



RANISE GILLESPIE MAXIE MEDIA GROUP

“With COVID that revenue just vanished overnight, as it did for a lot of businesses,” says Ranise Gillespie, co-principal at Maxie Media Group, reflecting on the impact of the global pandemic on her local small-business. “So we found ourselves in a position where we needed to be stable in order to continue our work.”

Gillespie is one of many North Carolina small-business owners who have recently received an emergency bridge loan through the NC COVID-19 Rapid Recovery Loan program. NC Rapid Recovery is a statewide consortium of partners—including the Golden LEAF Foundation, the NC Rural Center, and a host of nonprofit lenders—working across the state to support small-business owners struggling with the economic impact of COVID-19.

Maxie Media Group provides a constellation of services that includes professional development, consulting, and media and public speaking training.



Maxie Media Group partners Ranise Gillespie (left) and Leslie Maxie (right).

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PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS



“We are a comprehensive speaker provider,” says Gillespie. “We offer services that give speakers the ability to tackle the industry without having to recreate the wheel.” Maxie Media Group helps influencers share their message through training, consulting, and marketing services.

COVID may have changed the way people gather, but it did not change the need for stories and a personal connection. “The world needs speakers right now,” says Gillespie. “The world needs a good word.”

Maxie Media Group used their Rapid Recovery funds to rework their curriculum offerings along with a complete revamp of their training approach. “The technology is there and we’ve been using it all along, but our model has shifted from more of a one-on-one model to a one-to-many model,” says Gillespie.

What made COVID even more threatening to Maxie Media Group was the size and newness of their company. Established just two years ago and run as a group of independent contractors, Gillespie believed financial support would be impossible to find for their business.

“I never would’ve looked for it,” says Gillespie, knowing the risk associated with newer, small-businesses. “I didn’t know how to respond to COVID. We had the whole rest of the year planned out from a revenue prospective.”

When Gillespie heard about the Rapid Recovery Loan program in an email from the Women’s Business Center, she applied right away. “I’m so, so appreciative,” says Gillespie. “Due to this, we were able to move forward with our initiatives that we had planned.”

“I’m not going to say COVID was a good thing, but you know, sometimes it takes falling off to be able to get you focused and get you on a better path,” says Gillespie. “Things have slowly turned around and we have kept ourselves out there. And honestly, it is helpful to know there are people out there making it possible for our very small-business to continue what we’re doing. Because we won’t be small for long.”



Gillespie’s loan was administered by the Business Expansion Funding Corporation (BEFCOR), one of the nonprofit Rapid Recovery lenders. To learn more about the NC COVID-19 Rapid Recovery Loan, visit www.ncrapidrecovery.org.