

MCDEVCO NEWS



A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

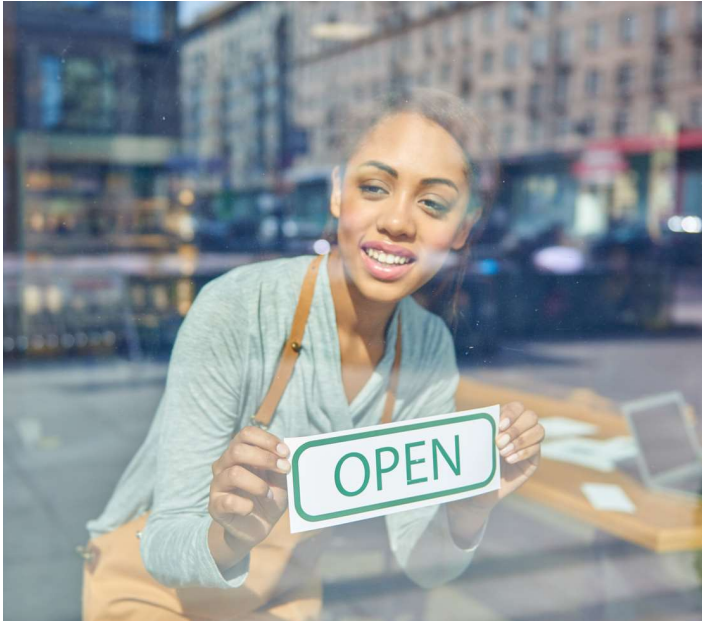
2022 is off to a fast start! MCDEVCO has been hard at work supporting small businesses in all municipalities throughout Marathon County. As we move forward in 2022, our mission continues to lie in Memberships, Municipalities, Entrepreneur Education and Development as well as GAP Financing.

MCDEVCO kicked off its Membership drive in January and would love to thank all of its business, financial and municipal partners for their continued support in MCDEVCO's economic development efforts. As MCDEVCO continues to look to the future, we will be leveraging partnerships with members and municipal partners to stay connected in the community and serve businesses and municipalities in Marathon County with educational resources and GAP Financing opportunities. If you are interested in joining the MCDEVCO team as a Member, please reach out at info@mcdevco.org!

MCDEVCO has had a strong start to 2022 in the realm of educational and leadership courses and programming.

January concluded the 16 weeks *GEARS* Certificate Program with the Financial Panel and Dolphin Tank. Thank you to our Mentors for providing a great experience to our entrepreneurs! February marked the Lunch and Learn Series at MCDEVCO where we read "Braving the Wilderness" by Brene Brown and discussed its meaning and relevance over lunch hour with business professionals within the community. In March, we were present within the school districts, talking about youth entrepreneurship and leadership to impact and support business-minded students in our schools. MCDEVCO has been present in classrooms and has also hosted students at the Entrepreneurial & Education Center for a field trip to discuss business incubation within Marathon County and how they can imagine starting their own business with guest speakers Allison Liddle, owner of Allison Liddle Consulting and Kim Lemke, owner of KimBob's Café.





MCDEVCO hosted two Quarterly Information Sessions in March to educate entrepreneurs contemplating the start of a new business on next steps.

Information sessions will be offered once per quarter. The next Information Session will be June 17th from 12:00pm-12:30pm. Interested in joining? Refer to page five for upcoming event information. Follow our website at www.mcdevco.org or our Facebook for upcoming events such as a Marketing Workshop, Crops and Shops, as well as our Fall *GEARS* Certificate Program.

We could not be more excited to continue to offer these resources to new and expanding small businesses in Marathon County!

GAP Financing is a resource that we want to ensure we are offering to small businesses looking to open for the first time or expanding their current operations.

We continue to collaborate with financial institutions and local small business owners and potential entrepreneurs in regard to what we offer in the *GAP Financing* space. Here are some highlights for you to share with someone you know that is looking to start a business. *GAP Financing* is a great way to support equity injection into a project! MCDEVCO works in partnership with a primary financial institution as the lender to offer low interest loans to fund projects that positively impact Marathon County. For more information, contact MCDEVCO directly at info@mcdevco.org or by calling 715.298.0084.

It has been a great start to 2022, and we look forward to continuing to support small businesses in Marathon County through initiatives to educate, incubate, and finance them.





MENTOR SPOTLIGHT

Lina VanNatta, Creative Shock Marketing
Area of expertise: Branding and Marketing

Meet Lina VanNatta, owner of Creative Shock Marketing, as well as a Mentor for MCDEVCO, Inc. Lina has been involved in MCDEVCO since 2016. Read about Lina's MCDEVCO journey and how she supports small business owners with her mentorship expertise!

What is your background and what programs do you teach at MCDEVCO to educate entrepreneurial students?

I have been an entrepreneur my whole life and worked in sales and marketing early in my career. Whether I was working in the financial services industry or serving as a VP of marketing at a facilities maintenance company, what I enjoyed most was getting the message out. When my daughter was born in 2010, I started a marketing consulting practice and in 2014 I launched my branding agency. Since then, I have had the pleasure and privilege of helping business owners across the globe launch, rebrand, and grow their businesses.

I am excited to teach branding and marketing at MCDEVCO and support business owners right here in my community.

How does the entrepreneurial development program positively impact students? The community?

The entrepreneurial development program at MCDEVCO is a godsend for our local entrepreneurs. In the age of information overload and internet gurus, getting practical advice and support from a local organization empowers participants with the knowledge, resources and confidence they need to take the entrepreneurial leap – whether it involves launching their new business or growing their existing company. The program also tends to facilitate new connections for entrepreneurs, and you can feel the synergy in the room as our participants share ideas and encourage each other.

What do you enjoy most about being a Mentor for MCDEVCO?

I love working with entrepreneurs 1-on-1, as well as leading workshops and classes. The passion and commitment to the students and clients is evident at MCDEVCO. Every staff member works hard to bring the most to the table and to provide the much-needed support to our community members. I am so excited to take part in their work.

What message would you give to anyone thinking about participating in MCDEVCO's entrepreneurial programs?

Taking courses at MCDEVCO is a great way to decrease your learning curve and move forward with your business. Whether you are brand new to business, need to reinforce the fundamentals, looking to learn the latest best practices, or crave new connections, you'll get a lot of value out of the programs available at MCDEVCO.



CreativeShock
MARKETING



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

BMO Harris Bank joined MCDEVCO as a Platinum Member in 2022. MCDEVCO thanks them for their partnership and investment in 2022 and beyond.!

What made you excited to become a MCDEVCO Member?

The mission of MCDEVCO: ‘To invest in business development and community growth through the integration of resources’ sums it up! MCDEVCO helps build strong communities within Marathon County, attracting new businesses and allowing small businesses to grow. BMO was more than excited to hear how MCDEVCO is able to make dreams of owning a business a reality!

Kimm Weber, Executive Director for MCDEVCO, showcases a passion and vision to elevate economic growth in Marathon County which is incredible. The first time we met her, we knew this was going to be a perfect fit for BMO Harris Bank!

How do you see MCDEVCO positively impacting your business and the community?

MCDEVCO has the tools and resources to support new business owners and existing businesses that are expanding! They invest in projects that will significantly aid in the economic development of the County and elevate underserved areas in the market. In partnering with MCDEVCO, BMO Harris Bank will be able to help break down barriers for all businesses while offering new opportunities for businesses to drive meaningful change in our communities.

What is your business working on within our community?

We strive to BOLDLY GROW THE GOOD IN BUSINESS & LIFE! We know small businesses are the backbone of the U.S. economy and each one of these companies was impacted in one way or another by the COVID pandemic. At BMO Harris Bank, we can help these businesses optimize cash flow, increase efficiencies, access financing and better serve their customers! We’re proud to be fueling growth for our specialty programs... Women, Black and Latinx businesses with better access to capital, educational resources and meaningful networking opportunities.

What else would you like readers to know?

At BMO Harris Bank, we help you achieve real financial progress in your business through practical tools, webinars and coaching. We offer businesses access to a full suite of banking services, customized financial planning expertise and financial education resources. Business owners and employees alike can learn more about personal financial topics including homebuying, credit scores, identity theft and developing a savings plan with our online financial wellness center, BMO SmartProgress™.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Meet Melinda Pauls! Melinda attended our *GEARS* Certificate Program in the Spring of 2021. Check out what she said about her experience in the educational program!

How did you hear about MCDEVCO's Entrepreneurial Development Courses and what made you want to apply?

I saw the advertisement in the City of Wausau Newsletter. I thought it would be a great introductory training opportunity and a great way to build local relationships.

What was the most impactful thing you learned while taking the 16 week program?

There were so many different topics and lessons, it was all very useful. One of the most impactful things I took away from this course was learning about all the different ideas the other students had for their businesses. I was so impressed by the creativity showcased by everyone. Experiencing the creativeness, hard work, and ideas everyone shared was very impactful.

How will the course positively impact the creation of your business?

The course provided me with a good base level knowledge of many aspects of building a business.

What is your business? When will you be operational?

My business is looking to expand into small, residential assisted living homes. Unfortunately, with the current real estate market, we have not been able to progress into this market, but it is in our future goals.

Why would you recommend someone to MCDEVCO's courses?

I would recommend MCDEVCO's courses because of the community relationships that are formed. To have the opportunity to learn from others within our City, knowing that many can be future resources, is a great thing.

DON'T FORGET TO REGISTER!

MARKETING WORKSHOP

MARKETING MUST-HAVES FOR 2022

How to boost your presence and authority to win more customers

May 12th & May 19th 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Entrepreneurial Education Center,
100 N72nd Ave, Wausau, WI

Presented by MCDEVCO, in partnership with
ELINA VANNATTA, CREATIVE SHOCK MARKETING

To register:
www.mcdevco.org or 715.298.0084

THANK YOU TO OUR PLATINUM AND GOLD SPONSORS!

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