

IGNITE



IGNITE RURAL

Business Accelerator Program

The IGNITE logo features the word "IGNITE" in a bold, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a circular icon with a sunburst or gear-like pattern.

November 6, 2025
5:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Waupun City Hall Auditorium

A Program of



WHAT: Envision Greater Fond du Lac's 5-week business accelerator program, Ignite Rural, has been preparing local entrepreneurs to pitch their next big idea.

WHO: The Ignite Rural Business Pitch event is a contest between the Ignite Rural 2025 cohort.

HOW: Audience vote has an influence on the final outcome.

IMPACT: Awards are an investment into the winning business ventures.

1st Place - \$30,000

2nd Place - \$20,000

EVENT TEAM



FACILITATOR

Raina Lyman
Senior Director of
Economic Development,
Envision Greater Fond du Lac



KEYNOTE

Steven Knuth
Founder & Owner,
TNT Fitness Results, LLC



JUDGE

Dana Nielsen
Project Manager,
Wisconsin Economic
Development Corporation



JUDGE

Andy Glewen
Founder & Owner,
A. Glewen & Sons
Excavating Inc.



EMCEE

Pat Miller
Founder & Owner,
Small Business Owners
Community



FACILITATOR

Zachary Beasom
Economic Development
Coordinator, Envision
Greater Fond du Lac



JUDGE

Craig Much
Vice President -
Business Banking,
Horicon Bank



JUDGE

Kathy Doyle
Business Development
Manager, ADVOCAP



JUDGE

Jeff O'Brien
Founder & Owner,
Legacy Express

MEET THE COHORT



Nicole Sippel, Airy Point Farms

Airy Point Farms has become a beloved local destination for flowers, pumpkins, and community connection through the Art of Agriculture. To build on this foundation, we propose the renovation and construction of a year-round workshop and community space on the farm.

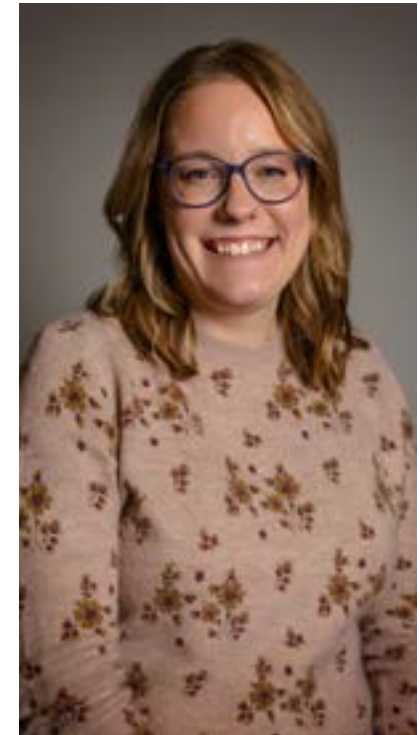
This expansion will create opportunities for visitors, neighbors, and local organizations to gather, learn, and celebrate agriculture beyond the growing season. Rooted in our mission of sustainability and community involvement, the new facility will provide lasting value to both our farm and the greater Fond du Lac County area. Airy Point Farms' Workshop will transform our farm into a year-round destination where sustainability, agriculture, and community come together. By creating an indoor gathering place, we can extend the reach of our mission, inspire meaningful connections, and ensure that the farm continues to thrive as "The Art of Agriculture: Locally and Lovingly Grown."

Christina Kartechner, Kartechner Girls and Flower Co.

Kartechner & Girls Flower Co. opened its storefront in March 2024 after growing from a home-based business launched in 2021. We've proven that a modern flower shop can thrive in Waupun by blending locally sourced blooms with curated gifts, décor, and everyday beauty.

Our next step is relocating to Main Street to secure a permanent home that fuels growth and downtown revitalization. Ignite funding will support this move, funding renovations to create a bright, welcoming space with expanded products and a walk-in cooler to meet rising demand for weddings, sympathy work, and daily arrangements. A branded delivery van will extend our reach, improve efficiency, and boost visibility across the region.

Relocating will enhance Waupun's Main Street with a vibrant, modern destination that attracts visitors, creates two to three new jobs, and strengthens the city's "City of Sculpture" identity-making us a lasting cornerstone business.



MEET THE COHORT

Andrew Rieder, Agile 3D Solutions

Agile 3D Solutions is an innovative 3D printing enterprise that bridges the gap between consumer creativity and small-scale manufacturing needs through two distinct but complementary revenue streams. Founded by an experienced product engineer with over 10 years of industrial design expertise, our company leverages cutting-edge additive manufacturing technology to deliver custom solutions that traditional manufacturing cannot efficiently provide.

We provide custom design and 3D printing services to small and regional manufacturers, offering rapid prototyping, low-volume production runs, and specialized components. With our advanced equipment portfolio including Creality K1, Ratrig Vcore 4, and Prusa XL 5-toolhead printers, we can handle a wide variety of materials from PLA and ABS to Carbon Fiber or Glass-filled Nylon and Polycarbonate, serving manufacturers who need quick turnaround without minimum order quantities.



Michael Strzelecki, Last Mile Parts

Last Mile Parts LLC is a start-up company that my wife and I began in January of 2025. We specialize in sourcing automotive parts of older vehicles that are less available to the consumer market and retailing them online across multiple platforms. We offer significant cost savings and fast delivery to empower car enthusiasts and everyday drivers to keep their vehicles running smoothly and affordably.

Funds would be invested in building a website, marketing, inventory and adding storage capacity to allow an expansion of product offerings.



MEET THE COHORT

Tara Riteris, 151 Salon

With 25 years in the beauty industry, I built a career grounded in creativity, connection, and exceptional client care.

this151bar. is a clean-beauty line crafted for renewal and simplicity. Each concentrated bar replaces bottled shampoo, conditioner, and body care — offering a sustainable, sensorial approach to everyday self-care.

Designed to reduce waste, clutter, and excess, this151bar. invites a return to intention:

- Less waste.
- Less clutter.
- Less ingredients.
- Less disruption.



Olivia Halbur, Halbur's Heavenly Hill

Olivia and Ted Halbur are the fourth-generation farmers at Halbur's Heavenly Hill located on Hwy 23 just east of Fond du Lac. Halbur's has transitioned over the last five years from a cow dairy farm to Texel sheep, custom dairy heifer raising, and crops. We offer educational hands-on field trips for the community, engaging the young to the very old. We also offer the best lamb meat around because customers can purchase lamb born, raised, and harvested all in Fond du Lac County!

To continue offering our community high-quality services and products that we are known for winter housing for the flock must be expanded.



MEET THE COHORT

Kurt Wismer, GRiTedu

GRiTedu addresses the growing crisis of student mental wellness, disengagement, and lack of essential human skills. Built on neuroscience and leadership science, GRiTedu is a research-backed curriculum that helps students understand how their brains learn, manage stress, and build resilience, communication, and relational intelligence.

Unlike traditional social-emotional learning (SEL) programs, GRiTedu integrates neuroscience, journaling, project-based learning, and executive tools to strengthen school culture and student leadership. Proven data shows gains in wellness, resilience, and attendance, positioning GRiTedu as a scalable, evidence-based solution supported by a train-the-trainer model that prepares students for success in school, work, and life.



Katie Fuhrmann, Salchert Meats

For nearly a century, Salchert Meats has been a trusted name in Wisconsin's Holyland community, a USDA-inspected, family-owned meat market and processing plant known for quality and craftsmanship since 1928. Now we're taking that legacy to the next level. After seven years of investment in infrastructure, licensing, and product development, Salchert Meats is launching Calanna, a new wholesale line of premium, alternative-protein snack sticks.

Calanna was founded by Katie Fuhrmann and her family, lifelong dairy goat farmers, cheesemaker, and industry leaders who helped build LaClare Family Creamery into a nationally recognized brand. Her next mission: create value where it's been missing. While goat cheese demand continues to climb 7% annually, the goats themselves remain underutilized. Calanna bridges that gap, transforming locally sourced goat meat through Wisconsin dairy goat farmers, into shelf-stable, high-protein, clean-label snacks that deliver both flavor and purpose.



MEET THE COHORT

Andrea Cisar, Founder's Collective

Founder's Collective is a podcast, resource hub, and co-working space created for rural entrepreneurs building real businesses in small towns, often between school drop-offs, late nights, and weekend shifts.

It's for founders who want to grow something meaningful in the places they love, even when resources are limited and the path feels lonely. At its core, Founder's Collective is about connection, encouragement, and action. What began as a podcast and online resource library offering simple tools and honest conversations is now growing into a physical co-working and incubator space, a home base for dreamers and doers.

Because when you're the only one in town doing it like this, it can feel isolating. Founder's Collective exists to remind you: you're not behind, you're building something that matters.



Kaitlyn Kenealy, Into the Woods Wellness

In many rural communities, healthy food is the missing piece of the wellness puzzle. Convenience options are everywhere, but nutrient-rich, balanced meals that support both physical and mental health are hard to find.

Into the Woods on Wheels ("Woodie") is our solution. Woodie is a mobile extension of Into the Woods Wellness, bringing intentional, high-quality nourishment directly to the community. Woodie is more than food—it's wellness in motion. By meeting people where they are—schools, workplaces, events, and neighborhoods—Woodie transforms how communities experience everyday wellness.

Funding from Ignite Rural will complete the truck build-out, scale our meal-prep operations, and expand outreach, allowing Woodie to bring holistic, accessible wellness across Fond du Lac County and beyond.



ABOUT ENVISION



Our Mission

We bring stakeholders together to pursue opportunities that improve economic vibrancy, strengthen community identity, and invest in the next generation.

Our Vision

To be the regional leader driving greater economic opportunities for all within our thriving and engaged communities.

Envision Greater Fond du Lac is the combined Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Office serving all of Fond du Lac County. Through collaboration and steadfast optimism, Envision Greater Fond du Lac strives to bring stakeholders together to improve the economic vibrancy of the communities they serve. With the goal of being the regional leader and convener of economic opportunities, Envision Greater Fond du Lac believes in challenging the status quo to help shape the future.



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