

Wyoming County Business Center, Inc. Annual Report

Accomplishments and Objectives December 2022



*Economic Development in
Wyoming County*



President's Message:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Wyoming County Business Center (WCBC), I proudly present to you the 2022 Annual Report. The WCBC celebrated its 16th year and has continued to make tremendous contributions to furthering the growth of Wyoming County's economy.

The WCBC's two newest technical assistance programs, the Business Accelerator Academy and the Business Mentorship programs continue to prove their value to our small businesses that are striving to attain additional business growth. With a full year now under their belt the programs continue to receive great reviews from the participants and they are well on their way to reaching new sales revenue goals.

FastTrac, our flagship entrepreneurship training program, wrapped up its 12th consecutive year of service in Wyoming County. The program strongly supports our economic development strategy of growing and cultivating our own new businesses in Wyoming County. Both the spring and fall classes were very interactive with no shortages of entrepreneurial and innovative concepts. Since the program's inception, we have graduated 183 participants from the program with approximately 50% of those participants starting a new business in Wyoming County.

In October of 2022, the WCBC was awarded a \$500,000 EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant that will be used to demolish and dispose of all of the structures at the former Emkay Trading Corporation site in Arcade. Plans are in place to turn the property over to a designated developer who will finish remediating the site and has plans to revitalize the site with new development starting with a market-rate senior housing project.

As we move into the new year the WCBC will continue to provide a very important role in economic development and will remain in place to carry out our core activities, micro lending, business attraction marketing, entrepreneurship development, and the remediation and redevelopment of environmentally challenging properties such as the former Emkay site.

Thank you to everyone who has played a role in the WCBC and our collective work to improve the economic viability of Wyoming County. I also want to thank the Board of Directors of the WCBC for the privilege of allowing the Wyoming County IDA, on a contractual arrangement continue the vital services of the organization.

Sincerely,

James Pierce

Mission: The Business Center provides opportunities for business growth by promoting and assisting economic development projects that result in capital investments and job creation and retention in Wyoming County.

Introduction

The Wyoming County Business Center (WCBC), Inc. was established in 2006 by the Wyoming County Board of Supervisors to become an economic development organization that could provide business services such as micro-lending for retail businesses, business attraction marketing and become the lead organization for encouraging and supporting the development of entrepreneurs in Wyoming County. In addition, the WCBC was created to get involved in the remediation and redevelopment of environmentally challenged properties on behalf of Wyoming County.

The WCBC is co-located and works with our development partners the Wyoming County Industrial Development Agency (IDA), Wyoming County Planning, Wyoming County Chamber of Commerce and Tourism, and the Wyoming County Business Education Council.

Board of Directors 2022

- Richard Fish Sr., Chairman
- Sam Gullo, Vice Chairman
- James Brick, Treasurer
- Dan Leuer, Secretary
- Brianna Stone, Board Member

Contact Information:

James Pierce, President

Wyoming County Business Center

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WCBC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

KAUFFMAN **FASTTRAC**®

FastTrac Program

An Entrepreneurship Development Program- *"Growing Our Own Jobs"*

A key component of Wyoming County's economic development strategy is supporting and assisting with entrepreneurship, new business startups, and business expansions. This is a significant source of job growth for Wyoming County. The Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation's FastTrac program, offered by the Wyoming County Business Center, has proven to be a very effective entrepreneurial program in Wyoming County. The program is designed to develop sound business plans and get new businesses started on the right foot.

FastTrac is offered twice a year, in the spring and fall. The training includes a fast-paced and challenging itinerary that spans over 10 weeks including guest speakers and interactive activities. The topics include analyzing the viability of the business idea, assessing the marketplace, cash flow projections, marketing, learning about the various legal structures for businesses, and the development of a business plan.

The classes, which are intentionally kept small in size, are facilitated by two local entrepreneurs trained and certified by the Kauffman Foundation.

The Wyoming County Business Center, Inc. is greatly appreciative of the generous program sponsors, **Tompkins Community Bank, Complete Payroll, Community Bank N.A., Robert D. Strassel Esq., Five Star Bank, Wyoming County Board of Supervisors** and the workforce development resources available to participants through **Community Action for Wyoming County**.



FastTrac is helping entrepreneurs transform their innovative business ideas into viable career options, and move their ventures to reality or new levels of growth. The program has educated over 180 entrepreneurs on how to overcome barriers and challenges common in starting and growing a business.

A testimonial from one of the participants summed up the program this way...



"I would highly recommend taking the class to get an understanding of what it takes to start a business and to see if you have what it takes (desire and commitment) to make it happen."



FastTrac Spring 2022 Graduates

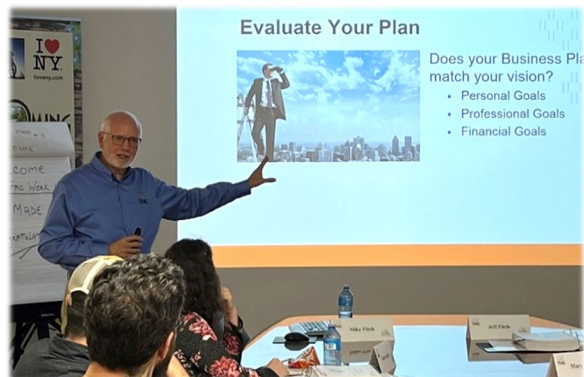
L-R Back Row: Jeff Fitch, FastTrac Program Co-Facilitator; Jennifer Tyczka, FastTrac Program Manager; Melonie Bray; Lauren Hume; Rosie Shader, Executive Director, Community Action for Wyoming County; Mike Fitch, FastTrac Program Co-Facilitator

L-R Middle Row: Mark George; Linda Franke; Katie Koerner; Amanda Luce

Front Row: Dakota VanOcker

Spring Class Business Concepts

Local Diner	Family Hair
Health Coach	Custom Creations
Natural Pet Treats	Mentoring





FastTrac Fall 2022 Graduates

L-R Front Row: Mary Gibson; Emily Richards; Tess Phillips; Laura Anders; Beth Caton, Sr. Manager Employment & Training, Community Action for Wyoming County

L-R Back Row: Jeff Fitch, FastTrac Program Co-Facilitator; Jennifer Tyczka, FastTrac Program Manager; Cheryl Gibson; Sheila Eigenbrod; Jessica Pomeroy; Tyler Day; Rick Ryan; Daniel Watkins; Carrie Johnson, Executive Director, Community Action for Wyoming County; Mike Fitch, FastTrac Program Co-Facilitator

Fall Class Business Concepts

Therapeutic and Adaptive Equestrian Center
Natural Farming/Regenerative Agriculture
Bakery/Café
Farm Stand/Milk Processing
Farm Winery with Coffee House

Grain Storage Facility
Bed and Breakfast
Berry Farm
Transportation Hub

Guest Speakers Enhance the Learning Experience



RD Strassel, Strassel Law



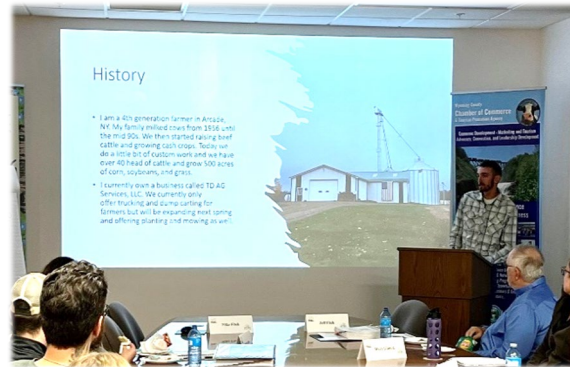
Rick Fish, Complete Payroll



Tom Lyon, Lyon Global

Wyoming County Business Center, Inc. Entrepreneur Scholarship

In collaboration with the Wyoming County Business Education Council, the Wyoming County Business Center provided Tyler Day, a Pioneer Central High School student and future business leader, the opportunity to attend the Wyoming County Business Startup Program-FastTrac with a full scholarship.



Program News The Wyoming County Business Center engaged with Lyon Global, a digital marketing agency, to develop new and fresh social media advertising, videos to be used for both paid and organic content, and best practice support and guidance for the FastTrac program and the Wyoming County Business Accelerator Academy. Look for a new logo for the Wyoming County Business Fast Track program in 2023!



*"Congratulations to FastTrac Graduate, Chelsey Makowski, on her ribbon cutting at the new CakeEaters Bakery, located at 249 Main St., in Arcade. She was joined by family, supporters, and friends as she cut the ribbon on the new downtown business on Saturday, February 5, 2022."
-Facebook post*

Wyoming County Community Action recognized the WCBC FastTrac program at the 2022 GLOW Workforce Development Board Annual Meeting.

GLOW BUSINESS RECOGNITION

Wyoming County Business Recognition

Wyoming County Business Center FastTrac Program *Nominated by Wyoming County Community Action*

The Wyoming County Business Center takes pride in supporting business growth and development in Wyoming County. The Center supports entrepreneurial interests by offering several programs and services to help individuals start and grow their own business. Among the programs offered is the FastTrac program. FastTrac, built on the Kauffman Foundation's FastTrac platform, is a business development program designed to help entrepreneurs fine-tune the skills needed to create, manage, and grow a successful business. Participants develop and refine their business ideas throughout a 10-week program - moving from concept to reality in an interactive group setting. The program began in 2010 offering classes twice a year. Since the fall of 2022 more than 180 individuals have graduated from this program with 103 moving forward to start a business. The success of the FastTrac program has only been realized due to the innovation, support and coordination of Jim Pierce, Executive Director, Jennifer Tyczka, Program Manager and the dedicated and knowledgeable instructors, Jeff Fitch teaching since 2010 and Mike Fitch since 2011. Throughout the years GLOW's WIOA funding has supported eligible candidates who have expressed an interest in self-employment, resulting in new business ventures, and individuals who have achieved their dream of opening their own business. For the 2021 program year 10 candidates received WIOA ITA funding for the FastTrac class. **Congratulations to Wyoming County Business Center!**



Testimonials from the FastTrac Program:

"I am so thankful for this class. I never could have written a business plan on my own. I felt better prepared and was so pleased by all the support" - CakeEaters Bakery, Arcade

"Fantastic Class that is beyond informative and provides the tools needed to be successful." Majestic Hill Coffee Roasters, Castile



Wyoming County Business Accelerator Academy



"Advance Your Business to the Next Level"

This new 4-week interactive program was developed to better equip business owners with the tools, resources, and knowledge to advance their business to greater financial success and long-term sustainability. The program is targeted at existing business owners who are looking to overcome barriers to growth and develop strategies to move their businesses to the next level. This program aligns well with the Wyoming County Business Center's commitment to providing programs that are geared to support the development and growth of businesses in Wyoming County.



Participants can expect to develop new business strategies and tactics to promote growth and profitability; identify their businesses' distinct competitive advantage and tap into new markets; increase online marketing and hear from a digital marketing expert, and learn how strategic thinking can dramatically improve their business performance.

Classes are offered in the spring and fall and are facilitated by the same facilitators as the FastTrac program.

Specialized guest speakers bring valuable insight to business owners.



*Brianna Stone,
Tompkins Community Bank*



*Kim Brown-Webster,
Complete Payroll*



Tom Lyon, Lyon Global

The Wyoming County Business Accelerator Academy is sponsored and supported by the **Wyoming County Business Center, Inc. Board of Directors** and the **Wyoming County Board of Supervisors**. Program funding resources were provided by a competitive grant awarded from the **Marjorie and Charles Van Arsdale Family Fund at the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo**, and sponsorship from **Key Bank**.

Wyoming County Business Accelerator Academy- Spring Participants



L-R: Jeff Fitch, Wyoming County Business Accelerator Academy Program Facilitator; Russ and Deborah Free, Free Style Mercantile; Jill Gould, Butter Meat Co.; Brianne Blaszak, Endless Outdoors Company; Brenda and Eric Kelly, Tackbary's Trophies and Gifts; Mike Fitch, Wyoming County Business Accelerator Academy Program Facilitator

Wyoming County Business Accelerator Academy- Fall Participants



L-R Front: Amy Bailey, The Gainesville Store; Ryenne Smucker, R & R Salon;

L-R Back: Jeff Fitch, Wyoming County Business Accelerator Academy Program Facilitator; Nathan Hand, Datum Works, LLC; Rodd Proefrock, Vertical Café; Jen and Andy Gniazdowski, Lake Effect Heating & Cooling; Mike Fitch, Wyoming County Business Accelerator Academy Program Facilitator (not pictured Michelle Snyder, Windy Brew)

Wyoming County Business Mentorship Program

Are You Ready... for What's Next?

What does the future hold for my business?

Am I moving in the right direction?

Have I prepared for the "new normal"?



The Wyoming County Business Mentorship Program was developed to connect experienced Business Mentors with Small Business owners with up to 8 hours of no-cost, one-on-one consultation.



Participants explore the issues that matter most to their growth; analyze and prepare their business operations for the "new normal"; improve their existing practices in response to the changing environment; learn how to build and sustain momentum in their business; develop new strategies on growing their business, and learn how to open new markets and gain new customers.

Twenty-four businesses have enrolled in the program since its inception.

Wyoming County Business Center's Micro Loan Program

The Wyoming County Business Center, Inc. administers a micro loan program utilizing grant dollars provided by the Wyoming County Board of Supervisors that were originally sourced from grant dollars from the NYS Office of Community Renewal.

The following business received funding from the program in 2022.



Diner on the Run, LLC - The funding was used to finance the purchase and equip a food trailer, inventory, and working capital.

Listed below is the current portfolio of micro loans that are currently being administered:

1. Canaan's Butcher Block
2. Datum Works, LLC
3. Diner on the Run, LLC
4. JKW Unlimited, LLC
5. Majestic Hill Coffee Roasters, LLC
6. Max's Bakery
7. Sands Restaurant, Inc.

8. Silver Lake Ventures, LLC
9. West's Bookkeeping Services, LLC
10. Windy Brew, LLC
11. Wyoming Gas Light Market, LLC

Total Loan Portfolio \$ 297,915.09

In 2022, the following businesses paid the balance of their loan.

Jacked 24/7, LLC
 Relax Salon & Spa, LLC
 Wolcott Brothers Music

The micro loan program is specifically designed to help finance startup businesses and higher-risk loans. The program is a very effective tool in helping Wyoming County's entrepreneurs startup and grow.

Re-Start Wyoming Loan Program



Recognizing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on our small business community, the Wyoming County Business Center Board of Directors established the

Re-Start Wyoming Loan Program. The purpose of the loan program is to assist small businesses in Wyoming County that have been impacted by the COVID-19 health crisis and to help "re-start" their businesses as governmental orders restricting business operations in Wyoming County were eased or lifted.

Funds from this program may be used to provide eligible borrowers with funding to modify current business operations to adapt to governmental orders imposing restrictions on business operations; provide funding to assist in the re-opening of their businesses within 30 days once governmental orders have been lifted; and provide funds for payroll support, rent assistance, payment of utilities, replenishment of inventory, employee health care and accounts payable.

Listed below is the current portfolio of Re-Start Wyoming loans that are being administered:

1. Hybrid Design and Construction
2. Invictus Barber & Brand, LLC
3. Jay Bee Contracting, LLC
4. Jemgo, LLC d/b/a Butter Meat Company
5. Loch Life, LLC
6. River Spring Lodge, LLC
7. Silver Lake Brewing Project, LLC
8. The Gainesville Store, LLC
9. The Quilter's Daughter



Loch Life, LLC Ribbon Cutting

Total Re-Start Wyoming Loan Portfolio \$64,578.86

Business Attraction Marketing

One of the important services of the WCBC is to conduct business attraction marketing for Wyoming County. The following marketing activities were undertaken during the year.

1. Jim Pierce continues to serve on the Board of Directors for Invest Buffalo Niagara (IBN), our regional business attraction marketing partner. This appointment helps the WCBC maintain high visibility of Wyoming County as a place to consider for business expansions and relocations. IBN provides the WCBC business leads for projects looking for sites that meet their needs.
2. Jim Pierce remains active with the Greater Rochester Enterprise (GRE) also a regional business attraction marketing partner. GRE provides the WCBC business leads for projects looking for sites that meet their needs.
3. The one-stop website for economic development for Wyoming County continues to be a source of leads for businesses looking for locations and well as a source of economic development services for our existing businesses and cultivating entrepreneurs for the FastTrac program.
4. The WCBC has a section in the Wyoming County Business Directory that features the FastTrac program and the WCBC business attraction marketing information. The directory is distributed to 20,000 households and businesses.



Industrial Real Estate Development Strategy

The regional business attraction entities of Invest Buffalo Niagara (IBN) and the Greater Rochester Enterprise (GRE) shared with the WCBC and WCIDA several leads during 2022, unfortunately, 90% of the leads are for existing industrial buildings and Wyoming County, much like Western New York does not have any vacant industrial buildings and as a result, many business prospect leads are lost. This building shortage led to IBN creating an Industrial Real Estate Development Strategy Committee of which Jim Pierce is a member. The Committee was presented with the plan by a consultant and now has moved into the implementation phase of the project.

Workforce Development Initiatives

The WCBC continues to play a key role in supporting and developing regional workforce programs to help address the workforce shortages for our existing businesses. Jim Pierce continues to serve on the Board of Directors for the GLOW Workforce Development Board which guides the investment of workforce funding where it is needed in the GLOW counties.



The WCBC in collaboration with GLOW regional workforce service entities have worked on initiatives to help address the skill gaps and attract and raise the awareness of the region's youth for high-growth, high-demand careers in agriculture, manufacturing, and skilled trades.

In 2022 GLOW with Your Hands held its annual career awareness and interactive event in person. GLOW with Your Hands provides an engaging, hands-on, applied experience for students and educators to increase student awareness and interest in local, high-growth and high-demand industries. This year's event was held on September 27, 2022 at the Genesee County Fairgrounds in Batavia.

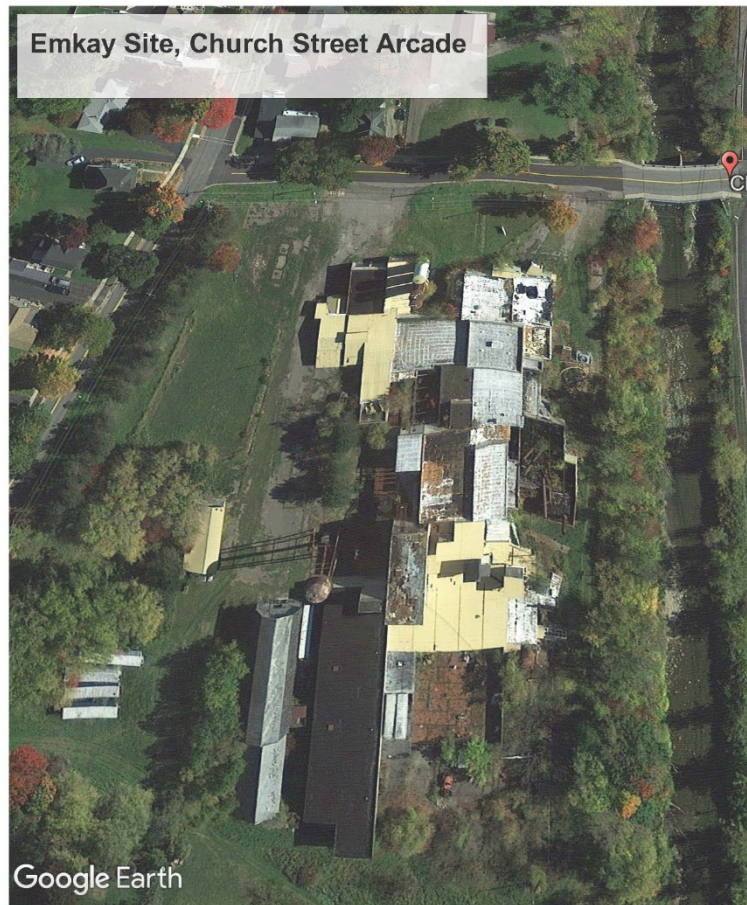


A record year! 1,000+ students representing 30 school districts from the region attended the interactive event with 65 GLOW vendors from the region representing manufacturers, agriculture businesses, trade unions, contractors, colleges, and other organizations.



Environmentally Challenged Development Sites

One of the roles that the WCBC has historically served in Wyoming County is being the entity willing to investigate and work on plans for the redevelopment of former manufacturing sites that are potentially contaminated with environmental issues. This has led to the WCBC's involvement in the former Emkay cheese processing site located on Church Street in the Village of Arcade. The site has been abandoned for 20 years and has many deteriorated buildings. It is environmentally challenged and classified as a Brownfield with the completion of Phase I and Phase II Environmental Assessment Study conducted by the WCBC in 2021. There is also another 5 acres of adjacent land added to the site which now encompasses 15.1 acres in the heart of the Village.



To carry out the cleanup work on the site, the WCBC formed a new not-for-profit affiliate entity known as WCBC North, LLC. The entity will own the site and be responsible for the cleanup. The WCBC North, LLC developed a letter of interest and sent it out to regional brownfield developers in the region in hopes of identifying a private sector development partner. This process resulted in finding Frontier Global Companies out of Buffalo and a partnership was formalized with a Designated Developer Agreement.

In the fall of 2021, WCBC North, LLC in partnership with the Frontier Global Companies and Labella Associates applied for an EPA Brownfield Cleanup grant of \$500,000. The grant application required a 20% funding match. The WCBC North, LLC

committed to matching \$50,000 and Frontier Global Companies also committed \$50,000. In May of 2022 news arrived that the EPA had awarded a \$500,000 Brownfield Cleanup grant to WCBC North, LLC for the first phase of the project which will include the demolition and disposal of all of the structures on the site. The cleanup is expected to begin in the summer of 2023.

Conclusion

The WCBC will continue to play a vital role in the economic development of Wyoming County. The WCBC plays a key role in the assistance of retail projects, development of entrepreneurs, micro lending, marketing for business attraction, and striving for solutions for our workforce needs and work to redevelop environmentally challenged properties.