often come to address topics of interest to the group and there's lots of time for roundtable problem-solving discussion. SOBIG Members traditionally paid \$200 per month to cover the costs of their meetings and other events.

Under the new SOBIG format, Leadership Breakfast talks will continue and any SORED I member is welcome to attend. In addition, new features are being added to the program. Once per quarter, SOBIG members will be invited to a Peer Learning Tour. Local companies can invite the SOBIG group to tour their manufacturing facility to learn and discuss their successful procedures and/or offer insight and problem-solving for challenges the business might be facing. Peer Learning Tours are free to attend. An added element in 2017 is SOBIG Quarterly Training. The first Quarterly Training Topic of 2017 will be an Introduction to LEAN Practices. Topics are chosen by consensus, based on the needs and requests of SOBIG members. Attending a Quarterly Training Topic will require an additional fee.

The SOBIG group is co-chaired by Norm Kester of Quantum Innovations and Scott Shumway of Cropper Medical Inc. The group is administered and facilitated by Kathy Trautman, Business Development Manager at SORED I. "SOBIG is really built on habit six from Stephen R. Covey's "Seven Habits" book. The group is all about synergy. When a group of leaders get together on a regular basis for breakfast and share their thoughts and solutions on local business issues, the ability to innovate and prosper really goes up," Shumway says. He continues, "Having a group of trusted business leaders as a sounding board is beyond valuable."

Companies interested in learning more about SOBIG activities, should e-mail [Kathy Trautman, Business Development Manager at kathy@soredi.org](mailto:kathy@soredi.org) or call 541-773-8946. To attend the next Leadership Breakfast on January 24, from 7:00 am - 9:00 am, register at no charge at www.soredi.org/events.

About SOREDI: SOREDI is a private, membership-based, non-profit organization, governed by a board of directors. Its seven-person staff is charged with local business expansion and new business recruitment efforts, financial assistance to start-up companies through its business loan fund, and management of Enterprise Zones in Jackson and Josephine Counties. The agency was formed as a regional economic development agency in 1987. Learn more at <http://www.soredi.org>.

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