

NewsLetter Business and Economy

Business and Economy

February 2024 | Issue No. 22

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Bright Future in Childcare in BC

Snow-much Fun

Anticipation Builds as Completion Nears, Promising Quality Education and Supportive Staff Culture for Young Minds



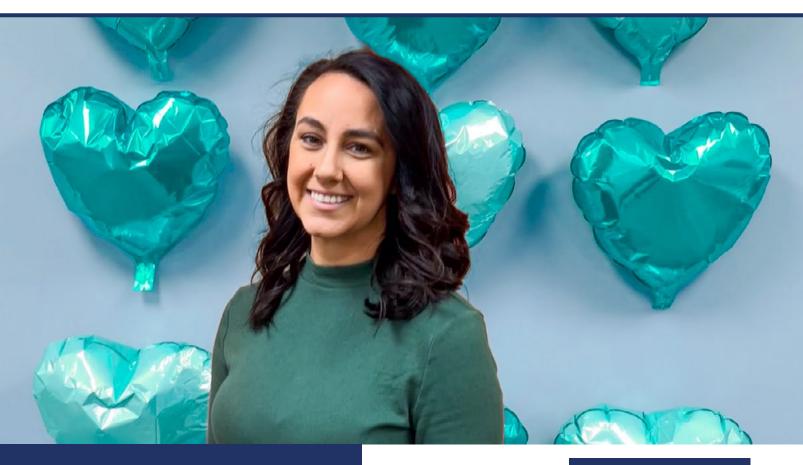
Downtown Great Bend Alive partnered with the City of Great Bend to create a winter wonderland of community engagement



CO.STARTERS Meet and Greet with Community, Feb. 8

GBED hosts CO.STARTERS to IGNITE Entrepreneurship in Rural Kansas

Annual Report



Ruhe Rituals is loving the new retail space and therapy rooms in the Main Street location.

Ruhe Rituals Danielle Hunter, Owner & Massage Therapist 1519 Main Street Great Bend, KS 67530 620-282-4224 ruherituals.glossgenius.com

Find them on:

<u>Facebook</u>

Hours: Sunday - closed Monday - closed Tuesday - 4pm - 7pm Wednesday - 9am - 7pm Thursday - 9am - 8pm Friday - 9am - 8pm Saturday - 9am - 3pm **Book An Appointment**

Ruhe Rituals

Tranquility on Main Street – An Interview with Danielle Hunter, Massage Therapist and Business Owner of a new Main Street Business

Tell us about you and the business:

I'm Danielle Hunter, I have been massage therapist over 7 years with experience in all fields. I graduated with an Associates Degree in Massage Therapy from Heritage in Wichita, KS. Originally from Ness City, Kansas, I now call Great Bend my home, where I live happily with my loving husband and two beautiful children.

The business has been a dream of mine for many years now. With being a spa we were able to adapt to the building we have found.



Tox Party Reserve by Feb. 10 Click Here to Reserve

Permanent Jewelry and more!



Why did Ruhe Rituals choose to locate in Barton County?

We have lived here for 4 years and we have no plans on leaving therefore this is the area we are opening our business in.

Why do you like to do business in Barton County?

This is the first for me to have a business in Barton County but I am excited to see what kind of support we receive from the community.

What inspired you to start your business?

It's been a work-in-progress for some time now but with all of the interest after presenting at the IGNITE competition I knew it was something we could not do it.

What did your startup plan and timeline look like?

It was all based on finding a property that best fit our needs. Once we found



Retail products are locally sourced available at 1519 Main Street in the Retail Shopping area of Ruhe Rituals. Merchandise includes candles, bath and body products, decor, and more! Click the hearts to jump to the Galentines Event on Facebook.

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.





that it was going to have to be a quick turn around as we are offering services and if you can't offer services then you have no income.

Do you have any advice for entrepreneurs starting out?

It's tough. Don't expect it to be easy or for anything to go perfect. Always keep an open mind and back up plans for everything.

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

Our largest obstacle has been financing. It's not cheap to start a business in today's world. We are starting small and will slowly keep updating and adding new services as we grow as a 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 <u>director@gbedinc.</u> <u>com</u> if you feel like you might qualify.

Focus Areas

Follow along on our journey

We are elated with the momentum gained and plan to continue to capitalize on the current progress and continue pushing forward on many ground breaking projects.

If you are interested in *investing* in GBED projects, we would be happy to keep you updated on any specific categories of interest. The upcoming project categories that we will be seeking funding for are as follows:

- * Housing
- * Childcare
- * Entrepreneurship
- * Apprenticeships

Anything you want to see in these newsletters that was not included? Please reach out to <u>marketing@gbedinc.com</u> with your feedback.





Childcare Bright Beginnings Childcare Center: A Beacon of Innovation and Excellence in Barton County

Anticipation Builds as ABCC's State-of-the-Art Facility Nears Completion, Promising Quality Education and Supportive Staff Culture for Young Minds

ABCC's highly awaited childcare facility, Bright Beginnings, is nearing completion, with its spring 2024 opening generating excitement among families in Barton County. The center aims to revolutionize childcare in the area by introducing innovative programs and activities.

A key highlight is the Watch Me Grow system, enabling real-time monitoring of children through a dedicated app. Bright Beginnings has chosen the High Scope curriculum, tailored for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, ensuring a high-quality educational experience.

Beyond its educational offerings, the center stands out by prioritizing its staff with above-average pay, benefits, and continuous education for all team members. The commitment to excellence extends to the hiring process, with plans to onboard 11 staff members for lead teacher, assistant teacher, and part-time positions. A dedicated apprenticeship program for part-time staff emphasizes growth and mentorship, with job details available on the ABCC website.

As Barton County eagerly awaits Bright Beginnings' opening, the center represents a symbol of warmth and growth for the community's youngest members. With a focus on innovation, quality education, and a supportive staff culture, Bright Beginnings is poised to be a cherished resource for families seeking a nurturing environment for their children.

CHILD CARE TAX CREDITS

In today's dynamic corporate landscape, good business leaders recognize the pivotal role of well-being of their employees. One effective strategy to support this balance is by providing child care assistance, which not only boosts employee morale but can lead to substantial tax benefits.

FEDERAL CREDIT

Businesses that provide child care facilities or services directly to their employees are eligible for this credit. An employer must only meet one of the following requirements to claim the full 25% credit:

- 1. Build, acquire, and then operate an in-house childcare center.
- 2. Contract with a licensed childcare program (including home-based providers).

A business also has the opportunity to claim a lesser credit of 10% if they don't meet the above requirements but meet the following:

1. Contract with a third-party referral service to find childcare for their employees. For both the 25% and 10% credit, the yearly limit is \$150,000, meaning a business will not be able to claim more than this amount, even if the credit they receive from their qualifying expenses is greater than this amount.

KANSAS CREDIT

The state of Kansas has several criteria a business can meet to be eligible for the credit.

- A business must be an income tax or privilege taxpayer and either. 1. Pay for child day care services for its employees, OR
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 Locate child day care services for its employees, OR
- 3. Provide facilities and necessary equipment for child day care services to its employees, OR
- 4. Provide access to available child day care services for its employees.

In addition to the above requirements, the child care facility must be registered or licensed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. The child care facility must also be primarily used by dependent children of the business's employees.



Click the snowball drop graphic below to see GB Alive's TikTok wrap up. 75+ joined us for catching deals and entertainment in the Crest Theater on Jan. 20th!

Great Bend Alive

Snow-much Fun at the Snowball Drop

Great Bend Alive partnered with the City of Great Bend to create a winter wonderland of community engagement

Great Bend Alive, in collaboration with the City of Great Bend, welcomed the community to kick off 2024 with a spectacular event on January 20th. Cozying up to unbeatable deals inside participating stores, the day unfolded with a Snowball Drop of discounts, deals, and prizes.

The iconic Crest Theater set the stage for the Snowball Drop. This unique experience was made even more memorable with captivating performances by downtown dance studios; Be Dance Studio and Euphoria Dance Centre, entertaining the crowd before the snowballs descended.

The event surpassed expectations with over 75 attendees actively participating in the Snowball Drop, redeeming a total of 300 deals or prizes. Thank you to the GBHS JAG student and dedicated GB Alive committee members, who

volunteered to ensure the event ran smoothly and contributed significantly to its success.

The

community came together fostering a spirit of togetherness and actively supporting local businesses. Great Bend Alive extends heartfelt gratitude to the Great Bend Alive Events Committee and the City of Great Bend for their unwavering support and all the shoppers for making this event a fantastic way to Beat the Winter Blues.



As we wrap up this event be sure to stay tuned for more exciting initiatives from Great Bend Alive. Join us in celebrating community, supporting downtown businesses, and making memories that will last a lifetime. Together, we make Great Bend Alive!



Great Bend Alive Great Bend Alive Parade through Time

Great Bend Alive is thrilled to extend an invitation to the community to actively participate in the "Great Bend Alive Parade Through Time", a captivating celebration honoring the history of Great Bend, Kansas. This parade, serving as the official kick-off to the City of Great Bend's June Jaunt festival, is not only an opportunity to witness history but also a chance for the community to become an integral part of it.

Showcase Your Story in the Parade: We are calling on businesses, individuals, clubs, and organizations to join us in creating a vibrant and memorable procession. Whether you have a historical connection, a unique performance, or a creative costume, we want you to share your story and be a part of this historic event. This is your chance to showcase what makes Great Bend truly special.

Participate and Celebrate: The "Great Bend Alive Parade Through Time" is not just a spectacle; it's a celebration that thrives on community involvement. We encourage participants to lean into history, performance, costumes, and reenacting to bring the city's rich past to life. By joining the parade, you become an active contributor to the collective narrative of Great Bend. Want to participate but need help brainstorming? Email GBED at **info@ gbedinc.com** and we will help you figure out how you/your organization can join the fun.

Event Details:

- Date: May 31, 2024
- Time: 5:30 PM
- Location: Parade begins at Brit Spaugh Park, travels down Main Street to 12th Street
- Followed by: Fridays on Forest A public invitation to continue the celebration

Highlights of the Parade:

- Vibrant Present: Showcasing Great Bend's dynamic and thriving present.
- Reverse-Chronological Time Wrap: A visual feast of the community's evolution through floats, performances, and nods to

key moments.

• Community Involvement: Join us in commemorating the city's journey, fostering community unity, and celebrating the resilient spirit of Great Bend.

June Jaunt Festivities Kick-Off:

Local car clubs will host a car show on Friday following the parade, with a movie playing in Jack Kilby Square at sundown. For a full list of the jam-packed Saturday and Sunday events, follow @ExploreGreatBend on Facebook or visit online at www.exploregreatbend.com/ annualevents.

How to Participate: To be a part of this historic celebration, submit your entry for the parade by May 1, 2024 for approval. For entry form and entry guidelines go online to <u>www.gbedinc.</u> <u>com/mainstreet</u> and click the button "Parade Form" or go to this link directly: <u>https://forms.monday.com/</u>

> Parade Entry Form

Great Bend Alive

Main Street, What does that mean?

Great Bend Alive is Great Bend Economic Development's downtown arm. Great Bend Alive is also a Kansas Main Street and Main Street America.



MAIN STREET

AMERICA

#WEAREMAIN STREET

Promotion/Events. Great Bend Alive is known for Fridays on Forest, while this has been our biggest success to date, we have committees in place to give equal focus to our other areas as well.

Be sure to follow Great Bend Alive on social media (click the links below) for upcoming events, opportunities to volunteer, sponsor events, or get involved in new ways!

What is a Kansas Main Street?

Kansas Main Street Organizations are a selfhelp, 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 preservationbased economic development in older and historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts.

For the latest updates follow Great Bend Alive on:



Instagram





GBEDinc.com/mainstreet



MEET OUR PRESIDENT



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



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 sharpened her skills in marketing, planning, and communication at the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce, and now 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 GBED's momentum, Lee Ann is invested in seeing the Great Bend area thrive.



Entrepreneurship

GBED Launches Inaugural 'Mindset' Series with 13 Enthusiastic Participants

Great Bend Economic Development (GBED) is excited to announce that the inaugural session of the "Entrepreneurial Mindset" series has successfully enrolled 13 participants.

The class structure involves engaging activities such as reading "Who Owns the Ice House," watching video interviews featuring the author and accomplished entrepreneurs like Brian Scudamore (founder/owner of 1-800-GOT-JUNK), and reflecting on the lessons imparted in the book. Additionally, participants have the privilege of hearing firsthand experiences from local entrepreneurs.

The class has already benefited from insights shared by prominent figures, including Terry Stueder (Stueder Constractors), Rachel Mawhirter (Marketing Maven), Shelly Peacock (formerly of TCI Answering Service), and Scott Reddig (Scott's Welding and many others). This diverse array of speakers adds depth to the learning experience, offering real-world perspectives on the challenges and triumphs of entrepreneurship.

GBED's commitment to fostering a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation is evident in its mission to equip individuals with the tools and mindset essential for success in both business and daily life. Led by co-facilitators Jim Correll and Shelly Peacock, the weekly classes continue to have dynamic discussions, exploration of video content, and an insightful journey through the pages of "Who Owns the Ice House?"

GBED remains dedicated to empowering individuals with the knowledge and mindset necessary for success in the dynamic world of business.

Next month's newsletter with have a complete recap on the classes and more information on the upcoming <u>CO.STARTERS</u> programs.

Dream big, but be patient on the journey - Terry Stueder, Stueder Contractors



Terry Stueder and daughter Taryn (Stueder Contractors) spoke with the class about the growth of their business over the last 40 years, challenges, and staying power.



CO.STARTERS to IGNITE Entrepreneurship in Rural Kansas

Community

Details:

Meet & Greet

Date: February 8th

Location: Dry Lake

Brewing, 1405 Main

Street, Great Bend

• Time: 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Great Bend Economic Development (GBED) is excited to announce a Community Meet and Greet event featuring CO.STARTERS, a renowned company dedicated to fostering entrepreneurship. The

event is scheduled for February 8th at Dry Lake Brewing, located at 1405 Main Street. **CO.STARTERS** representatives will be in town for facilitator training.

CO.STARTERS is at the forefront

of building vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystems, empowering communities, and equipping starters of all kinds. Originating from grassroots efforts in Chattanooga, Tennessee, CO.STARTERS has evolved into a global entity, impacting thousands through its programs annually.

This event serves as a platform for anyone curious about the upcoming programs through CO.STARTERS. Entrepreneurs, starters, and the community at large can learn more about the resources available to accelerate culture and empower

communities. GBED recognizes the importance of entrepreneurship in rural Kansas and is committed to cultivating a thriving environment through initiatives like CO.STARTERS, the IGNITE Rural Business

> competition, as well as business development services.

CO.STARTERS Impact on Entrepreneurial Ecosystems:

CO.STARTERS plays a pivotal role in community development by

connecting leaders, problem solvers, and starters to collaboratively solve challenges and identify solutions. This collaboration exponentially increases their effectiveness in fostering entrepreneurship. Additionally, **CO.STARTERS** connects communities with proven models and tools, curating the best resources from innovative leaders nationwide to address the specific needs of each community.

In their commitment to filling gaps in entrepreneurial ecosystems, CO.STARTERS develops its own

programs and tools. A foundational offering is their cohort-based program, empowering entrepreneurs with insights, relationships, and tools needed to turn ideas into action.

The event will feature opportunities for networking, discussions on entrepreneurial growth, and a chance to learn more about CO.STARTERS and its impact globally.

GBED's Commitment to Entrepreneurship:

Great Bend Economic Development remains steadfast in its commitment to entrepreneurship. Through initiatives like the IGNITE Rural Business Competition and business development services, GBED aims to provide a supportive environment for local businesses to thrive. The IGNITE competition has been a beacon for aspiring entrepreneurs, offering a platform to turn innovative ideas into successful ventures with the incentive of prize money, exposure for their business, and mentorship. GBED remains dedicated to empowering individuals to realize their business goals and contribute to the growth and vibrancy of Barton County. The deadline to compete in the IGNITE Competition is June 13, 2024. It is important to note that IGNITE contestants receive extra credit for the 1st round of competition for participating in CO.STARTERS classes offered by GBED.

Join Us in Building a Thriving Entrepreneurial Community:

Great Bend Economic Development invites the community to join the Community Meet and Greet with CO.STARTERS on February 8th at Dry Lake Brewing between 5 pm and 7 pm. This is an opportunity to connect, collaborate, and contribute to the growth of entrepreneurship in rural Kansas.

For more information on CO.STARTERS, IGNITE, or other business development services, please contact GBED Staff at 620-796-2407 or via email at info@ gbedinc.com.



Entrepreneurship

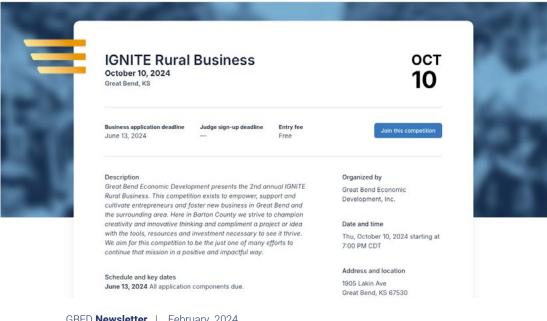
IGNITE Rural Business Competition: Sparking Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Barton County

Great Bend Economic Development launches year two of the IGNITE Rural Business competition, inviting entrepreneurs to establish businesses in Barton County. This initiative provides tools, resources, classes, and investment to support innovative ventures, fostering creativity and impactful entrepreneurship.

Participants can gain exposure, mentorship, and a chance to win cash prizes. Partnering with NetworkKansas and the Small **Business Development Center,** the IGNITE committee uses Venture Dash for submissions and progress tracking. The competition unfolds in rounds, with the IGNITE Finale event on October 10, 2024, showcasing top contestants.

Startups (less than 5 years old, 10 or fewer employees) are eligible, and applicants must be 18 years or older. The deadline is June 15, 2024, with rules and applications on www. igniteks.com.

Join for a chance to showcase innovation and creativity. The IGNITE Committee seeks business mentors and sponsors; contact GBED staff at 620-796-2407 or marketing@gbedinc. com.





Entrepreneurship

Time is Running Out: Join the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge in Barton County

Time is running out to join the 4th Annual Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge (YEC) for **Barton County students in grades 7-12**, scheduled for March 6th, 2024. This exciting opportunity allows students to showcase entrepreneurial skills and vie for cash prizes. The students participating, and organizers urge more students to join!

Lee Ann June, Communications Director at Great Bend Economic Development, emphasizes the impact of education and entrepreneurship on the community's future. Teacher Champions will collaborate with students, engage with local businesses, and contribute to regional entrepreneurial growth.

The deadline is approaching, so visit **www.gbedinc.com/yec** or contact Lee Ann June directly to learn more and become part

of inspiring the next generation of entrepreneurs in Barton County!

At the culmination of the challenge, participants will have the opportunity to present their innovative ideas at a tradeshow, competing for a total prize pool of \$2500. The breakdown includes **\$1000 for first place**, with the added bonus of advancing to the Statewide competition, **\$750 for second place**, **\$500 for third place**, and a People's Choice **award of \$250**, voted on by tradeshow attendees.





Workforce

Central Kansas Jobs, an Enhanced Platform for Employers

Central Kansas Jobs has a commitment to bridging the gap between talented individuals and exceptional career opportunities has taken a giant leap forward with the complete reconstruction of our <u>website</u>. Geared towards empowering employers and streamlining the hiring process, our upgraded platform offers a range of new features and improvements.

Our developers have spent the past several months enhancing the user experience, ensuring efficiency and satisfaction for both employers and job seekers. The centerpiece of this upgrade is the ability for users to create a profile and establish a distinct company profile. This innovative approach allows multiple users to connect to a single company, facilitating seamless collaboration within organizations.

One of the added features introduced in our rebuild is the "Featured Company Highlight." For \$50 per month, companies can secure a spot in the spotlight, with their profiles rotating in a scheduled display. This premium feature provides heightened visibility to potential candidates, showcasing your company as a prime destination for top talent.

While we are gradually introducing paid features to enhance user experience, it's important to note that posting jobs and viewing resumes remains entirely free for employers. The same holds true for job seekers, ensuring an inclusive and accessible platform for everyone.

Visit <u>www.centralkansasjobs.com</u> to explore the revamped website and take advantage of the new features designed to elevate your recruitment process. Central Kansas Jobs is not just a job board; it's your strategic partner in building successful, dynamic teams.



Upcoming Events and Business Education

7 FEB	Starting a Small Business: The First StepsWednesday, Feb. 71:30 - 2:45 PM730 S Wall Ave., Joplin, MO and ONLINEhttps://www.sba.gov/event/40407	QuickBooks [®] Online (The Basics) Wednesday, Feb. 14 9:00 AM - NOON Cost: \$129 405 N Jefferson Ave., Springfield, MO https://www.sba.gov/event/41375
8 FEB	CO.STARTERS Community Meet & Greet Thursday, Feb. 8 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM Dry Lake Brewing, 1405 Main Street https://www.sba.gov/event/40407	Introduction to QuickBooks Online (In-Person Training) Tuesday, Feb. 20 6:00 PM Cost: \$49 3201 W. 16th Street Fielding Room 231 - Sedalia, MO 65301 https://www.sba.gov/event/35614
13 FEB	Essentials of Effective Supervision - 12-Week ProgramTuesday, Feb. 13 - May 7216:00 PM - 9:00 PM Cost: \$1299.00405 N Jefferson Ave., Springfield, MO405 N Jefferson Ave., Springfield, MOFEBhttps://www.sba.gov/event/39674FEB	Credit as an Asset Wednesday, Feb. 21 10:00 AM Cost: FREE 3950 Newman Road, Joplin, MO 64801 https://www.sba.gov/event/41374

<u>Calendar on the www.gbedinc.com</u> <u>Home Page has class descriptions & links.</u>

Education SBDC & SBA Classes

Click on the Class Name for the Link

Legal Basics for Small Business Thursday, Feb. 1 9 AM: \$10

Financial Statement Basics Saturday, Feb. 3 9 AM: FREE

Sources of Funding Saturday, Feb. 3 11 AM: FREE

Financial Projections Saturday, Feb. 3 1 PM: FREE

Hiring Your First Employee Tuesday, Feb 6 10 AM: FREE

<u>Unlock Google's Top Spot in</u> <u>Just 1 Week: Your Ultimate Guide</u> Wednesday, Feb 7 6 PM: FREE Simple Steps for Starting your Business - Basics Wednesday, Feb 7 6 PM: FREE

All Things Pinterest Thursday, Feb. 8 11 AM: \$10

Business Credit Thursday, Feb. 8 6 PM: FREE

Start up and Start right Tuesday, Feb. 13 12 PM: FREE

Virtual Reboot | Regional Tuesday, Feb. 13 8 AM: FREE

Beginner's Guide to Short-Form Videos Featuring Adobe Rush Thursday, Feb. 15 11 AM: FREE Understanding the Beneficial Ownership Information Reporting Rules Thursday, Feb. 15 2:30 PM: FREE

Entrepreneurship Research Lunch and Learn – Market Research for Startups Friday, Feb. 16 Noon: FREE

QuickBooks for Beginners Tuesday, Feb. 20 9 AM - NOON: \$179

Social Media Mindset Tuesday, Feb. 20 5 PM: \$49

QuickBooks for Intermediate Users Thursday, Feb. 22 9:00 - 12:00 PM \$179 Business Planning Tools Thursday, Feb. 22 9:00 - 12:00 PM: FREE

Business Funding Essentials Tuesday, Feb. 27 Noon: Free

Entrepreneurship Research Lunch and Learn – Trademarking Your Business Friday, March 29 Noon: Free





"Economic growth is not an end in itself, but a means to an end – a way of improving people's lives." - Paul Krugman

In the next issue



- Featured Business
- Entrepreneurship Class Update
- Update on Childcare Center
- · GB Alive, Fridays on Forest, and More!

Watch our 2023 Year in Review

Let's keep in touch

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in





CHILD CARE TAX CREDITS

In today's dynamic corporate landscape, good business leaders recognize the pivotal role of well-being of their employees. One effective strategy to support this balance is by providing child care assistance, which not only boosts employee morale but can lead to substantial tax benefits.

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