



# 2026 Small Business Entrepreneurial Boot Camp

**Four Sessions Plus Graduation and Grand Finale - ALL FOR \$50!**

**5:00 PM to 7:00 PM**

**January 14 through February 12**

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

This workshop is designed to provide aspiring entrepreneurs with some of the essential knowledge and tools needed to turn their business ideas into successful ventures. The boot camp also invites high school and college aged students to explore career goals through the program.

Participants will gain practical insights into business planning, marketing strategies, customer service, financial management, securing financing and numerous business best practices for their ventures.

The program encourages active participation, networking, and the development of practical skills that can be immediately applied to real-world entrepreneurial challenges.

Sessions will be held in Galena and Mount Carroll Locations:  
Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa  
The DeSoto House Hotel  
Timber Lake Playhouse  
Davis Community Center

**Cost: \$50 per person**

*Workshop is Free to all  
NWILED Members!*

(Memberships start at \$250)

## BIGI PROGRAM OUTLINE

### Session 1

Entrepreneurialism with Aaron Apt of Abt Enterprises and Succession Planning with Patrick Powaser of Gradient Coaching and Consulting.  
Wednesday, January 14 - Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa in the Galena Territory - Ballroom.

### Session 2

Financial Literacy for Small Businesses with Citizens State Bank, Schoenhaar Accounting and the Small Business Development Center.  
Thursday, January 22 - DeSoto House Hotel in Galena - Ballroom.

### Session 3

Small Business Marketing and Branding with WINPRO Pet/Whole Heart Creative, Visit Galena and Visit NW Illinois.  
Thursday, January 29 - Timber Lake Playhouse in rural Mount Carroll.

### Session 4

Artificial Intelligence for Small Business with the University of Illinois, SoundSafe.ai and Dry Creek Beekeeping.  
Thursday, February 5 - Davis Community Center in Mount Carroll.

## PROGRAM GRADUATION AND SHARK TANK GRAND FINALE!

Thursday, February 12  
Apple Canyon Lake Clubhouse  
in rural Apple River

Program participants who have attended each session will have the opportunity to "WIN" monetary prizes by pitching their ideas and business needs to a panel of select NWILED stakeholders, JCE Coop, and NWILED Executive Committee members.

## BIGI PROGRAM SPONSORS AND COLLABORATORS

NWILED Members:  
JCE Co-op  
Jo Daviess County, Illinois  
Adkins Energy  
Baranski Hammer Moretta & Sheehy  
Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa  
First Community Bank of Galena  
Louie's Trenching Services, Inc.

Abt Enterprises, Basket Case, Citizens State Bank, Dry Creek Beekeeping, Gradient Coaching & Counseling, University of Illinois, Schoenhaar Accounting, Small Business Development Center, SoundSafe.ai, Visit Galena, Visit NW Illinois.



## REGISTRATION IS LIMITED!

For more information or to RSVP, Contact: David Schmit  
NWILED Regional Director. 1 Commercial Drive, Suite 2  
Hanover, Illinois 61041. 815-297-7361 | [dschmit@nwiled.org](mailto:dschmit@nwiled.org)