



# BARTON COUNTY

YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP CHALLENGE











# 3rd Annual Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge is back March 8th!

Great Bend Economic Development and the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce welcome Barton County's third annual Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge this spring. This competition was created to challenge our youth, encourage our business community to partner with and mentor our younger generations, and foster an entrepreneurial spirit. NetWork Kansas holds regional and state Youth Entrepreneurship Challenges as part of its mission

in developing entrepreneurship ecosystems throughout Kansas. The partnership with NetWork Kansas allows YEC contestants use of VentureDash, the contestant portal. Great Bend Economic Development and the Great Bend Chamber partner on this competition as both organizations are tasked with strengthening the area's workforce, and that means nurturing the next generation's entrepreneurs.

Continued on page 2

# Do you have questions for GBED? Submit questions <a href="mailing">here</a> or by emailing <a href="mailing">marketing@gbedinc.com</a>

We are bringing back Sara's Asked & Answered. This video series came about to help the community understand what Great Bend Economic Development is working on and how businesses can utilize resources in the area. Submit your questions via email, post on the link above, or by calling 620-796-2407.





# **Continued from page 1**

This competition will take place at the Great Bend Events Center on March 8th. All participants will put together a trade-show presentation of their business idea and share it with the public. They will also present their

formal 4-minute presentation to the judges. This year, the competition has grown to include 7th graders through 12th graders. The public is invited and encouraged to attend this event to cheer on our student competitors and show their support for the next

generation of business ideas.

After the trade-show exhibition, the winners will be announced. There is \$2500 in prize money to be divided among the top competitors. Third place will receive \$500 second place will receive \$750 and first place will receive \$1000 and the opportunity to continue onto the Statewide competition. Audience members will also have a chance to vote for their favorite and award one competitor \$250.



# How students can participate

The competition finale is about three

months away, so participants are encouraged to get started on their business plans. Students wanting to join the competition can go to the Great Bend Economic Development, Inc. web page for more information on YEC at www. gbedinc.com/yec. This page holds sample business plans, links to resources on giving presentations, as well as a few of 2022's contestant interviews. Also, students can join the competition with a link to the VentureDash contestant portal. After a student joins the competition, they will be paired with a business mentor to help them iron-out details, ask them questions, and fine-tune the student's business plan and presentation.

# BUSINESS MENTORS NEEDED

CONTACT: MARKETING@GBEDINC.COM



Great Bend

**GREAT BEND** 

# How the community can participate

The community can help in a few ways, such as a sponsor of the live event, a business mentor, and/or a teacher champion. Depending on the sponsorship level, sponsors can speak to the contestants and community before we announce the winners at our live event and/or have their logo on all marketing materials. As a business mentor, you are matched with a student, to help them with their business plans and 4-minute presentation. Teacher Champions are needed as well, teachers can guide students from inside the classroom and have more face time with students that may not have heard about the competition.

If you/your business would like more information about sponsoring the live event, being a teacher champion, or becoming a business mentor, please reach out to GBED staff at <a href="marketing@gbedinc.com">marketing@gbedinc.com</a> or by calling 620-796-2407.

# President's Letter to Exiting Board Members

Great Bend Economic
Development is made great due
to the people that go above and
beyond to make it so. Two of those
individuals are board members,
Tony Szot and Mark Calcara. As
they prepare to leave the Great
Bend Economic Development
board we reflect on the positive
impacts they've made to the
organization.

Tony Szot, plant manager at Superior Essex, joined our board at the beginning of 2022. Although he only served a short term, we're forever thankful for the expertise and point of view he brought to the table. Not only was he a strong voice for manufacturing, but also, we could always count on him for a well-thought-out solution to a problem. We're thrilled for Tony as he moves up in the ranks of Superior Essex and joins their corporate team in Atlanta. We're also very thankful for the time he dedicated to Great Bend Economic Development. Best of luck in all of your future endeavors.



Mark Calcara, attorney at Watkins Calcara, joined our board at its very beginning in 2020 and was also instrumental in building the organization prior to that. To say that Mark has been impactful to our team in this time would be an understatement. Mark put in numerous extra hours to help with brainstorming, researching, legal needs and so many other things. As chairman of our board, Mark acted as a guiding voice to keep us moving forward. His progressive thoughts and passion for growing our community made him a vital member of our team. Although

Mark has served out his term on the board, we have no doubt he will still be a mentor to the organization. Thank you, Mark, for your years of service to the Great Bend Economic Development board. Your efforts are noticed and appreciated and this organization is as successful as it is in large part due to you. Best of luck in all of your future endeavors.

Sincerely,

# 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 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.

# GBED's newly formed partner,

# Advancing Barton County Childcare, is making progress

The ABCC team has been working hard to bring this childcare center to life. Sara Arnberger, President of GBED and Board Member of ABCC says, "Our goal was and is to create a self-sustaining center with high standards of education and care and competitive pay. We're very pleased to have secured zoning approval for our childcare land, while this is certainly a huge milestone in the project, we have many more to conquer before we have a completed project. We will be sure to share and celebrate all of the coming milestones with the public, right here, as they happen."

**ABCC's Mission**: To provide quality, reliable and sustainable childcare solutions to the citizens of Barton County.

# The Board of Directors

Our Board team consists of business leaders, public sector leaders, and childcare professionals. Together, this team is committed to establishing high-quality childcare centers and support. Meet the Advancing Barton County Childcare board: Tricia Reiser is the Assistant Superintendent at USD428 and serves on the ABCC board as Chairman. Laura Maneth is the HR Director for the University of Kansas

Future 10 January 10 January 10 January 11 January 11 January 12 January 13 January 13 January 13 January 14 January 14 January 15 January 16 January 16 January 16 January 17 January

on the ABCC Board as Vice Chairman.
The remaining board members include Jake West, Mary Foley,
Sara Arnberger, Jim Blackwell, Larissa Graham, Cody Schmidt, Matt Patzner, and Debbie Stephens.



ABCC, Inc. was born from conversations with our businesses where they expressed that lack of childcare was a major barrier to hiring employees. As a partner of Great Bend Economic Development we always strive to keep our businesses informed and at the table.

#### **Future Location**

We are in a growing phase! Our future home will be located on the Farmer's Plaza site at 10th and K96 in Great Bend. We are very excited to get this facility up and running, but please be patient as we take our time to ensure we are building the best possible childcare center for your children!

#### **Contact Us**

For questions about ABCC, Inc., our partnership with GBED, please reach out HERE.

# IGNITE competition inspires entrepreneurs, GBED Seeking Sponsors and Business Mentors

We at Great Bend Economic Development want to keep you updated. For those following along with our journey as an entrepreneurship ecosystem, and as we continue to promote the IGNITE competition for entrepreneurs. Businesses have begun reaching out and inquiring about the process. The deadline for submitting a business plan and video pitch is at the end of June, however, we want those interested in joining us to get started soon! We want those competing to get

the support and assistance they need,

as this competition exists to empower, support, and cultivate entrepreneurs. Here in Barton County, we strive to champion creativity and innovative thinking, we aim for this competition to be one of many efforts to continue that mission in a positive and impactful way.

As a reminder to those thinking they would like to participate, serious prize money is on the line for those competing in the IGNITE Rural Business Competition! \$95,000 in total will be given out at the October 5th live event, with \$50,000

Light an Entrepreneurial Fire in Barton

going to the firstplace winner. Those interested in competing will not only have the opportunity of exposure of their business, but also assistance from local business professionals.

With an emphasis on bringing business

to Barton County, the IGNITE committee is partnering with NetworkKansas and the Small Business Development Center. NetworkKansas has facilitated the use of Venture Dash as the contestant portal. Venture Dash allows contestants to submit materials and track their progress. In addition to weighing in on the competition, both NetworkKansas and the Small Business Development Center assist in the connection to mentors as well as assistance with business plans.

# How to participate

For details on how to join the IGNITE competition, deadlines, and requirements, please go to www.GBEDing com/IGNITE for a full list of information. However, if you would like to get your business involved as a mentor or being a sponsor of the live event, please reach out to GBED President, Sara Arnberger





# Local Entrepreneurship Success Stories

Great Bend Economic Development celebrated Global Entrepreneurship Week in November with a video series. We at GBED want to continue to spotlights these businesses throughout the vear as we celebrate those entrepreneurs that have been successful. We hope to inspire the next wave

of entrepreneurs with the wisdom these featured Barton County businesses have learned.

This month we highlight Dana Dawson from Dawson Jewelers, Designs by Dana. Dana talks about how he continues to change and evolve

Watch Dana's interview: TikTok



his business, as well as the importance of marketing.



# GROW **WORKFORCE:**

A Recruiting Incentive for **Barton County** Residents

Know someone who would love a great paying job in Barton County?

Recruit them and GET PAID!

**How it works:** 

- 1. Pick an advertised job posting and share it with your friends and family who live outside of Barton County.
- 2. Your friend or family member moves to Barton County to fill one of the advertised positions and **GBED** pays you CASH for your recruiting efforts.
- 3. After your recruit completes 90 days of employment the employer will then match the cash you received from GBED.

**Amount received is** dependent on the job salary. For example: if the job you recruited for pays between \$35K - \$53K you will make \$500, if the job pays between \$54K-\$69K you will make \$750, and if the job pays \$70 + you will make \$1000!

Visit our page to view the advertised jobs to get recruiting OR visit our page if you are a business that would like to advertise a position.

To advertise your open positions contact us HERE

To learn more about the program, visit us HERE





Join us for a dynamic, in-person, interactive seminar which will keep your business growing and thriving!

Thursday Evenings • February 9, 16, 23; March 2, 9, 23 & 30, 2023 • 5:30 - 8:30 p.m. \$300 for all seven sessions (Sessions, meals and materials included in cost.) Front Door Community Center, 1615 10th Street, Great Bend, KS

#### Sessions

- Management & Company Culture
   Mark Mingenback, Business Consultant & Sally Mauler, The Buckle
- Human Resources
   Brenda Kaiser, Barton County; Lynda Jamison & Sam Jacobs, Adams Brown, LLC
- Financial Resources
  Paul Snapp, First Kansas Bank & Sara Hayden, Great Bend Economic Develop
- Legal Considerations & Accounting Molly Bailly & Taylor Calcara, Watkins Calcara; Barry Bowers, Spectrum Partners
- Buying and Leasing Property
- Creating Vision for Your Business and Effectively Marketing it to Potential Customers
- · Q & A with Panel of Small Business Owners

For more information or to register, contact Krystall Barnes at barnesk@bartonccc.edu or (620) 792-9332. (Registration Deadline: Monday, January 23, 2023) Seating is limited, so register today!!













# '22 Review: Fridays on Forest had banner year in 2022, and a new mural adds to downtown place-making efforts

Great Bend Alive is GBED's downtown development arm and we are committed to, not only Fridays on Forest but many other downtown development initiatives to come.

Fridays on Forest run the final Friday of each month from April - October, and 2022 was nothing short of monumental. No sophomore slump for the Friday on Forest happenings, attendance was up and vendors showed a gain in profits on those days as well. Our neighbors at the Great Bend Tribune and First American



Title coordinated with us to have water available in the hot months, on-theme treats, and events to add value to our efforts. Sponsors turned up the volume at events as well. Wheatland Electric brought a screen and live-streamed the Great Bend High School football game (pictured below). Thank you to our 2022 Friday on Forest sponsors: Adams Brown, Equity Bank, Farmers Bank, First Kansas Bank, Francis Financial, Innovative Livestock Services, Jim & Kathi Armatys, Keller Real Estate, Marmie Auto Group, Max Nichols, MPIRE Companies, The Lindberg Family, Venture Corp, Watkins Calcara, and Wheatland Electric.

Barton Arts Movement (BAM) partnered with Great Bend Alive to host an art show in the alley between Forest and Lakin Ave. Then, BAM, Melanie Ryan, and GB Alive hosted a community paint day to paint that same alley! Thank you to those that sponsored the art alley, and those that helped paint cement on a triple digit day. We appreciate those that participated in the 2022 season, and if you missed last season, we hope to see you in April for a

It takes a lot of help, hands, and support to throw a party every month. If you/your business is interested, please reach out today. We are working now to get the next season scheduled and the schedule is

BIG kickoff event.

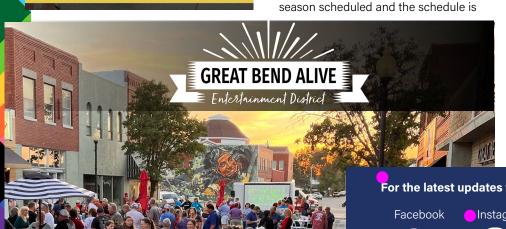


filling up fast! Would you or your business be interested in being a part of the Friday on Forest fun? Here are a few ways to help:

**SPONSORSHIP**: Organizations, Individuals, or businesses can sponsor one of our Fridays on Forest events. **PARTICIPATE**: Organizations or businesses can participate in one of our Fridays on Forest events. Each event needs many hands to set up Forest Street in preparation for the hundreds of folks that come out to enjoy it.

**VOLUNTEER**: Organizations, Individuals, or businesses can volunteer at Fridays on Forest events too! We need 12 volunteers at each event to be our gatekeepers.

**BOARD/COMMITTEE MEMBERS:** Are you interested in being a part of shaping Great Bend's downtown and Fridays on Forest? GBED is seeking board members for the Great Bend Alive Board. Within the GB Alive board, members are asked to serve on one of these committees: Design, Economic Vitality, and Organization Promotion. As we shape these committees/ boards we are looking to create positive change in these areas. Interested parties are to reach out directly to Sara Arnberger via email at director@ gbedinc.com or call 620-796-2407.



For the latest updates follow Great Bend Alive on:

Instagram













# "EPIC" Group Visits Neighboring Communities

GBED couldn't ask for a better group to lead the charge lead the charge in our next place-making project. This project is still in its beginning phases, but as with any great initiative, the learning/research period comes first.

This group came together to visit neighboring communities to find out what makes them special and how we can leverage each other's assets to become stronger regional partners. In doing so, several in the group mentioned that these visits had them looking at Great Bend with a fresh perspective.

We look forward to sharing more information on this project in the coming



months, but are thrilled to have such a wonderful team to accept the challenge!

Pictured (left to right) are Andrea Bauer, Sara Arnberger, Ryan Fairchild, Rich Baskerville, (back row) Lee Ann June, and members of the cohort group that are not pictured: Hailey Hicks and Venessa Favela.

# Bringing new life to historic Downtown

Loft living can utilize the historic buildings in Great Bend's downtown corridor while adding to the available housing. By updating and filling those upper levels with households, downtown lives a new life and helps with the housing crisis.

"If we were to use the existing infrastructure that these historic buildings provide, we now have the ability to shorten our end goal timeline."

In combating the rural housing crisis, we have to consider every opportunity, traditional and outside the box. Of course traditional tells us we need a

new housing development, and while we certainly do not disagree, we saw a quicker timeline opportunity in a less traditional, route downtown loft living.

Great Bend's downtown corridor alone has over 200,000 SF of unused upper floor space. If we were to use the existing infrastructure (building, infrastructure, plumbing, etc.) That these historic buildings provide, we now have the ability to shorten our end goal timeline. In finding this opportunity, the next step was to provide funding assistance to enable downtown property owners to complete these loft and commercial spaces in a condensed timeline. As

these are historic buildings, there are many costs property owners will face to upgrade these unused/ vacant spaces.

The funding assistance comes in the form of our loft grant program. It will provide \$5.50 per interior SF of the property to help property owners spur forward to complete these extensive, but worthwhile projects. This project has the potential to create over 20 new residential units and a handful of new commercial opportunities.

Great Bend Economic Development is continuing forward with other more traditional housing solutions as well and will share those projects as they gain traction.

Learn more about the loft project and the funding opportunities available

https://www.gbedinc.com/downtowndevelopment

\* Other state and federal funding opportunities for this project are available now. Reach out for more information.



# Briefly tell us about yourself

I grew up interested in all things decor, fashion, trends, and creativity and talking was always high on my priority list. I knew I wanted to do something where I could be creative and interact with people daily. I graduated from Hays Academy of Hair design and worked as a stylist for several years before opening The Farmhouse. I naively thought I could do both and that quickly changed as the business grew and took over. The Farmhouse has given me the outlet to still use that creativity, be interactive, help people, and enjoy what I do.

# Tell us about your business

We started the idea of The Farmhouse in 2018 with the plan to make custom pieces, have small orders come in, and help with design. When someone told us about a building available, it quickly grew into a brick-and-mortar. I quickly began researching brands, designers, and products to carry. The Farmhouse has grown from a store that offers apparel, candies, gifts, and home decor. To somewhere that offers all of that plus interior decorating services, floral arrangements, party

decor and planning services, and so much more. Being creative and mixing things up is the job's best part. So anytime a customer asks for a service or something I may haven't done before. I jump right into the challenge, and it always ends up being my new favorite thing to do. The Farmhouse is currently open 6 days a week. Monday to Friday from 10 am - 6 pm, and Saturdays from 10 am - 5 pm.

# How long did it take you to execute your vision from idea phase to opening day?

In the beginning phase, it only took a few months to start the original Farmhouse. I came up with the idea, researched products to carry, my husband and I did a small remodel, and we were open within a few months. To grow into the space we are in now has taken years. We completely remodeled the building on our own, have added thousands of products, have a team of five employees, and now have online shopping available. Ideas are always still flowing. I'm not sure if I will ever be able to say that everything has been executed because I always have something else I want to add or change up.



# What were some of your biggest challenges and how did you overcome them to continue towards your goals?

Growing our business from a small space to the one we are in was a challenge. The process of the remodel added expenses, of course, Covid. The pandemic hit right before we were set to



open our new location. We did and I think we still do feel some of the effects of covid. Playing catch up on time lost,

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.







people ordering online instead of shopping in the local stores, etc. We are still working towards overcoming these challenges. We have changed the way we do things. We have added shopping experiences, in home decorating, private parties, events, and more to keep working through the challenge of shopping locally vs the convenience of shopping online.

#### What inspired you to start your business?

I have always had an entrepreneurial mindset. I know that I am not a person that cannot work the same job doing the same things every day. The idea of The Farmhouse just kind of fell into my lap one day. I had two little kids at home and a husband who works long hours. I needed something I can do but still be close. Something I can start with is a small budget and a way to do the things I love in a way that allows me to give to my community, be a part of the community, and still be there for my family.

# If you could share any positive feedback to another company hoping to open in the Barton County market, what would it be?

I am a firm believer in starting small. I know it doesn't always work like that. Sometimes you just have to jump in with two feet. For us it worked well to start in a small building that we rented. We had a very small budget for our initial inventory. And we worked our way up over time to be able to purchase our own building and grow the business. If it is an option I recommend starting small if you can and growing.

# What advice would you give to anyone considering the entrepreneurship path?

I would recommend you take it slow. Start small if you can and let the business grow. Your business and all of your dreams won't be built over night so take your time. It will be a lot less stress on you financially, physically, and emotionally to start small and work your way up. It is a lot of work but also a lot of reward.

# The Farmhouse

Caitlyn Meitner/ Owner 104 North Main Street Hoisington, Kansas 67544 thefarmhouse163@gmail.com PHONE: (620) 282-0500 www.thefarmhouseks.com

### **Hours**

Monday - Friday: 10:00am-6:00pm Saturday: 10:00am-5:00pm



# Did You Know?

# How about some spending pattern facts?!

STI: Spending Patterns Household Furnishings & Equipment (Annual)	Walmart 0-5 min					Walmart 0-10 min						Walmart 0-20 min					
	Aggregate Expenditure Estimate	%		erage Mark per Index ehold US	to	Aggregate Expenditure Estimate	%		Average per Household	Market Index to USA		Aggregate Expenditure Estimate	%		Average per Household	Market Index to USA	
Major appliances	\$ 863,887	13%	\$ 20	8.25	79	\$ 1,485,643	13%	\$	216.07	82	\$	2,201,938	13%	\$	217.15	83	
Dishwashers (built-in), garbage disposals,																	
range hoods	\$ 72,696	1%	\$	7.52	75	\$ 123,710	1%	\$	17.99	77	\$	185,366	1%	\$	18.28	78	
Refrigerators, freezers	\$ 286,050	4%	\$ (	8.96	79	\$ 494,489	4%	\$	71.92	82	\$	731,723	4%	\$	72.16	82	
Washing machines and clothes dryers	\$ 234,019	3%	\$	6.41	30	\$ 400,516	3%	\$	58.25	82	\$	593,429	3%	\$	58.52	83	
Cooking stoves, ovens	\$ 122,703	2%	\$ :	9.58	78	\$ 214,349	2%	\$	31.17	82	\$	316,185	2%	\$	31.18	82	
Microwave ovens	\$ 38,291	1%	\$	9.23	77	\$ 66,227	1%	\$	9.63	81	\$	98,335	1%	\$	9.70	81	
Air Conditioning units	\$ 18,589	0%	\$	4.48	73	\$ 31,435	0%	\$	4.57	75	\$	46,882	0%	\$	4.62	75	
Electric floor cleaning equipment	\$ 94,938	1%	\$ :	2.89	33	\$ 163,210	1%	\$	23.74	86	\$	240,687	1%	\$	23.74	86	
Sewing machines	\$ 34,900	1%	\$	8.41 8	39	\$ 57,961	0%	\$	8.43	89	\$	87,696	1%	\$	8.65	91	



# Fun Facts...

Our area spends \$2.2M annually on major appliances. That equals around \$217 per household!

Most of that spending was on refrigerators, and freezers, with washers/dryers, close behind.

# **NewsLetter**



# Upcoming Events & Business Education

# **Upcoming Events and Business Education**

**11**JAN.

### SBDC Class - Startup and Start Right

Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2023 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Cost: FREE Virtual Class through SBDC https://secure.touchnet.com **25** JAN.

#### SBDC Class - How to Write a Business Plan

Wednesday, Jan. 25, 2023 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM (CST) Fee: No Fee 1 W Main St, Chanute KS 66720-1761 https://ksbdc.ecenterdirect.com/events/27688

**18** JAN.

### SBDC Class - Branding Basics

Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2023 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Cost: FREE Virtual Class through SBDC https://secure.touchnet.com/ **25** JAN.

# SBDC Class - How to Write a Business Plan

Wednesday, Jan. 25, 2023 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CST) Fee: No Fee 9 S Jefferson Ave, Iola KS 66749-3327 https://ksbdc.ecenterdirect.com/events/27689

**25** JAN.

#### SBDC Class - State Tax Webinar

Wednesday, Jan. 25, 2023 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Cost: FREE Virtual Class through SBDC https://secure.touchnet.com/ **31** JAN.

# SBDC Class - Intellectual Property Basics

Tuesday, Jan. 31, 2023 12:00 p.m. –1:00 p.m. Cost: FREE Virtual Class through SBDC https://secure.touchnet.com/

**25** JAN.

# SBDC Class - State Tax Webinar for Construction Contractors

Wednesday, Jan. 25, 2023 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Cost: FREE Virtual Class through SBDC https://secure.touchnet.com/



# SBDC Class - Startup and Start Right

Wednesday, Feb. 8, 2023 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Cost: FREE Virtual Class through SBDC https://secure.touchnet.com/

# Thank you for Following Along on our Journey!

As we begin a new year, 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 marketing@gbedinc.com with your feedback.







Instagram

















