

NewsLetter

Business and Economy

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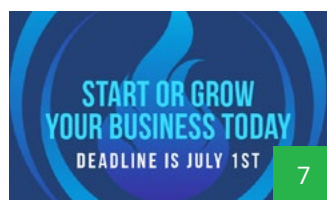
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IGNITE July 1st Deadline Approaching

Time is running out for aspiring entrepreneurs to apply for Barton County's biggest business competition of the year!



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Big Bend Bash, GBK's new festival set for June 7th!

The Big Bend Bash, will kickoff summer in a 'big' way on June 7th. Turn to page 10 to learn more!



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Bat Cats Night at Fridays on Forest set for May 30th

Bat Cats come back downtown before their season opener! Turn to page 11 to learn more about the event.



Behind every bite is a mission to create joy

Proper Boards & Picnics
Paxton Rein, Owner & Food Artist
at Proper Boards & Picnics
Great Bend, KS
620-617-7469
paxton@properboards.com

Follow on all Platforms

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

[TikTok](#)

Order Online:
properboards.com

A sweet \$30K win! Paxton beams with pride after placing 2nd at the 2024 IGNITE competition.

Properly Plated, Perfectly Planted

How a KU grad turned her creative passion into a thriving charcuterie business—and found unexpected joy in coming home

Tell us about yourself and your business.

I was born and raised in Great Bend, graduated from the University of Kansas (Rock Chalk!), and then lived in Kansas City for 6 years before moving back to GB in November of 2022. I've loved living in Great Bend as an adult much more



Above: Celebrating community and connection at the Great Bend Chamber Annual Banquet with fellow FUEL Barton County Steering Committee members, Zach Streit, Christy Conner, and Callie Miller. Right: Paxton poses with a grazing table at the same event for the Chamber, a few moments prior to the event.



than I expected. I live with my partner, Hunter, and our three dogs, Basil, Benji and Bentley, otherwise known as the 3Bs! Hunter and I both love to go on road trips and travel in general. Hunter moved to Great Bend from Salina in March of 2024 and is currently a student out at Barton in the Natural Gas program.

I have a full time job where I work from home as a Senior Implementation Specialist at a restaurant software company called Olo. It is very fulfilling because I love working with different restaurants and their corporate teams to launch software solutions that make their operations easier and their businesses more successful. I am a busy body at my core and I love having a social life and being part of a community so it was important that I find something to fill some of my free time. The two main components missing from my career are in-person social activities and hands-on work, both of which I easily fulfill with Proper Boards & Picnics! In my spare time outside of my work with Olo and with Proper I enjoy crafting, reading, and spending time with my family and friends.

Proper Boards & Picnics is a charcuterie board & grazing table business. Along with the boards and grazes I host workshops to teach people how to build their own charcuterie boards, how to pair food together, and how to pair food with wine, coffee, beer, or any other drink. I love bringing a variety of delicious and fresh food to the community and encouraging people to get creative with their taste buds! (Especially that mustard, am I right? If you know, you know!

The business model is closer to a catering business than anything else so I don't have specific hours, you can always reach out to me and I'll get back to you (please be patient, I am largely a one woman show so I can get a little backed up on work sometimes!)

How did you come up with the idea for Proper Boards & Picnics?

I had been building boards and grazes for friends and family at

Entrepreneurship Resources with Great Bend Economic Development

Entrepreneurs are the key to success in rural communities. If you have interest in creating a business, reach out to us today for help with business planning, financial analysis and access to start up loan funding. Great Bend Economic Development partners with many experts in the entrepreneurship field to bring you all the resources you need to get started successfully.





Top Left: Paxton presenting her passion project turned business, Proper Boards & Picnics, to the IGNITE Judges at the 2024 Finals on Oct. 10th at the Crest Theater.

Top Right: Making headlines — Paxton is featured in the Great Bend Tribune's Business section after taking home 2nd place and \$30,000 in prize money at IGNITE.
Bottom Right: A moment of pride — Paxton's headshot captured by Blue Thistle Film + Photo during the International Women's Day celebration hosted by Kelly's Garden Sense in March 2024.



the occasional function for a long time because it was something that was fun for me to put together. I love good food, I love color and creativity, and I needed an opportunity to be more involved with the community all of which made the pursuit of Proper Boards feel very natural and fun. It brings me a lot of happiness to create joy for other people so Proper is really designed around just that: creating joy.

Why did you choose Barton County for your business?

The overwhelming community support and pride others take in living and owning a business in Barton County. Family, friends, acquaintances, the Chamber(s), Economic Development, and even strangers are rooting for your success and that feels so amazing.

Why do you enjoy doing business in Barton County?

The people, the support, the genuine interest and appreciation people have for me and the business.

What inspired you to start

your business?

A wide variety of things like (but not limited to) wanting to create joy for others, needing to be involved in the community, and a hunger for expressing creativity with color and delicious food (pun intended).

What did your startup plan and timeline look like?

I soft launched in summer of 2023 and more officially launched in January of 2024. It was important to me that I tested the market to understand if the people of Great Bend would find value in a charcuterie board business and now that I'm a year or so into it, boy does that feel like a silly question to have even asked! For the first 8 months of being in business, I was driving to Bushton, KS (about 30 minutes northeast) to work out of an incubator kitchen in their community building. There was a lot of driving, packing, unpacking, sorting, and planning to make sure everything was at the right place at the right time especially given that the majority of my



business was being done in Great Bend. I am incredibly grateful to the Bushton community for that space because without it Proper would not have been able to get off the ground. Thankfully I was able to get in touch with the My Town team and began renting the Tellers kitchen in September of 2024! I have loved running Proper out of that kitchen in downtown Great Bend, especially with an iced vanilla latte so close. I have plans to continue expanding Proper with more food options and my own space eventually.

What advice would you give to businesses considering Barton County?

That the community support is overwhelming in the best way. Getting connected with GB Ec Dev and also the Chamber of Commerce will catapult your business into something you only dreamed of!

Do you have any advice for entrepreneurs starting out?

It's going to take every ounce of perseverance you have but it's incredibly rewarding. Also don't forget that self-care is important, make sure you still have time for the things that matter most in your life.

What obstacles have you faced and how did you overcome them?

Finding a place for Proper to live was the most difficult, ideally I wouldn't have had to drive to Bushton to make Proper a reality. That took a lot of perseverance and

motivation. Another obstacle I've faced is more internal as I can often succumb to thoughts that I'm not doing enough. I frequently have to remind myself that what I am doing is enough and that I don't need to take on more at every given turn, that it is okay to go through periods that are not focused on hypergrowth. I'm a people person and I'm so blessed to be able to serve in this community. Meeting and conversing with my customers is the highlight of my days!



Top Left: Snackable and stunning — Individual grab-and-go charcuterie cups perfect for showers, office lunches, and community events.

Top Right: Bone appétit! This spooky Halloween board features skull-shaped cream cheese — the delicious details will haunt you in the best way.

Bottom Left: Love at first bite — Heart-shaped charcuterie boxes available for your Valentine, Galentine, or treat-yourself moment.

Bottom Right: Pair it with a latte — These charming boxes are available in limited quantities at Perks Coffee Shop. (Be sure to check availability.)

Childcare

Bright Beginnings Offers Enrollment and Employment Opportunities

Bright Beginnings by ABCC continues to provide high-quality early childhood education in a fun, nurturing environment—and we're excited to share that spots are currently available for enrollment and we're hiring!

Our curriculum encourages curiosity, creativity, and social-emotional growth through hands-on learning and engaging activities. From themed lessons and art projects to outdoor play and group learning, every day at Bright Beginnings is designed to support young children as they build the foundation for lifelong success.

Thanks to our DCF subsidy certification, qualifying families can access financial assistance to make early education more affordable. We're proud to offer a caring, inclusive environment where every child receives the support they need to thrive.

Now Enrolling!

If you're looking for quality childcare and preschool education in Barton County, we invite you to join our Bright Beginnings family. Spaces are limited—don't wait to reserve your child's spot!

We're Hiring!

We are currently accepting applications for Lead Teachers and Assistant Teachers who are passionate about early childhood education. If you want to be part of a team that values creativity, compassion, and growth, we'd love to hear from you.

Whether you're a parent, a job



Children at Bright Beginnings by ABCC enjoyed an Easter egg hunt in April—just one of the many fun and seasonal activities that make learning come alive!

seeker, or a community supporter, we thank you for helping us build a brighter future for Barton County's youngest learners.

Contact us at 620-796-2392

Visit www.abccinc.org

Email admin@abccinc.org



Entrepreneurship

Barton County Youth Entrepreneurs Shine at State Competition

Two youth-led businesses from Barton County earned top honors at the Kansas Entrepreneurship Challenge (KEC), held at the K-State Student Union Ballroom in Manhattan in mid-April. This statewide competition gives ambitious students

the chance to pitch their business ideas, connect with entrepreneurial leaders, and compete for cash prizes.

Representing Barton County, The Kansas Voice and Ice on Wheels showcased their creativity

and professionalism on the tradeshow floor—impressing both the public and judges.

- **The Kansas Voice earned a finalist rating and took home \$1,700.**
- **Ice on Wheels was recognized with an**

exemplary rating and awarded \$2,500.

KEC continues to be a platform that empowers the next generation of business owners and innovators—and Barton County's youth are making their mark.



Left: Callie Umphres and Bennett Jacobs, the creative team behind Ice on Wheels, bring the chill and the charm to their tradeshow booth.



Right: Zoey Bogner, founder of The Kansas Voice, stands proudly beside her booth, ready to share her bold vision with the judges.

IGNITE Competition Deadline is July 1: Don't Miss Your Chance to Compete for \$95K

Time is running out for aspiring entrepreneurs to apply for Barton County's biggest business competition of the year! The IGNITE Rural Business Competition is in full swing, and the **application deadline is just around the corner – July 1.**

Whether you're launching a brand-new idea or expanding your existing venture, IGNITE offers more than just funding. Participants gain access to mentorship, visibility, and business development support—all with the goal of helping startups grow and thrive right here in Barton County.

This year, the competition is offering an incredible \$95,000 in prize money, with awards of \$50,000 for first place, \$30,000 for second, and \$10,000 for third, plus a \$5,000 People's Choice Award decided at the live finale event in October.

To enter, applicants must:

1. Submit a business plan
2. Record and submit a 5-minute video pitch
3. Sign and submit the competition rules and guidelines

If you're unsure how to write a business plan, don't let that hold you back. IGNITE organizers will connect applicants with professional business planning consultants through the Kansas SBDC or a local mentor—free of charge.

Now is the time to take action. If you—or someone you know—has a business idea that could take root and grow in Barton County, visit www.igniteks.com and apply today.

Let's fuel local innovation and help Barton County businesses shine.



**JULY 1ST
DEADLINE**

TO COMPETE FOR
\$50,000
IN BUSINESS FUNDING

IGNITEKS.COM

Workforce

Biggest Turnout Since COVID at the 2025 Grow Workforce Business & Career Expo

The 2024 Grow Workforce Business & Career Expo was one for the books! With 43 participating businesses and over 80 job seekers in attendance—the largest numbers we've seen since COVID—the event had a positive buzz of energy, opportunity, connection, and community.

For Job Seekers: Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive. Nearly all who responded reported that the Expo helped them discover local opportunities they hadn't known about before. Most described the event as "Very Helpful" or "Helpful," and many expressed a strong interest in seeing more events like this throughout the year. Attendees learned about resume assistance and training resources to more information on open positions for employers who were not in attendance.

For Employers: Our business and organizational partners were equally enthusiastic. Several reported making meaningful connections with potential hires and praised the event's organization and professionalism. The good news? Many businesses are already looking forward to future expos.

Shared Themes: Across the board, one thing was clear: our community is eager for deeper connection between employers and job seekers. Communication, marketing, and access to tools like resume support can make a big difference—and we're already brainstorming ways to build on this year's success.

What's Next: Given the strong interest in recurring events and targeted outreach, we're exploring ideas for future job fairs, resource-sharing events, and employer panels. Your feedback is helping us shape an even stronger model moving forward.

Thank you to everyone who participated and made this year's Expo such a resounding success. Whether you were looking to grow your team or take your next career step, we're honored to support your journey.



**Employers,
are you
hiring?**

Create a company profile at:
www.centrankasjobs.com

- Advertise available job openings
- Look through resumes
- Find your next employee

**central kansas
JOBS**

Workforce

CK Jobs, an Enhanced Platform for Employers

Central Kansas Jobs has undergone a significant website overhaul, emphasizing our commitment to connecting talent with career opportunities. Our upgraded platform is designed to empower employers and streamline the hiring process, featuring new enhancements for a better user experience.

Users can now create profiles and establish distinct company profiles, fostering seamless collaboration within organizations. A notable addition is the "Featured Company Highlight," allowing companies to showcase their profiles in a scheduled display for \$50 per month, providing heightened visibility to potential candidates.

While we introduce premium features, posting jobs and viewing resumes remain free for employers and job seekers, ensuring an inclusive and accessible platform. Explore the revamped website at www.centrankasjobs.com to leverage these new features and make Central Kansas Jobs your strategic partner in building successful teams.

Organization

Support Local Entrepreneurship and Save on Taxes with 75% Network Kansas Tax Credits

Great Bend Economic Development is excited to announce the return of Network Kansas 75% tax credits—a powerful opportunity for individuals and businesses to support local entrepreneurship while enjoying significant tax savings.

Here's how it works: When you purchase Network Kansas tax credits, you receive a 75% credit on your Kansas state income taxes. That means a \$1,000 contribution would reduce your state tax liability by \$750—leaving a net cost of just \$250.

But the impact goes even further. 30% of every dollar raised through these tax credits comes directly back to Great Bend Economic Development to fund programs that support entrepreneurs and small businesses in our community. Whether it's training, technical assistance, or early-stage funding, these dollars help build a stronger local economy.

These tax credits are limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis. If you're looking for a meaningful way to invest in the future of Great Bend while reducing your state tax bill, now is the time to act.

To learn more or reserve your tax credits, contact Sara Arnberger at director@gbedinc.com or 620-796-2407. Let's grow together—your support makes all the difference.

Entrepreneurship Tax Credits

Program Overview

The Kansas Economic Growth Act of 2004 established the Center for Entrepreneurship (d.b.a. Network Kansas) to build an entrepreneurial ecosystem connecting resource organizations and entrepreneurs. A key initiative was providing seed capital to small businesses in rural and distressed areas, supported by the Kansas Center for Entrepreneurship Tax Credit.

Additional program details:

- A tax credit is a dollar-for-dollar credit against income tax liability
- For every \$1,000 donated, donors will receive \$750 credit directly off of their income tax liability
- Donors may be eligible to receive a federal and state tax deduction and should consult with their individual tax specialist to determine the amount of any deductions. A K-31 Form is required with the individual tax form and is available online through the Kansas Department of Revenue
- Minimum and maximum allocations are based per tax ID number (EIN, SSN)
- Individuals, financial institutions (i.e., banks, savings & loans), and corporations can donate
- Lending institutions may apply CRA credits

Minimum allowable tax credit per year	Maximum allowable tax credit per year
\$250 Donation = \$187.50 Tax Credit	\$133,333.33 Donation = \$100,000 Tax Credit

Donate

Donations fund entrepreneurship programs and matching loans via Network Kansas' partners, including local/regional organizations, agencies, small business development centers, and others aiding entrepreneurs and small businesses in Kansas.

Contact the Network Kansas Business Development Department (below) for more information regarding criteria for participation and to verify that tax credits are available. Donors will be required to provide identification to receive credit for their donation. Deadline to submit payment is November 1st. Make checks payable to the Kansas Center for Entrepreneurship. Our mailing address is as follows:

Kansas Center for Entrepreneurship
c/o Network Kansas
P.O. Box 877
Andover, KS 67002-0877

75% tax credits

networkkansas.com | 877-521-8600 | taxcredits@networkkansas.com

Click the image to download the PDF.

Mark Your Calendars:

Big Bend Bash Debuts June 7, 2025!

Parade Entries & Vendor Applications Now Open

Get ready for an all-new downtown tradition! Big Bend Bash is coming to downtown Great Bend on Saturday, June 7, 2025, and you won't want to miss it. Hosted by Great Bend Alive and the City of Great Bend, this high-energy festival will celebrate community spirit, local culture, and the future of our downtown district.

Building on the legacy of June Jaunt, Big Bend Bash blends longtime favorites with new and exciting experiences. From a patriotic Red, White & Blue Parade to a bustling vendor fair, car show, Kid Zone, Art Alley, and the 10th Annual Bike Brew Q - Brew Fest, the event promises a full day of fun for all ages.

Want to be part of the action?

Join the Parade: We're calling on businesses, clubs, churches, schools, and creative community members to join the Red, White & Blue Parade! Floats, walkers, decorated vehicles—all are welcome. Submit your entry and help us kick off the day with color and excitement.

Be a Vendor: Commercial, food, and artisan vendors are invited to set up shop and take advantage of



large downtown crowds. Whether you sell crafts, snacks, or services—this is your chance to showcase your business.

Save the Date: Invite your friends and family, and make plans to attend! With activities stretching from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and live music, food trucks, inflatables, face painting, and more, there's

something for everyone.

This year's Bash will also serve as a fundraiser for a transformational downtown streetscape project, set to launch in 2026. Attendees can view renderings of the proposed improvements, provide feedback, and see how their support is helping create a more beautiful, walkable downtown—

especially after the 2023 storm damaged over 20 trees.

Highlights of the Day:

Red, White & Blue Parade
(starts at 10 am)

Kid Zone at Jack Kilby Square

BAM Art Alley

Expanded Vendor & Food Truck Fair

Shifters Car Show on Lakin Avenue

Brew Fest (11 am - 3 pm)
www.bikebrewq.com

Live music & entertainment all day

The event will take place within a common consumption area, allowing attendees to enjoy food and drinks throughout much of downtown in a relaxed, festival atmosphere. (No outside food or drink permitted.)

Ready to get involved?

Sign up for the parade or become a vendor at:

www.gbedinc.com/bigbendbash

Or email: director@gbedinc.com

Don't miss your chance to celebrate Great Bend, support downtown revitalization, and be part of a brand-new tradition. Big Bend Bash is more than just a party—it's a bold step toward our city's bright future.



Fridays on Forest Season Kicks Off with Strong Crowd and Chilly Fun — Bat Cats Night Up Next!

Our 2025 Fridays on Forest season officially kicked off in April, and despite the chilly temps, the downtown vibe was alive and well! Over 430 attendees bundled up in hoodies and hats to enjoy an evening of great food, drinks, and community fun. A ribbon cutting with the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce helped us launch the season in style, and a heartfelt thank-you goes out to our April sponsor, SOFTwarfare, for making it all possible.

Special thanks also go to our setup and tear-down partners: Barton Baseball Team for their hands-on help behind the scenes, and Great Bend Tribune for use of their facility.

And thank you to Fastenal for donating water to keep everyone hydrated throughout the night.

Now, get ready for Round Two on Friday, May 30, sponsored by Pryor Automatic Fire Sprinkler! We're calling it Bat Cats Night and it's shaping up to be a crowd-pleaser. Come downtown to meet members of the Great Bend Bat Cats baseball team, enjoy live music from Artifact, and indulge in an amazing food and drink lineup:

Food Vendors:

- * Lana's Catering and Goodies
- * The Spread Catering
- * Freaking Delicious Cheesecake
- * Los Dos Potrillos
- * Lumpy's

Drink Vendors:

- * Los Dos Potrillos
- * Charlie's Place
- * Lumpy's
- * Dry Lake Brewing
- * Avast Ye Java

Plus, we're working on a few surprises — including a possible return of the dunk tank! Stay tuned.

Fridays on Forest continues to grow, and we're always looking for helping hands. Want to get involved? Sign up to volunteer here: [Gatekeeper Link](#)

We'll see you on May 30 in downtown Great Bend!



Click the image above to watch the recap reel from April's Fridays on Forest on Facebook.

What is a Kansas Main Street?

Kansas Main Street Organizations are a self-help, technical assistance program that targets revitalization and preservation of downtown districts through the development of a comprehensive strategy.

Main Street America™ leads a movement committed to strengthening communities through preservation-based economic development in older and historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts.



For the latest updates follow Great Bend Alive on:

Facebook



Instagram



TikTok



GBEDinc.com/mainstreet



Explore Downtown During the Art & Wine Walk on May 2

Great Bend's rich history and vibrant arts scene are now at your fingertips—just in time for the Art & Wine Walk on May 2!

The Great Bend Alive Walking Tour App offers a fun, immersive way to explore downtown while connecting with the heart of our community. Whether you're a longtime local or a first-time visitor, this self-guided experience is the perfect companion for your evening stroll.

The app features two interactive tours plus the Wine Walk stops:

Historic Tour – Step back in time and learn about the iconic buildings, events, and people that shaped Great Bend.

Art & Mural Tour – Celebrate our creative community by discovering the stories behind downtown murals, sculptures, and public art.

Art & Wine Walk – Don't miss a stop on the Wine Walk with the help of this tour.

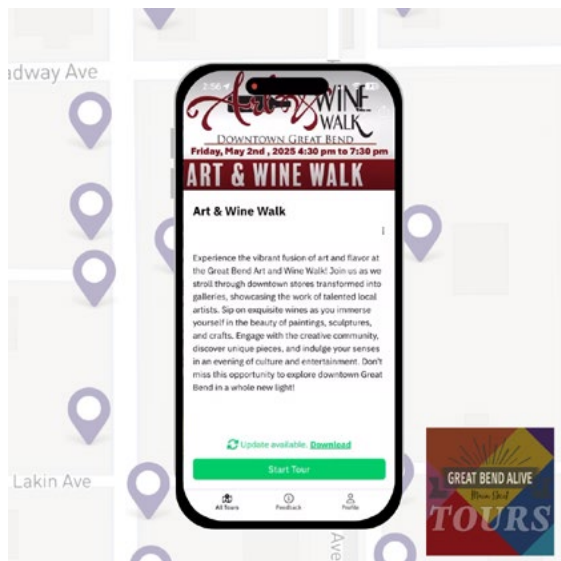
Each stop includes photos, audio narration, videos, and artist interviews—plus GPS integration to guide you from one highlight to the next at your own pace.

Get the App

The Great Bend Alive Walking Tour App is free and available now on the Google Play Store, Apple Store, and online. Download it before the Art & Wine Walk and enjoy an enriched, self-guided experience alongside all the downtown fun!

Start your tour: www.gbedinc.com/tours

This is just the beginning! More tours and features are in development to help you explore Great Bend in new and exciting ways.



MEET OUR PRESIDENT

director@gbedinc.com



Sara Arnberger is a native of Great Bend, Kansas and located back to the area to pursue the opportunities with economic development. Sara comes to Great Bend Economic Development with a bachelors degree from Friends University and close to 10 years of experience in management and customer service. Her experience combined with her passion for the area is sure to spur new growth.

COMMS DIRECTOR

marketing@gbedinc.com



Communications Director, Lee Ann June, is a longtime local with a love for community. She is excited to join forces with GBED to promote and grow Barton County. Bringing a comprehensive set of skills that are valuable to the organization, she is delighted to contribute her talents to GBED's efforts. Mother of two, former business owner/instructor, and creative; she brings a unique perspective to this position. Motivated by the momentum, Lee Ann is invested in seeing the Great Bend area thrive.

MARKETING & EVENTS INTERN

intern.team@gbedinc.com



Hi! I'm Charley Sander, the newest addition to the team at Great Bend Economic Development. Born and raised in Great Bend, I am continuing my academic career at Barton Community College with a focus on marketing. I hope to further my skills in marketing while I learn alongside my new team! I'm excited to be a part of something so big and have the opportunity to give back to my hometown.

Entrepreneurship

Spring 2025 CO.STARTERS Core Cohort in Full Swing

The Spring 2025 cohort of the CO.STARTERS Core program is well underway, bringing together a diverse group of aspiring entrepreneurs who are committed to turning their ideas into thriving businesses. Over the course of 10 weeks, participants are guided through every essential step of building a sustainable venture—from understanding their own entrepreneurial motivations to planning for growth.

Facilitated by the experienced duo of Regan Reif and Jeremy Elliott, each session is packed with hands-on learning and valuable insights. Local entrepreneur guest speakers join weekly to share real-world stories, offering inspiration and practical advice that

resonates deeply with participants.

The program covers everything from knowing yourself and your customer, to building financial models and planning for long-term growth. Each session builds on the last, helping these “starters” grow in confidence and clarity.

The program will culminate in a private Celebration Night in mid-May, where participants will share their progress and celebrate with their invited guests and members of the CO.STARTERS community—including GBED board and committee members. It’s an exciting moment that honors the hard work and bold vision of Barton County’s emerging business leaders.



Top: Participants listen intently as local entrepreneur and attorney, Rob Bauer, shares the importance of legal and accounting services in their startup journey.

Above: Guest speakers and small business owners, Keith & Jennifer Kennon (JK Catering & BBQ), field questions from the group, offering insights on overcoming early challenges in business.

Development

Attention Manufacturers!

Did you know there are funds available to assist in your expansion projects? Get in touch with us today to find out how to take advantage of the State’s incentive programs for manufacturing. Whether you’re expanding machinery, building space, capital improvements in general, hiring new employees or

re-training existing ones, there are programs that are in place to help you and we’re here to help make it happen!

Check out the list of all Kansas Business Incentives here and get in contact with us at director@gbedinc.com if you feel like you might qualify.



Did You Know?




Marketable Statistics

How about some spending pattern facts?!

Our area spends \$45 Million on Cereal and cereal products every year!

That's almost \$5,000 per household!

<div>  retail strategies </div> <div> Walmart Sitewise Online STI: Spending Patterns Food: Cereals, Bakery, Meat and Dairy (Annual) </div>												
STI: Spending Patterns Food: Cereals, Bakery, Meat and Dairy (Annual)	Walmart 0-5 min				Walmart 0-10 min				Walmart 0-20 min			
	Aggregate Expenditure Estimate	%	Average per Household	Market Index to USA	Aggregate Expenditure Estimate	%	Average per Household	Market Index to USA	Aggregate Expenditure Estimate	%	Average per Household	Market Index to USA
Food	\$ 30,957,180		\$ 7,462.72	80	\$ 53,362,747		\$ 7,760.85	83	\$ 78,634,971		\$ 7,754.85	83
Food at home	\$ 18,113,268		\$ 4,366.49	79	\$ 31,274,805		\$ 4,548.47	83	\$ 45,992,147		\$ 4,535.67	82
Cereals and bakery products	\$ 2,311,205	13%	\$ 557.15	80	\$ 3,990,789	13%	\$ 580.40	83	\$ 5,866,208	13%	\$ 578.52	83
Cereals and cereal products	\$ 712,198	4%	\$ 171.69	79	\$ 1,229,190	4%	\$ 178.77	82	\$ 1,808,597	4%	\$ 178.36	82
Flour	\$ 42,299	0%	\$ 10.20	78	\$ 72,996	0%	\$ 10.62	81	\$ 107,637	0%	\$ 10.61	81
Prepared flour mixes	\$ 53,891	0%	\$ 12.99	78	\$ 93,069	0%	\$ 13.54	81	\$ 137,033	0%	\$ 13.51	81
Ready-to-eat and cooked cereals	\$ 333,241	2%	\$ 80.33	80	\$ 576,385	2%	\$ 83.82	83	\$ 847,994	2%	\$ 83.83	83
Rice	\$ 123,636	1%	\$ 29.80	81	\$ 212,443	1%	\$ 30.90	84	\$ 311,686	1%	\$ 30.74	83

Upcoming Events and Business Education

5
MAY

Unlock AI for your Business: A Day of Innovation (El Dorado)

Monday, May 5th
10-2pm
383 E. Central Ave El Dorado, KS
www.sba.gov/event/66553

9
MAY

Unlock AI for your Business: A day of Innovation (Wichita)

Friday, May 9th
10-2pm
5015 E. 29th St N Wichita KS
www.sba.gov/event/66552

7
MAY

Managing in time of information overload

Wednesday, May 7th
9-4pm
\$279.000
405 N Jefferson Ave Springfield MO
www.sba.gov/event/64434

13
MAY

Hiring your First Employee- Kansas SBDC at WSU

Tuesday, May 13th
12-1pm
www.sba.gov/event/66470

7
MAY

Kansas Exporter Roundtable- Emporia

Wednesday, May 7th
11:30-1pm
719 Commercial St. Emporia KS
www.sba.gov/event/56523

22
MAY

State Sales Tax for Construction Contractors- Kansas SBDS at WSU

Thursday, May 22nd
1-3pm
www.sba.gov/event/66471

8
MAY

Creating and Conducting Structured Interviews for improved hearing

Thursday, May 8th
9-4 pm \$279.00
405 N Jefferson Ave Springfield MO
www.sba.gov/event/63196

30
MAY

Fridays on Forest - BAT CATS NIGHT Sponsored by Pryor Automatic Fire Sprinklers

Friday, May 30
5 pm - 10 pm
Forest Ave between Main and Williams St.
www.gbenedinc.com/downtownevents

Please note that online registration will close at noon the day before each event, learn more online: www.gbenedinc.com

Education

SBDC & SBA Classes

Applying Yourself to Supply your Business Wealth
Wednesday, May 7th
10-11 am
www.sba.gov/event/69580

Why We Click: Psychology Secrets for Social Media Growth
Thursday, May 8th
1-2pm \$10.00
www.sba.gov/event/67572

Becoming a Better Borrower
Friday, May 9th
9:30-11am
405 N Jefferson Ave Springfield
www.sba.gov/event/70236

High Performance Supervision
Tuesday, May 13th
9-4pm \$279.00
405 N Jefferson Ave Springfield
www.sba.gov/event/63195

Small Business Success: Mastering the Essentials
Tuesday, May 13th
6-8pm
www.sba.gov/event/70237

Coaching and Mentoring to Accelerate Potential
Thursday, May 15th
9-4pm \$279.00
405 N Jefferson Ave Springfield
www.sba.gov/event/64440

LinkedIn Part 2: Elevate your Events and Content Strategy
Saturday, May 17th
9-12pm
www.sba.gov/event/66317

Conducting Effective Internal Investigations
Tuesday, May 20th
9-4pm \$279.00
405 N Jefferson Ave Springfield
www.sba.gov/event/64439

Proof to Profit
Tuesday, May 20th
3-6pm \$199.00
www.sba.gov/event/65454

StartSmart: Your Business Foundations
Tuesday, May 20th
3-6pm
\$649.00
4747 Troost Ave Kansas City MO
www.sba.gov/event/65468

QuickBooks Online for your Business
Wednesday, May 21st
8:30-12:20 pm \$149.00
405 N Jefferson Ave. Springfield
www.sba.gov/event/69422

How to Stand Out in a Competitive Market with a Capability Statement
Wednesday, May 21st
9-11am
www.sba.gov/event/65642

Navigating the Legal Maze of AI: Business Perils of Evolving Technology
Thursday, May 22nd
12-1:30 pm \$15.00
405 N Jefferson Ave Springfield
www.sba.gov/event/69423

State Sales Tax for Retailers
Thursday, May 22nd
9-12pm
www.sba.gov/event/66472

Startup and Start Right
Tuesday, May 27th
12-1pm
www.sba.gov/event/66473

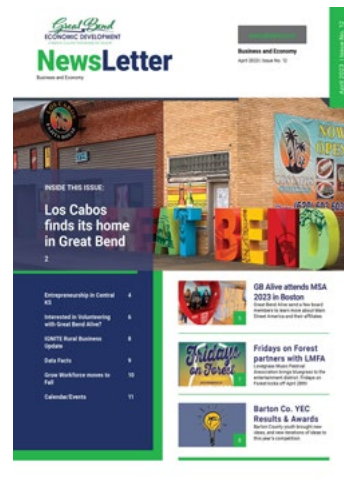
Manage your Own Social Media
Thursday, May 29th
1-2pm
www.sba.gov/event/66474



“Economic development is not a science, but an art, and a combination of forces and factors that must come together in the right way at the right time.” - James E. West

2023-2024 Annual Report

In the next issue



- Featured Business
- BIG BEND BASH
- Update on Childcare Center in Barton County
- GB Alive, Fridays on Forest, and More!



Watch our 2024 Year in Review

Let's keep in touch

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