



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, June 26, 2024

CONTACT: NW Illinois Economic Development

815-297-7361

dschmit@nwiled.org

“BUILD IT GROW IT” ENTREPRENEURIAL PROGRAM GRADUATES 23

HANOVER, ILLINOIS - Northwest Illinois Economic Development (NWILED) is proud to announce the 2024 graduates of the BUILD IT GROW IT program, an entrepreneurial bootcamp that targeted attendance from small business owners in both Jo Daviess and Carroll counties. The program’s goal was to offer seminars to help equip aspiring entrepreneurs with the essential knowledge and skills to kick start and grow their businesses successfully while also offering something new and substantive to established business owners. A total of 44 individuals registered for the program and 23 graduated with certificates of achievement.

The program offered participants the opportunity to attend five monthly sessions from February through June which covered workshops on gaining practical insights into business planning, marketing strategies, customer service, financial management, succession planning, and securing funding. The program encouraged active participation, networking and the development of practical real-world skills among the attendees.

“As always, the Build It Grow It course gave me insight into areas of my business I have been overlooking and it has reenergized my passion as an entrepreneur.” said Alana Turner, CEO/Janitor of Poopsie's and Main Street Inn in Galena. “This class is always worth the time and money.”



NWILED collaborated with Highland Community College, Gradient Coaching & Consulting, the Illinois Small Business Development Center at Sauk Valley Community College, Illinois Bank & Trust, and ITC Midwest to offer the opportunity to the NW Illinois community. As a result, participants were even given a choice of either two locations to attend the workshops: Riverport Railroad in Savanna or the DeSoto House Hotel in Galena.

“Build It Grow It was a part of NWILED’s program through 2019. Working with Highland Community College and others, we were able to successfully bring it back in 2024.” said David Schmit, Regional Director of NWILED. “We had such a great turnout and are already looking to improve the program for 2025.”

Graduates of Build It Grow It 2024 include:

Michelle Hubb, The Sewing Room & Workshop

Natalie Berning, Berning Acres

Marisa Linn, Editrix Row

Michelle Sullivan, 1826 Creative Co.

Angie Heidenreich, Galena Weddings & Events

Alana and Brady Turner, Main Street Inn and Poopsie's

Connie and Michael Kieffer, Country Crafts and Sports

Mackensie Wand, personal chef

Brittany Richard, Lit on Twentea

Ginger Zambrano, Linen & Stone Inn

Lydia Smith, Modern Social Creations

Jeff Beals, Vel Terra Campground

Maria Krull, Bridgewater Inn

Amy Laske, Amy May Photography

B’Ann Dittmar, Dry Creek Beekeeping



Jamie Whitmer, M&W Feed Service

Kristina and Monika Larkin, Hudson's Tack and More

Melissa Coverdill, Nature's Harmony

Rebecca Kruse, entrepreneur

Quinn Ruddell, On the Right Track Enterprise

ABOUT NWILED:

Northwest Illinois Economic Development was formed in 2008 by the Jo-Carroll Energy Board of Directors whose main goals were to spearhead economic development structures, funding and progress in Jo Daviess, Carroll, and Whiteside counties in Northwest Illinois. The Board's main focus was to form a regional development entity concentrating on growing the economy and public/private partnerships.

NWILED promotes economic development by fostering business growth and assisting expanding and relocating businesses in determining their needs for growth with cooperation of government and business partners. NWILED encourages entrepreneurs by assisting with access to resources to begin and grow their businesses and employ all available resources to create a welcoming business environment, aligning the skills of the available workforce with the needs of businesses, and building political and economic capital.