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Mobile Moraga app making



## Moraga's small businesses utilize the talents of Saint Mary's College



Consulting teams hard at work offering small business solutions.

Photo Vera Kochan

## By Vera Kochan

Saint Mary's College ChangeMakers has partnered with The Moraga Chamber of Commerce to present the first, and hopefully annual, Small Business Catalyst Program.

The event, held April 17 at the SMC campus, utilized members of the Graduate School of Business to help local businesses with 15 or less employees solve various challenging issues that may arise within the course of daily operations.

SMC undergraduates, grad students, faculty and alumni were called upon to provide their input and expertise in a roundtable format with six individual business owners who had, prior to the event, provided the consulting team with pertinent background information and expectations. Through discussions and a diagnosis, a game plan was formulated to help the business owner address and overcome any success-hindering issues.

Areas of possible troubleshooting were: financial, accounting support and analytics for sound decision making; business development challenges; marketing with media and social media; computer and online support; conversion of online business or home-based businesses to brick and mortar; competitive market research; organizational and structural management and; international growth opportunities.

SMC Director of Marketing and Outreach for Graduate Business Programs Bill Flitter stated, "I was initially worried – it being our first time – but I'm very pleased with how things turned out." Flitter coorganized and acted as Master of Ceremonies.

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## By Vera Kochan

Back in February, Parks and Recreation Director Breyana Brandt first presented the idea of a new work order management system to the Moraga Town Council.

The free app's features would allow a user to click onto whatever issue needs attention by the Public Works Department or the Parks and Recreation Department. Problems such as traffic signal issues, potholes and more would be reported by the touch of a fingertip.

An additional feature lets the user go one step further to target the exact geolocation of the problem and either upload or download photos for a more detailed explanation of the issue.

The final weeks of testing the app and the work order system occurred in April involving the town staff and the Parks and Recreation Commission. "The app has been submitted to Apple and Google for approval," Brandt explained, "and we will go 'live' once the free app is available for download in the app stores.

"The Beta testing," acknowledged Brandt, "has prompted some improvements and resolved some initial glitches so we are prepared for a smooth launch. The work order system, known as 'report an issue,' has specifically been refined to include 10 categories in which residents can report concerns to the town." These categories are: potholes; storm drains and creeks; streets; trash; parks and trails; hazards; graffiti; facility and building issues; public works (general); and animal control (referred to the county).

The new app will provide additional information about the town and the Moraga community. Features such as town news, social media and live stream feeds will also be available to users.

Brandt stated that there will be a general town booth during the May 11 Moraga Community Faire at the Rheem Shopping Center, between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., where attendees can get additional information about the new Mobile Moraga, as well as free giveaway items.



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