

NewsLetter

Business and Economy

www.gbened.com

Business and Economy

December 2024 | Issue No. 31



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Convicted INK Opens in GBK

2

Entrepreneurship in Central KS	3
Christmas Window Contest	9
Great Bend Alive Tours App	10
IGNITE 2025	14
Innovation Center Groundbreakings	15
Marketable Statistics	16
Calendar	17

2023-2024 Annual Report



5

ICE House is Back in January 2025

Designed to inspire Barton County residents to adopt an entrepreneurial mindset, ICE House is an interactive walk through a book and video Series.



6

Grow Workforce Summit Wrap & Review

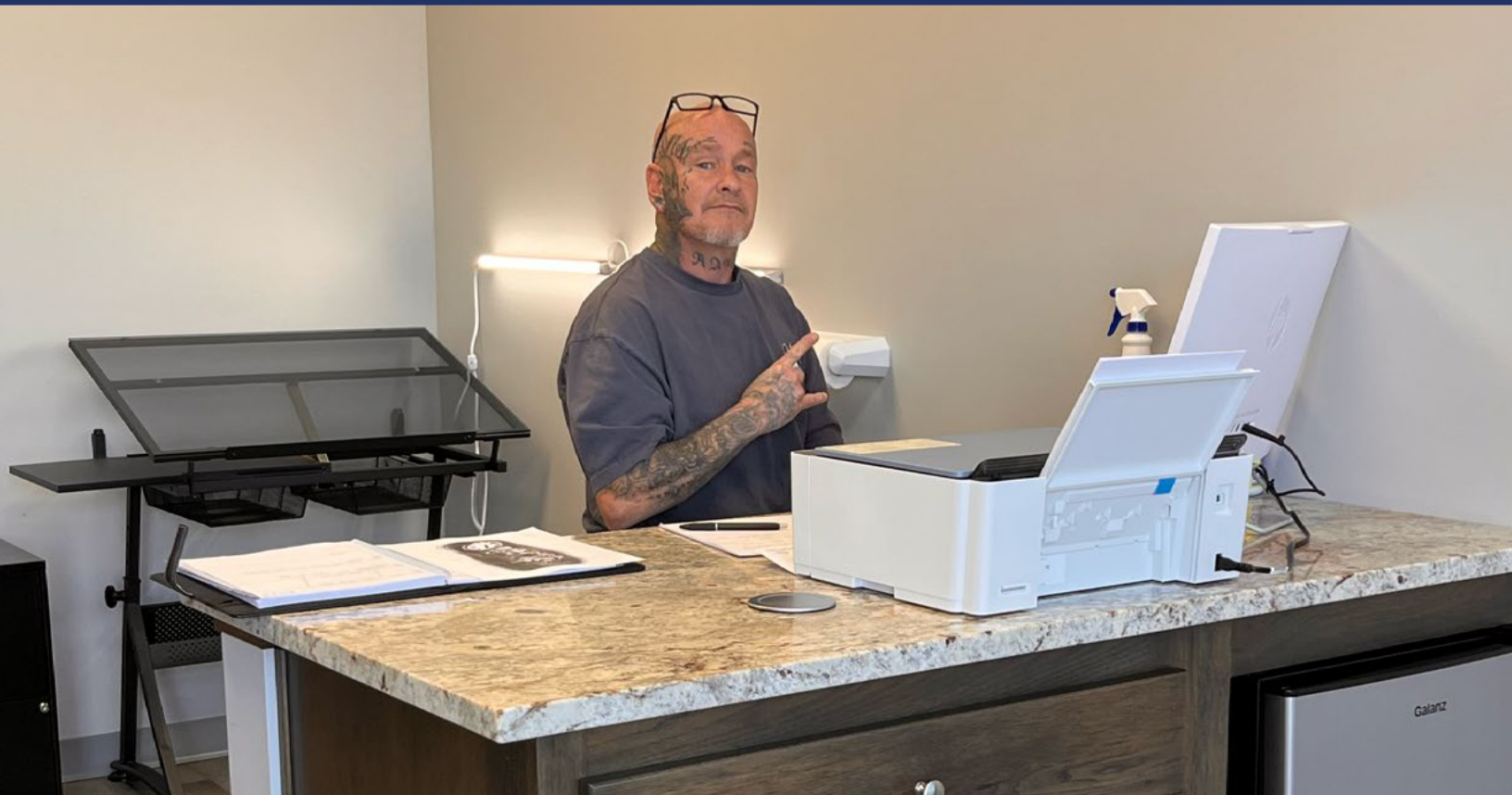
Our review of overarching themes from this year's Grow Workforce Summit!



12

GBED Board Applications are due

For those interested in applying to be on the GBED Board of Directors, please submit your application by Dec. 6th at 5 ppm.



Mike Whetham, owner of Convicted Ink, brings his artistic expertise and passion for community growth to his tattoo studio in Barton County.

Convicted INK Tattoo Studio

Mike Whetham,
Tattoo Artist & Owner
3715 10th Street
620-282-1504

[Find Them on Facebook](#)

Mike chatted with GBED about the economic impact of tattoo studios, bootstrapping the studio in GBK, and what it takes to be an entrepreneur.

Convicted Ink Tattoo Studio

From Artistic Vision to Community Revitalization: Mike Whetham's Journey Back to Barton County

Tell us about yourself and your business.

My legal name is Mike Hummel, but everyone knows me as Mike Whetham. My two older half-sisters are Whethams, so I've always gone by that name.

You can reach me through Messenger on Facebook or by phone.



Why did you choose to locate your business in Barton County?

The main reason I came back is the old-school friendships I have here. Nobody out there knew me as “Mikey” or anything like that. I wanted to return and be part of the rebirth and growth of this town. I believe Great Bend has so much potential, but we need forward thinking to attract businesses and people.

It’s not about politics—it’s about bringing everyone together to create a thriving community. I’ve seen what Great Bend is capable of, and I want to contribute to its future. I’m also passionate about supporting veterans and have plans to raise money for causes that matter to me.

How far out are you booked?

Right now, I’m booked through December. For example, I’ve got ten tattoos to do just between Friday and Sunday!

How did you get into tattooing?

I’ve always been artistic, with a natural flair for creativity and perfectionism. I apprenticed at Fantasy Graphics in Hays before opening my own shop, Skin Revolution Tattoos, in Colby, Kansas. I ran it for eight years and even trained an apprentice.

Earlier this year, I moved back to Barton County, thinking I was done with tattooing. But a friend, Robert from Hays, told me, “I can’t imagine you not tattooing anymore.” That woke me up. I realized I just needed a break to reignite my passion. Now I’m more motivated than ever to create bold, exciting tattoos.

How would you describe your tattooing style?

I don’t stick to one specific style. I enjoy realism and working with color, but I like the versatility required in a smaller town like Great Bend. Unlike bigger

The interior of Convicted INK Tattoo Studio in Great Bend, a welcoming space for clients seeking custom ink.

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.





cities, where artists might specialize in portraits or certain designs, here, you need to do it all. I love that challenge.

What first inspired you to get into tattooing?

A buddy of mine had these old-school skull tattoos with cowboy hats, and I thought they were the coolest thing ever. I never imagined I'd be running my own professional tattoo shop one day, but here I am.

What are some myths you'd like to dispel about tattooing?

Not everyone has to like tattoos, but they do have a way of drawing people in. Tattoos also tell a story of transformation. For me, it's been about changing my life—from being a bit of a troublemaker to someone who now has the respect of the community, including the police.

I'm also very proud of how clean and professional my shop is. Inspectors have told me it's

one of the cleanest they've ever seen, and I've never failed an inspection.

What advice do you have for people starting their own business?

Perseverance is key. You need to believe in yourself and love yourself. Self-confidence is the foundation for success—it's what enables you to take care of your family and keep pushing forward.

When I moved back here five months ago, I started by roofing houses to save up the money I needed to open this shop. It wasn't easy, but believing in myself got me here.

What does the future look like for your business?

I have big plans, including opening a brick-and-mortar store and expanding my offerings. Giving back to the community, especially veterans, is also something close to my heart.

Every tattoo is created with meticulous care, using single-use materials and adhering to the highest standards of safety and cleanliness—a commitment Mike Whetham has upheld throughout his career.



Entrepreneurship

ICE House is back in 2025

ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET CLASSES

Think like an entrepreneur



Beginning Early January 2025!

Great Bend Economic Development announces the launch of its 2025 “Entrepreneurial Mindset” classes in partnership beginning on January 8. This program is designed to inspire Barton County residents to adopt an entrepreneurial mindset, following the success of the IGNITE Rural Business competition and the high demand for continued entrepreneurial education in the community.

With support from NetWork Kansas, these classes will be accessible and affordable, helping to lower the barriers for aspiring entrepreneurs. NetWork Kansas, renowned for its dedication to fostering entrepreneurship and economic growth, is aligned with the mission of Great Bend Economic Development to provide practical and transformative resources for individuals exploring business opportunities.

2025 classes will be co-facilitated by

Jim Correll, Executive Director of the Innovative Business Resource Center, and Kimberly Becker, an ICE House Certified facilitator and Owner of Move Your Mountain Coaching.

Classes are scheduled to run every Wednesday from January 8 through February 12, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Great Bend Economic Development Offices inside the Great Bend Events Center.

Participants will engage in engaging discussions, video content, and thought-provoking readings from *Who Owns the Ice House?*, a book inspired by the story of entrepreneur Clifton Taulbert. Additionally, local entrepreneurs will join the sessions to share firsthand experiences, shedding light on the rewards and challenges of entrepreneurial life.

Jim Correll emphasizes that the

curriculum centers on eight key principles: Choice, Opportunity, Action, Knowledge, Wealth, Brand, Community, and Persistence.

This course is open to adults of all ages, whether they are considering a new business venture, currently in business, or seeking innovative approaches to problem-solving. Registration costs \$100 per person and includes dinner at each session. Participants attending at least five sessions will be eligible for a 50% refund. In an exciting addition, the first class on January 8 will be offered for free to interested participants! Attendees must register in advance to reserve their spot.

For additional information, contact GBED staff at 620-796-2407 or via email at marketing@gbedinc.com. Online registration opens Nov. 15th online at: www.gbedinc.com.



GROW WORKFORCE
EMPLOYER AND JOBSEEKER SUMMIT

Workforce

Wrap-Up Summary: Grow Workforce Summit 2024

The 2024 Grow Workforce Summit, held on November 13th brought together employers, managers, and workforce professionals from across Barton County. Hosted in partnership with Great Bend Economic Development, the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce, Barton Community College, KansasWorks, and local businesses, the event offered a full day of learning, networking, and collaboration aimed at strengthening the local workforce.

A highlight of the summit was the inspiring keynote luncheon featuring Phillip Kelley, Founder of Purpose-Driven Coaching and former Character Coach for the Kansas City Chiefs.

The event also featured dynamic panel discussions and breakout sessions led by distinguished professionals like Jeremy Elliott, Dr. Marcus Garstecki, Christina Nuttmann, Travis Young, and Kelley himself. Topics ranged from team development and workforce education to global business leadership and HR strategies,

sparking great conversations on the most pressing workforce issues facing Barton County businesses. Explore the insights shared during the Workforce Panel discussion below.

The Power of Cultural Alignment in Recruitment

One of the recurring themes during the event was the emphasis on cultural alignment. Businesses that prioritize core values during recruitment tend to create more cohesive and high-performing teams. Panelists shared how they evaluate candidates against core values during interviews and performance evaluations. For example, one organization uses the acronym "PHIRE"—Passion, Humility, Integrity, Respect, and Empathy—to guide hiring and management decisions.

The Role of Leadership and Core Values

Leaders play a crucial role in fostering a culture that reflects the organization's core values. By regularly

referencing and teaching these values, leaders can use them as tools for addressing challenges and maintaining team cohesion. For instance, if a team member's behavior deviates from the values, leaders can address it constructively by reminding them of the shared expectations.

Quadrant Analysis: A Recruitment Framework

An intriguing framework discussed was the quadrant analysis of team members based on their alignment with core values and productivity. This model categorizes employees into four types:

Rock Stars: High core values, high productivity

Cheerleaders: High core values, low productivity

Terrorists: Low core values, high productivity

Continued on Page 7

Rats: Low core values, low productivity
Panelists stressed the importance of avoiding “terrorists,” who, despite their productivity, can harm team morale and cohesion. Organizations should focus on recruiting “rock stars” and coaching “cheerleaders” to improve their performance.

Social Media: A Window to Company Culture

Many panelists highlighted the growing role of social media in recruitment. By showcasing their workplace culture authentically, organizations attract candidates who resonate with their values. From team events to testimonials, a well-maintained social media presence can serve as a powerful tool for talent acquisition.

Skills vs. Cultural Fit

Another key takeaway was the preference for cultural fit over technical skills. Panelists agreed that while skills can be taught, cultural alignment is innate. Hiring individuals who embody the organization’s values and possess a

willingness to learn often yields better long-term results.

Emphasizing Problem Solving and Innovation

Organizations that highlight their unique strengths, such as a commitment to problem-solving and innovation, stand out in the competitive job market. For example, one company successfully integrated this narrative into its recruitment campaign, emphasizing its reputation as a place for creative thinkers and innovators.

Multilingual and Inclusive Hiring Practices

To further enhance their appeal, some organizations have adopted inclusive hiring practices, such as posting testimonials in multiple languages. This approach broadens their reach and makes the workplace more accessible and relatable to diverse candidates.

Overarching Takeaways

Cultural alignment is paramount: Hiring for cultural fit ensures better team

cohesion and long-term success.

Core values guide decision-making: Integrating core values into daily operations and recruitment creates a strong, unified culture.

Authenticity attracts talent: A genuine portrayal of workplace culture, especially through social media, resonates with potential candidates.

Invest in cultural ambassadors: Organizations benefit from nurturing employees who embody their values, turning them into advocates for the company.

This panel discussion underscored the importance of aligning recruitment strategies with cultural values. By fostering an environment where employees thrive both professionally and personally, businesses can build stronger, more resilient teams.

Thank you to everyone who attended, supported, and made this event possible. Together, we are building a stronger, more resilient workforce for our community.

Childcare

Bright Beginnings Receives DCF Subsidy Certification

We are delighted to share some exciting news from Bright Beginnings by ABCC! Our preschool program has recently received its DCF subsidy certification, marking a significant achievement in our commitment to providing quality early childhood education.

With this certification, families can now access financial support through DCF subsidies, making it easier to enroll their children in a nurturing and educational environment. At Bright Beginnings, we believe every child deserves the best start in life, and our dedicated team of educators is here to ensure that your preschooler receives a comprehensive and engaging learning



experience.

Our curriculum is designed to foster curiosity, creativity, and a love for learning, with activities that promote cognitive, social, and emotional development. We provide a safe and stimulating environment where children

can explore, play, and grow.

Enrollment is now open! Don't miss this opportunity to give your child a strong educational foundation. For more information or to enroll your preschool-age child, please contact us at 620-796-2392, email admin@abccinc.org, or visit our website at www.abccinc.org.

Join us at Bright Beginnings by ABCC and take the first step in your child's educational journey. We look forward to welcoming you and your family to our community!

For any questions or to schedule a tour of our facilities, feel free to reach out. Let's make your child's bright beginning a reality today!

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.centrankansasjobs.com to leverage these new features and make Central Kansas Jobs your strategic partner in building successful teams.

ARE YOU HIRING?

- FREE JOB POSTINGS
- CREATE A COMPANY PROFILE
- LOOK THROUGH RESUMES
- ADVERTISING AVAILABLE

centrankansasjobs.com

central kansas
JOBS

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 marketing@gbedinc.com with your feedback.





Fridays on Forest Survey

Fridays on Forest: A Fresh Start for the New Season

As we wrap up the year, we're already looking forward to another exciting season of Fridays on Forest! Thanks to your valuable feedback, we're making a few tweaks to enhance your experience and ensure this beloved event continues to thrive.

Our goal is to create a true "third place" for the community—a welcoming space outside of home or work where everyone can connect, relax, and enjoy Great Bend. With the help of some amazing community

partners, we're exploring new ways to make Fridays on Forest even more vibrant and engaging.

What will be different? You'll have to wait and see! Rest assured, we're taking your suggestions to heart while keeping the spirit of Fridays on Forest alive—bringing our community together for great food, music, and fun.

Mark your calendars—new dates will be announced soon! In the meantime, we're still gathering feedback to make

Fridays on Forest even better. If you haven't shared your thoughts yet, the form is still open! ([CLICK HERE](#) for survey.)

Enjoy a snapshot of May's epic Fridays on Forest, where we celebrated record-breaking attendance and unforgettable moments. Thank you for making it all possible—we can't wait to see you in 2025!

Sponsorships will be available soon, to learn more, please reach out to Lee Ann June at marketing@gbedinc.com.

Celebrate the Season with the Great Bend Alive Downtown Christmas Window Tour!

This holiday season, downtown Great Bend is aglow with the magic of the Great Bend Alive Downtown Christmas Window Decorating Contest! Formerly hosted by the Rosewood Santas Around the World Committee, this cherished event has found a new home with Great Bend Alive, adding even more sparkle to our festive lineup.

While voting for your favorite display may have ended, there's still plenty of joy to

be found in strolling through Main Street and nearby, marveling at the creativity and holiday spirit on display. Each decorated window tells a unique story, turning our downtown into a winter wonderland that's perfect for a family outing or a festive night on the town.

And the holiday magic doesn't stop there! Our Great Bend Alive Tours app is the perfect companion to your seasonal stroll, offering self-guided walking tours

that highlight the best of downtown.

To keep your app up-to-date with the latest tour content and seasonal features, simply go to your profile, tap the gear icon in the top right, and select "Check for Updated Content."

Whether you're enjoying the holiday window displays, diving into Great Bend's history, or uncovering its artistic treasures, the Great Bend Alive Tours app adds a little extra magic to your



downtown experience.

To get started, visit www.gbедinc.com/tours.

[Google Play](#) [Apple](#) [WEB](#)



Above: Yours Truly's dazzling display stood out with its intricate design and vibrant southwestern holiday theme, perfectly capturing the festive spirit of the season. Below: This enchanting display from Rana Luna Balloons impressed with its unique design and festive creativity, adding a special charm to the holiday celebrations.

Great Bend Alive

Christmas Window Decorating Contest Winners

This holiday season, Great Bend Alive is thrilled to announce the winners of the Downtown Christmas Window Decorating Contest! The inaugural contest was a resounding success, with 43 windows beautifully decorated to bring festive cheer to Main Street. Among these, 11 individuals and groups outside the downtown corridor joined in the fun, while many others decorated without officially participating, creating a truly magical holiday atmosphere.

The winners are:

- **1st Place:** Yours Truly, winning \$1,500
- **2nd Place:** Rana Luna, winning \$1,000
- **People's Choice Award:** Saint Francis Ministries, winning \$500

The People's Choice Award garnered 81 out of 821 total votes, highlighting

strong community engagement. "Our Christmas Window Decorating Committee couldn't be happier with the inaugural effort," shared Sara Arnberger, Executive Director of Great Bend Alive. "This contest has truly lit up downtown Great Bend, fostering holiday spirit and encouraging residents and visitors to shop and celebrate locally."

With the generous support of an anonymous donor, \$3,000 in prize money was awarded to the most festive displays. Community members voted for the People's Choice Award online, while three Main Street Directors from across Kansas, experienced in downtown revitalization and holiday decor, evaluated the windows for the first and second prizes.

"It's a pleasure to have such dedicated professionals evaluate

the displays," said Arnberger. "They understand the value of a vibrant downtown during the holidays and

Continued on Page 11



the positive impact it has on community spirit and local businesses.”

To help visitors enjoy all the participating displays, the Great Bend Alive Tours app offered an interactive map, ensuring everyone could experience the full lineup of holiday lights and decorations. The tour will remain on the Great Bend Alive Tours App through the holidays, along with the historical and art tours.

Great Bend Alive extends heartfelt thanks to all participants, voters, and the community for making this event such a success. As downtown Great Bend continues to shine with holiday cheer, we invite everyone to enjoy the festive atmosphere and celebrate the season with us. Let’s keep the spirit alive and look forward to an even brighter event next year!



Saint Francis Ministries captured the hearts of the community, earning 81 out of 821 total votes for its creativity and holiday spirit.

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



Organization



APPLY NOW

Great Bend
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

BOARD APPLICATION

APPLICATIONS DUE BY DEC. 6

GBED Board Applications Now Open!

Great Bend Economic Development, Inc. announces that applications for our Board of Directors are now open. As a non-profit organization, our mission is to enhance the economic quality of life for working families in Barton County. We achieve this through job creation, workforce development, and fostering a thriving business environment.

Our seven-member Board is integral to guiding GBED's strategies and achieving our goals. We're looking for passionate, forward-thinking individuals who share our commitment to growth and collaboration. If you're eager to make a meaningful impact in our community, we'd love to hear from you!

Why Join the Board?

- Shape the economic future of Barton County.
- Advocate for job retention, recruitment, and expansion.
- Strengthen the workforce through education and training initiatives.
- Help create and support living wage jobs.

Application Details:

Download Application [HERE](#)

Completed applications are due by **Friday, December 6th at 5 PM**. Please submit your application to director@gbedinc.com.

Together, we can create a stronger and more vibrant Barton County. Apply today!

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

Missed the Highlights of Global Entrepreneurship Week? Here's What You Need to Know!



GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK

Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) was a whirlwind of inspiration, community stories, and exciting updates about the entrepreneurial spirit of Great Bend. If you missed our social media posts or the interviews with local business owners, don't worry—we've got you covered with all the highlights and some big news about what's coming next!

Throughout GEW, we shared powerful stories of local entrepreneurs who turned

their dreams into reality. These individuals have used creativity, determination, and the unwavering support of the Great Bend community to build thriving businesses. From startup successes to established enterprises, their stories highlighted the resilience and innovation that define Barton County's business community.

These posts weren't just about celebrating past successes; they also offered a sneak peek into the future—IGNITE 2025 is just around the corner!

Click to watch their videos below.

Joe Andrasek

Jenny & Scott Andersen

Allie Cartwright

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.





Entrepreneurship

IGNITE Rural Business 2025, Competition Now Open for Entries

GREAT BEND - Aspiring entrepreneurs and small business owners, it's time to turn your innovative ideas into reality! The IGNITE 2025 Business Competition is officially open for entries, offering participants a chance to compete for their share of a \$95,000 prize pool.

The competition, hosted by Great Bend Economic Development (GBED), is Barton County's Shark Tank-style event, designed to empower and celebrate entrepreneurship in the local community. IGNITE invites individuals and teams to pitch their business ideas, connect with mentors, and gain access to resources that can launch or grow their businesses.

Key Details:

- Prize Pool: \$95,000 total
 - o 1st Place: \$50,000
 - o 2nd Place: \$30,000
 - o 3rd Place: \$10,000
 - o An additional \$5,000 People's Choice Award will be voted on during the finals.
- Entry Deadline: July 1, 2025
- Finals Event: October 9, 2025, at the



historic Crest Theater in downtown Great Bend

"IGNITE is more than a competition," said Lee Ann June, Communications Director of GBED. "It's an opportunity to shine a spotlight on the startups in Barton County, while providing critical support to entrepreneurs who are building the businesses of tomorrow."

Participants will compete in multiple rounds, starting with a business pitch submission. Semi-finalists will move on to further refine their ideas with the help of mentors and business experts,

culminating in the live finals where they'll present to a panel of judges and a live audience at the Crest Theater.

In addition to the prize money, participants gain invaluable mentorship, exposure, and a chance to join Barton County's growing network of successful entrepreneurs.

How to Enter:

To enter IGNITE 2025, submit your business idea or concept at igniteks.com before July 1, 2025. Entries are open to individuals and teams focused on creating economic impact in Barton County. A detailed list of submission requirements is available on the VentureDash platform, accessible through the competition dashboard on igniteks.com.

This is a fantastic opportunity for new businesses to gain exposure, receive expert guidance, and compete for funding that could kickstart or expand your entrepreneurial journey.

Don't wait—enter today! Great Bend Economic Development (GBED) is here to help you refine your business plan and video pitch, increasing your chances of advancing to the next round.



**JULY 1ST
DEADLINE**

TO COMPETE FOR
\$50,000
IN BUSINESS FUNDING

IGNITEKS.COM

Entrepreneurship

Groundbreaking for the Innovation Center set for Dec. 12 at 2 pm



The Great Bend Economic Development team is thrilled to announce the groundbreaking ceremony for the highly anticipated IGNITE Innovation Center, set for Thursday, December 12th, at 2 PM. The event will take place at the site of the future center, located at the frontage lot on Farmers Plaza at K-96 and 10th Street.

This milestone marks the beginning of a project years in the making, designed to foster innovation, entrepreneurship, workforce development, and community growth. The event will feature a ceremonial shovel dig and remarks from Sara Arnberger, President of Great Bend Economic Development. Dignitaries from the City, Barton County, partners, and board members have been invited to participate.

The Innovation Center, with an estimated budget of \$7 million, is already three-quarters funded through grants and donations. It will include:

- Fab Lab: A makerspace equipped with 3D printers, flight simulators, drones, plasma cutters, CNC machines, welders, and more.
- Commercial Kitchen: Supporting childcare providers, startup restaurant incubators, and cooking classes.
- Leafy Green Farm Pod: Engaging youth in agriculture and entrepreneurship.
- Co-Working Space and Computer Lab: For remote workers, students, and community members.
- Childcare Rooms: Providing care for shift workers during nontraditional hours.

• Meeting Rooms and Podcast Studio: Equipped with high-tech resources for training and content creation.

"We are committed to creating opportunities and inspiring growth in Barton County," said Sara Arnberger. "The Innovation Center is a testament to our dedication to the community's future."

Attendees will have the opportunity to view architectural renderings of the completed center during the event. The groundbreaking is open to the public, and no RSVP is required.

For those interested in contributing to the project through donations or materials, please contact Sara Arnberger at director@gbedinc.com. Join us as we take this exciting step toward the future of Great Bend and Barton County.

Did You Know?



Marketable Statistics

How about some spending pattern facts?!

Our area spends \$1.83 million on chicken annually!

That's \$181 a year per household!

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 I HCA	Aggregate Expenditure Estimate	%	Average per Household	Market Index to I HCA	Aggregate Expenditure Estimate	%	Average per Household	Market Index to I HCA
Poultry	\$ 723,043	4%	\$ 174.30	79	\$ 1,251,071	4%	\$ 181.95	83	\$ 1,834,086	4%	\$ 180.87	82
Fresh and frozen chickens	\$ 598,519	3%	\$ 144.28	80	\$ 1,036,842	3%	\$ 160.66	83	\$ 1,516,402	3%	\$ 149.54	83
Fresh and frozen whole chicken	\$ 184,474	1%	\$ 44.47	81	\$ 318,274	1%	\$ 46.29	84	\$ 465,757	1%	\$ 45.93	83
Fresh and frozen chicken parts	\$ 414,044	2%	\$ 99.81	80	\$ 717,568	2%	\$ 104.36	83	\$ 1,050,651	2%	\$ 103.61	83
Other poultry	\$ 124,531	1%	\$ 30.02	76	\$ 215,247	1%	\$ 31.30	80	\$ 317,704	1%	\$ 31.33	80

**DO YOU
NEED**

**TAX
CREDITS**

Great Bend
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The tax credits we have available currently are 75% credits from Network Kansas. We've participated in this program for 4 years now! Email Sara Arnberger for more information: director@gbedinc.com

Upcoming Events and Business Education

10
DEC

Regulation Changes for 2025

Tuesday, December 10, 2024
11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
3003 Frederick Ave Saint Joseph MO
<https://www.sba.gov/event/59895>

17
DEC

Last-Minute Holiday Market

Tuesday, December 17, 2024
1:00 - 4:00 p.m.
RC, Regnier Center, 145 12345 College Blvd. Overland Park , KS
<https://ce.jccc.edu/courseDisplay.cfm?sclID=43053>

11
DEC

Kansas Exporter Roundtable - Manhattan

Wednesday, December 11, 2024
12:00 - 1:30 p.m.
501 Poyntz Ave Manhattan Chamber of Commerce
<https://www.sba.gov/event/56519>

18
DEC

Last-Minute Holiday Market

Wednesday, December 18, 2024
12:00 - 6:00 p.m.
WSU Hughes Metropolitan Complex 5015 East 29th St N Wichita, KS
<https://www.sba.gov/event/59665>

11
DEC

IRS Small Business Tax Workshop

Wednesday, December 11, 2024
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.
RC, Regnier Center, 145 12345 College Blvd. Overland Park , KS Fee(s) \$ 45
<https://ce.jccc.edu/courseDisplay.cfm?sclID=43050>

19
DEC

Turning Feedback into Opportunity: Handling Comments on Social Media

Thursday, December 19, 2024
10:00 - 11:00 a.m. ONLINE
<https://www.sba.gov/event/58612>

17
DEC

Loans, Grants and Other Funding Options for Small Businesses

Tuesday, December 17, 2024
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
ONLINE
<https://www.sba.gov/event/60072>

19
DEC

Strategies and Tips for Finding a Retail Space for Your Business

Thursday, December 19, 2024
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
<https://www.sba.gov/event/60070>

Education

SBDC & SBA Classes

Click on the Class Name for the Link to Registration

Go to www.gbedinc.com and scroll down to the calendar for even more classes with descriptions & links.



U.S. Small Business Administration



[Business Law and Related Tax Topics for Emerging Business](#)

Tuesday, December 3, 2024
9:00 - 11:30 a.m.

[QuickBooks Online Training for Intermediate Users](#)

Thursday, December 5, 2024
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

[How To Create A Marketing Plan For Your Small Business](#)

Wednesday, December 11, 2024
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

[QuickBooks Online Training for Beginners](#)

Tuesday, December 3, 2024
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

[Expert Tips for Starting and Growing a Successful Business](#)

Thursday, December 5, 2024
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

[How Tariffs Can Impact Your Business and How to Prepare](#)

Thursday, December 12, 2024
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

[Business Development Maximizers: The SBA and DoD Mentor-Protege Programs](#)

Tuesday, December 3, 2024
9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

[Simple Steps for Starting Your Business - Basics](#)

Saturday, December 7, 2024
9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

[Solopreneurship 101](#)

Thursday, December 12, 2024
1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

[Market Research for Small Businesses - Using Free Tools to Grow Your Business](#)

Tuesday, December 3, 2024
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

[Creating a Business Plan That Works - Key Elements Every Entrepreneur Needs](#)

Tuesday, December 10, 2024
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

[The LinkedIn Advantage: Your Roadmap to Professional Success](#)

Saturday, December 14, 2024
9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

[Commercial Insurance Basics](#)

Tuesday, December 3, 2024
1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

[Business Financial Literacy](#)

Thursday, December 19, 2024
11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Please note that online registration will close at noon the day before each event.

“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



In the next issue

- **Featured Business**
- **CO.STARTERS Entrepreneurship Class Update**
- **Update on Childcare Center in Barton County**
- **GB Alive, Fridays on Forest, and More!**



Watch our 2023 Year in Review

Let's keep in touch

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