

Wyoming County Business Center, Inc. Annual Report

Accomplishments and Objectives December 20 18



**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 2018 Annual Report. The WCBC celebrated its 12th year anniversary and has continued to make tremendous contributions in furthering the growth of Wyoming County's economy.

One of our economic development strategies is to encourage and support entrepreneurship development continues to serve a vital role for Wyoming County. The very successful FastTrac program held two cycles of the 10-week long program by coordinating both a spring and fall class in 2018. The results for the program are quite remarkable since the inception of this program in 2010. To date 77 businesses have opened in Wyoming County creating 130 jobs. These businesses are generating a new source of jobs and sales tax revenue for Wyoming County.

The WCBC will continue to provide a very important role in economic development and will remain in place to carry out activities such as assistance for retail projects (which the IDA is prohibited from doing) micro lending, business attraction marketing, and entrepreneurship development (FastTrac Classes).

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 and our staff to administer the vital economic development 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 the lead economic development agency in Wyoming County. The WCBC is a private, not-for-profit local development corporation that is in its seventh year.

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, Small Business Development Center and the Wyoming County Business Education Council.

Board of Directors 2018

- Richard Fish Sr., Chairman
- Sam Gullo, Vice Chairman
- Jeremy Satchell, Treasurer
- Dan Leuer, Secretary
- James Brick

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WCBC Economic Development Activities

FastTrac Program

KAUFFMAN **FASTTRAC**®

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

A key component of the 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 WCBC, has proven to be very effective entrepreneurial program in Wyoming County. The program is designed to develop sound business plans and get new businesses started off on the right foot.

This year there were many changes implemented by the Kauffman Foundation. A new product was introduced to affiliates combining and updating content from three of the prior courses offered, a new online Learning Management System was implemented, a new affiliate structure was established and the product was rebranded. The transition process had many challenges and manuals were no longer available for the traditional classroom style setting. A custom manual with coordinated power point slides and value-added materials was developed by staff.

Kauffman Foundation Executives from Kansas City, MO visited the first class of the spring session to see first-hand how the Wyoming County FastTrac program is helping entrepreneurs succeed in a rural community. Their visit prompted Matthew Fischer, Director of New Entrepreneurial Learning in Entrepreneurship along with Kim McGrew, Program Associate in Entrepreneurship and Lauren Aleshire, Senior Content Marketing Specialist in Public Affairs from the Kauffman Foundation to attend the spring graduation and spend a day visiting FastTrac alumnus. Data and video footage were gathered and developed into Wyoming County success story videos along with a FastTrac marketing video. This was the first time Kauffman Executives visited one of their program affiliates and they chose Wyoming County based on our track record.



The Wyoming County FastTrac classroom style program is now being used to support new entrepreneurial learning and shared with other affiliates and programs across the country as a model for best practices.

FastTrac is offered twice a year, in the spring and fall. The training includes a fast paced and challenging itinerary which spans over a 10-week period including guest speakers and interactive activities. The topics include analyzing the viability of the business idea, assessing the market place, 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 Bank of Castile, Complete Payroll and Five Star Bank** and the workforce development resources available to participants through **Community Action for Wyoming County**. The results for the program are quite remarkable since the inception of this program in 2010. To date 77 businesses have opened in Wyoming County creating 130 jobs.

FastTrac Spring 2018 Graduates



L-R Back Row: Jeff Fitch, Program Facilitator; Jennifer Tyczka, Program Manager; Lauren Aleshire, Kauffman Foundation Senior Content Marketing Specialist in Public Affairs; Peter Soetemon III, Michelle Fontaine, Russ Free, Erin Becker, Jackie Copeland, Tonya Roberts, Matthew Fischer, Kauffman Foundation Director of New Entrepreneurial Learning in Entrepreneurship; Jim Pierce, Program Director; Mike Fitch, Program Facilitator

L-R Front Row: Rosemary Shader, Community Action for Wyoming County Executive Director; Inessa Jackson, Sylvia Previty, Jackie Hoyt, Deborah Free, Brianne Blaszak, Michelle Sia, Kim McGrew, Kauffman Foundation Program Associate in Entrepreneurship

Spring 2018 Business Concepts

Convenience Store	Outdoor recreation and fitness	Tea Shop
Health & Wellness Center	Auto salvage & parts	Woodworking
Embroidery & screen-printing	Hyperbaric oxygen therapy	

FastTrac Fall 2018 Graduates



L-R Back Row: Jeff Fitch, Program Facilitator; Jennifer Tyczka, Program Manager; John Shonk, Justin Britton, Jim Pierce, Program Director; Mike Fitch, Program Facilitator

L-R Front Row: Paul Rissinger, Lindsay Rissinger, Stephanie Luders, Theresa Adams, Julia Ferrini

Missing from photo: Margaret VanArsdale and Jamie VanArsdale

Fall 2018 Business Concepts

Dairy goat operation/Agri-tourism	Photojournalism
Bed & breakfast	Paint night events
Restaurant/bar	Salon/spa
Delicatessen	Real estate investment
Graphic design solutions	

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



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

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 requested and received funding from the program in 2018:

1. **Majestic Hill Coffee Roasters, LLC, Castile**-The funding provided this business working capital for equipment that they needed to expand the business.
2. **West's Bookkeeping Services, LLC, Perry**-Financing from the program provided an established business working capital to purchase software and hire staff.

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

1. Attica Pharmacy, Inc.
2. Canaan's Butcher Block
3. Jacked 24/7, LLC
4. Little Bell Enterprises, LLC
5. Majestic Hill Coffee Roasters, LLC
6. Silver Trail Outfitters, LLC
7. Spotlight Theater of Warsaw, LLC
8. Stang Tek Service
9. Swept Away Hair Studio & Day Spa, LLC
10. Twice is Nice Boutique, LLC
11. West's Bookkeeping Services, LLC
12. Wolcott Brothers Music
13. Country Homes & Interiors
14. NY Stork Exchange

Total Loan Portfolio \$215,098.26

In 2018, one business paid the balance of their loan.

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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.

Business Attraction Marketing

One of the important services of the WCBC is to conduct business attraction marketing for Wyoming County. A three-year marketing plan was developed and centered on three industry targets for business recruitment efforts they are agribusiness, advanced manufacturing and recreation. The following marketing activities were undertaken during the year.

1. Invest Buffalo Niagara, our regional business attraction marketing partner, appointed Jim Pierce to serve on their Board of Directors which has helped raise the awareness of the business opportunities of Wyoming County.
2. Invest Buffalo Niagara in a broadcast to agribusiness prospect in Canada featured the 28 acres site owned by the Wyoming County IDA in Arcade.
3. We formally had 3 websites dedicated to economic development resources in Wyoming County, it was confusing for online searchers, so the WCBC in partnership with the IDA created a new website. It is now a one stop website for economic development for Wyoming County. It was launched in August of 2018 and in the four months following we have tracked 1,600 hits to the site.
4. We featured the business attraction video for recreation/tourism on LinkedIn.
5. A Facebook page dedicated to FastTrac and items focused on business attraction continues to average about 2,000 reaches per month with approximately 750 engagements. All 3 videos for each of the industry targets have been posted on the Facebook page with the recreation/tourism video by far being the one most viewed and commented on.
6. We have a section in the Wyoming County Business Directory that features the FastTrac program and the WCBC business attraction marketing information. This year the section is in color on printed on glossy paper. The directory is distributed to 20,000 households and businesses.
7. The direct mail postcard developed to attract hotel developers that was sent out last year to hotel owners within 150 miles of Wyoming County, a strong prospect. Indus Development Group out of Rochester will be building a 67 rooms hotel on the site of the former Manor Oak Nursing Home on rt. 19 in Warsaw. The project is fully permitted to begin construction. Marketing materials were also shared with a hotel development group out of Buffalo who is considering a hotel in Arcade and they are currently conducting their due diligence.

New Website Launched in 2018

The Wyoming County Industrial Development Agency (WCIDA) launched a unified economic development website www.wycoida.org. The new website consolidates and creates a one-stop location for accessing everything that Wyoming County has to offer developers, entrepreneurs and start-ups, and businesses looking to expand or grow in Wyoming County.

The new website effectively consolidates previous websites including the Wyoming County IDA, Wyoming County Business Assistance Corporation (WCBAC), and the Wyoming County Business Center (WCBC).

The new website hosts all of Wyoming County's economic development resources making it easier to access financial assistance, learn about available development sites, start a business, and access demographic data. The website also hosts a section on quality of life, links to social media and partner resources, and provides easier access to the very successful FastTrac entrepreneur training program. It also contains a section hosting the mandated compliance documents required by law for public engagement and review.

The website was developed and designed by Civic Plus, the specialized municipal web development company Wyoming County used to redevelop its website wyomingco.net, which launched last year.

Business Prospect Leads Shared by Invest Buffalo Niagara and the Greater Rochester Enterprise

The regional business attraction entities of Invest Buffalo Niagara (IBN) and the Greater Rochester Enterprise (GRE) shared with the WCBC and WCIDA 26 business leads during 2018. The leads include the needs of the proposed project, if any of the available sites in Wyoming County meets the infrastructure specifications of the prospect they are submitted to IBN and GRE and shared with the business prospect for their consideration. Unfortunately, many of the project leads we could not respond to because Wyoming County's building inventory is very limited, good buildings are scarce or we could meet their other needs usually related to a specified location. The majority of business leads want an existing business.

Below are a couple of projects that sites were submitted for:

- Project Marigold-this is a Canadian food processing company. This project was looking for a 100,000 sq. ft. building which we do not have, fortunately they were also considering a build to suit option on 10 acres of real estate. The WCBC submitted the Steele Avenue Business Park Parcel A in Arcade that is owned by the IDA for consideration.
- Project Gymnast is a Canadian business that manufactures zero emission vehicles and are projecting the creation of 300 jobs. The company was looking for a building of 100,000-200,000 sq. ft. Unfortunately, we do not have a building available of that size. They are however also considering a build to suit option on

a minimum of 12 acres. The WCBC submitted the Steele Avenue Business Park Parcel A in Arcade that is owned by the IDA for consideration.

Workforce Development Initiative

The Board of Directors has requested that the WCBC explore the development of workforce program which may include subsidizing some training costs to help elevate some of workforce shortages for our existing businesses for positions such as CDL drivers and machinist and many other entry level production workers. The workforce shortage is not just a problem for Wyoming County it is a regional and state-wide problem and it seems to be a growing problem.

It seemed logical that the best place to start some dialogue on this issue would be to gather a meeting several of the workforce development entities that currently serve Wyoming County. A meeting was held in December of 2017 with the Wyoming County Business Center, Chamber, Business Education Council, Community Action Employment and Training and BOCES. While there was some good discussion it was recognized that not all of the players were at the table and there still some pieces missing to begin seeking some solutions. The next step is to make plans to hold a workforce roundtable summit in January 2018 and be sure to have all of the players are in on the discussions. Invited to the roundtable meeting were the entities from the original meeting but would also now include, Workforce Development Institute, GCC Best Center, Addeco, WC Dept. of Social Services, Literacy West, Senator Gallivan's office and the GLOW Workforce Development Board.

The hope of the next roundtable meeting is an opportunity to gather information, share ideas, and seek solutions. As a roundtable we hope to learn about available resources; determine next steps and potential strategies; identify barriers and disconnects that may exist; learn about financial assistance; share vital information and avoid redundancy. We hope to create a working dialogue among a group of partners who can advance the issues that may be identified, and to find solutions that will benefit our businesses and job seekers. We also hope to learn more about all of the organizations and the populations served; and to discover potential ways to leverage everyone's capabilities to the benefit of employers and existing/potential employees. Two meetings were convened

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 strive for solutions for our workforce needs.