

SUCCESS STORIES 2018

**WEDA'S MISSION IS TO PROMOTE
LEADERSHIP AND SUPPORT TO FOSTER
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN WYOMING**

Technology and innovation are changing the business landscape in Wyoming. The determination and ingenuity of local entrepreneurs has led to the launch of tech companies throughout the state and even existing companies are finding ingenious ways to incorporate new technology in their business model. From small startups located in Makerspaces to companies with national clientele, these Wyoming businesses are redefining what it means to be a pioneer. These tech cowboys are charting their own course and drawing attention to Wyoming in the process.

2018 has been a year of unprecedented change and forward progress. The legislature enacted bills that made Wyoming blockchain friendly - a distinction that sets Wyoming apart and positions the state to attract investment from around the world. The synergy of the blockchain community was on full display at the WyoHackathon, held this September at the University of Wyoming. The event garnered international attention and led to several companies making commitments to invest in Wyoming. This type of progressive thinking is going to continue propelling Wyoming's economy forward.

This is exactly what the ENDOW Initiative was founded to do - create economic diversity in Wyoming. Through targeted legislative efforts, economic development initiatives, and the support of local and statewide organizations, Wyoming tech companies are competing on the national stage and creating numerous opportunities for job growth and economic diversification in the process.

The Wyoming Economic Development Association and the Wyoming Business Council are working with economic developers, stakeholders, business and community leaders throughout the state in support of diversification and expansion projects, in tech and other sectors. The ENDOW Initiative has created a clear vision and path to follow. Along that way, we must stop to acknowledge successes throughout the state so that we can build on their momentum. We have included success stories here to demonstrate the power of progressive thinking, partnerships and what can be achieved by actively supporting businesses in our state.

Our mission is to continue to support the innovators, entrepreneurs, business owners, and professionals who are passionate about growing Wyoming's economy. By promoting ongoing learning, statewide collaboration, and economic diversification initiatives, WEDA is on the front line of economic development. We are helping propel Wyoming forward into a more prosperous future.

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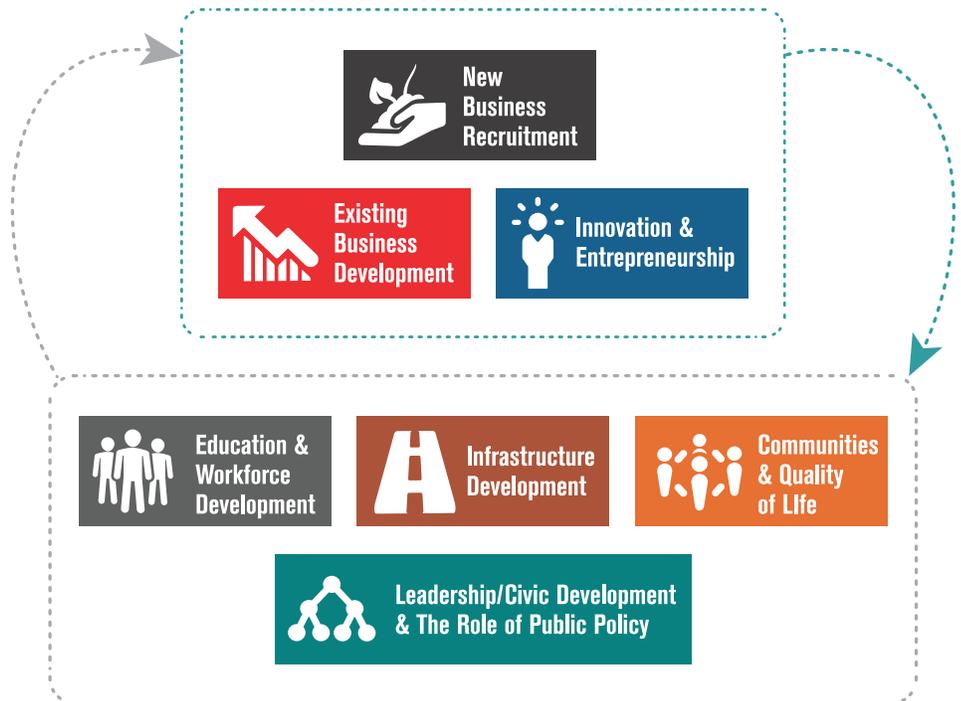


INFRASTRUCTURE AUTHORITY

BUILDING BLOCKS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Cycles of Development

PROVIDE \$ FOR INVESTING IN BELOW



PROVIDE FOUNDATION FOR ABOVE



VIRTUAL REALITY COULD CHANGE WORKFORCE SAFETY TRAINING FOREVER

Technology is making it possible for Wyoming entrepreneurs to reach customers across the state and the country. Patrick Kelley, owner of Kelley Integrity Safety Solutions, is using 3D technology to do just that. His company is using virtual reality to deliver safety training programs and certifications.

KELLEY'S INSPIRATION-- A SIMPLE DESIRE FOR WORKERS TO STAY SAFE.

In the United States, 5,190 workers were killed on the job in 2016 (OSHA, 2018), while globally, 2 million people die at work every year (Buehler, Werna, & Brown, 2017). Kelley has personally been on jobsites where seven different people have lost their lives. After one of these accidents, as he loaded up tools for a wife of a dead co-worker, he watched the couple's five-year-old son hug his three-year-old sister, knowing that they would never see their Daddy again. This inspired him to take action to empower workers on how to stay safe, know their

rights, and work in an environment where their chance of being injured would be significantly reduced. Kelley believes the best way to do this is to train workers directly so that they will demand safer working conditions and understand what each one of them can personally do to stay safe. He believes in some ways that this is more effective than regulation, because workers are the ones on the frontlines.

Delivering comprehensive safety training programs has been challenging because it would typically require an employer to bring in a safety consultant, which means workers would need to take time off work to attend the training session. This is not always possible and leaves many workers uneducated and exposed. Kelley came up with a solution - deliver safety training online using virtual reality.

VIRTUAL REALITY HAS THE ABILITY TO DISRUPT THE SAFETY TRAINING INDUSTRY.

Kelley initially started to put his safety courses online because clients were contacting him with a desire to train one to three people. He bought cameras and started filming live presentations and training sessions, but found that the material was too dry and lacked the engagement they were looking for. From there, the company began animating the videos to make them more interesting and have now moved to virtual reality. VR has made it possible for the training sessions to be more engaging, but also to document the level of a participants understanding. This is where the power of technology really shines. For example, in a forklift safety course, there is an operator evaluation. Both the operator evaluation and equipment training is necessary for earning a certification. This can be done in virtual reality, making the evaluation significantly more safe. If a participant runs over someone in VR, the program starts over. Training errors don't result in real-world consequences, such as a potential accident. Kelley's solution is a safe way to demonstrate an understanding of workplace policies and the material learned.

EXPANDING OPERATIONS

Kelley Integrity Safety Solutions is located in Goshen County Economic Development's Business Incubator. Kelley said that the assistance he has received through the incubator can not be overstated.

"The Goshen County Economic Development group has offered more assistance than we can even take advantage of. I would not be where I am today without their help and support. They helped to create our business plan, do proposals, create a growth plan and even took us on a trip to the University of Wyoming to look at different VR technology that is now being implemented in our training courses."

This is a great example of a business harnessing the power of working with a local economic development group and participating in a business incubator. Businesses that take advantage of these opportunities have access to a plethora of resources, insights, and connections that can help their business launch or expand. For Kelley, these connections were vital in making the jump from recorded training sessions to virtual reality. That jump has revolutionized Kelley Integrity Solutions and has the ability to disrupt the entire safety training industry.

Kelley's clients now include one of the largest oil companies in the world. The power of technology means that their next client could be any company, anywhere in the world. No longer are companies tied to geographic locations or forced to travel for work. Wyoming companies can offer more services than ever before by simply implementing the right tools and having a strong support structure behind them.

For more information contact, Patrick Kelley, CET and Summer Kelley <https://www.kelleyintegrity.com/contact.html>

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS REVOLUTIONIZING WYOMING COMPANIES

Artificial intelligence (AI) can do more than power robots. AI is making it possible to do more and go further than ever thought possible. There is an AI revolution taking place in Wyoming, one that's changing the way Wyoming companies operate. It is being led by research, but a wide swath of the business community can leverage this evolving technology.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS DISRUPTIVE

With its ability to make things intelligent, AI is disruptive technology. By enabling machines to problem solve, make decisions, and utilize their own inbuilt intelligence, this technology is revolutionizing how business is conducted. AI can drive economic growth by making Wyoming businesses more productive and able to do more, without significant capital investments.

AI AND THE ENERGY SECTOR

From a consumer perspective, AI is already changing the way energy is utilized. Products like intelligent light bulbs and thermostats are currently in use across the country, reducing energy usage. The more complex question is how to utilize artificial intelligence in energy businesses. Nick Cheney, Ph.D., a visiting professor of computer science at the University of Wyoming, offered a few ideas.

Machine learning can be used to process data being gathered by machines working underground. Something like seismic data could be taken and processed to determine what the ground actually looks like underneath, or if there are future oil reserves underground. By comparison, even a well-trained specialist could find it difficult to process this level of information.

Simultaneously, drills being used underground are getting smarter and smarter. Using AI, they are able to sense and make decisions regarding what path to take underground. AI can drive them underground instead of having someone review sensory data coming from a drill bit. As the technology progresses, autonomous vehicles could also become advantageous for use underground.

There is also a large potential for renewables in Wyoming. Machine learning can be used to process large quantities of data to determine how to do things like change the wind turbine blade to maximize energy potential based on the turbines' exact location. Knowing how to make these small changes and where to put specific wind turbines to maximize energy, could make a wind or solar farm more efficient and economically viable. A little improvement could go a long way.

MACHINE LEARNING IS THE FOCUS OF AI RESEARCH AT UW

The research being conducted at UW is primarily focused on machine learning, robotics, deep learning, and creating machines that can make decisions over time. This technology is then being used in manufacturing and engineering fields for enhanced production and economic growth.

This is not the only area where AI is changing how business is done. Deep intelligence can be used to gather the data necessary to analyze trends, identify correlations, and provide answers. Using this data, companies are recording more of what is happening with the state of their machines in the industrial process, and with their customers. This has created a need for machines that can process and analyze data, then use that information to make predictions. Data alone does not provide insight. The relevant and actionable information contained within that data does. This is what allows businesses to make decisions critical to their operations or profitability. AI is currently being used in this way by businesses throughout Wyoming, and will likely become even more common in the coming years.

BUSINESSES CAN BENEFIT BY WORKING WITH UW

The UW lab is available to help businesses looking to solve problems using AI. The lab is already working with the Jackson Hole Technology Partnership and assisting startups in the tech space.

Recently, students at the lab used AI to address a Wyoming issue – the tracking of wildlife. With so many wide-open spaces, it can be challenging to determine where animals are, accurately count them, and follow where they are going. Students authored a paper on how to utilize artificial intelligence to process images coming in from small cameras placed in wildlife areas. AI makes it possible to track wildlife automatically, a benefit that can be utilized by state agencies and eco-tourism companies. This same technology can also be used to automatically monitor crops, a benefit to the state's agricultural sector.

AI WAS A TOPIC AT THE 2018 ENERGY SUMMIT

Dr. Cheney spoke about the impact of AI and machine learning at the 2018 Wyoming Energy Summit. He holds a Ph.D. in Computational Biology from Cornell University and a B.S. in Applied Mathematics from the University of Vermont. Nick has also held visiting and affiliated research positions at Columbia University, the Santa Fe Institute, and NASA Ames Research Center. His work uses Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning to study emergent behaviors in Complex Adaptive Systems, with a particular interest in autonomous robots and vehicles. Nick's research has been popular in both scientific and public venues, winning numerous awards at academic conferences, and also featured by venues such as NBC, Popular Science, Discover, and TEDx. Anyone seeking to learn more about artificial intelligence, machine and deep learning, or the potential impact to the Wyoming economy can view his talk here, <http://wyoenergysummit.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/AI-and-the-future-of-energy.pdf>.



WYOMING'S MAKER SPACES ARE A LAUNCH PAD FOR INNOVATION

Wyoming's makerspaces are changing the game by allowing entrepreneurs, small businesses, and local companies to access advanced equipment and high-tech tools that are typically only available to those at universities or major corporations. For example, the cost of purchasing an advanced 3D printer might make it difficult or virtually impossible for an entrepreneur or local company to produce prototypes on a regular basis. Wyoming's makerspaces have created opportunities for creativity and fine-tuning by making this equipment accessible to anyone in the state with a business idea, invention or technical problem they need to solve.

The purpose of these makerspaces is to fuel innovation, make it easier to produce prototypes, and shorten the time it takes for a company to develop an idea and then take that product to market. Shortening this time window is one way to drive Wyoming's economy forward.

There are makerspaces throughout the state that are doing incredible things by helping entrepreneurs and businesses realize their potential.

CENTRAL WYOMING COLLEGE INNOVATION LAB

Leading this statewide effort is Lynne McAuliffe, Dean- Business, Technical, Health & Safety, Central Wyoming College (CWC).

“The college recognizes that students need the skills to be creative and innovative in almost every discipline,” she explained. “We wanted to have a place on campus where students and community members could have access to design software, 3D printers, and co-working space and an entry into learning about these processes and tools.”

The college launched this initiative using a federal grant. With the financial boost from the grant, CWC offered an Innovation Institute program in Riverton and Jackson, and later developed the highly successful Start-Up Intensive Entrepreneurship program in Jackson. As part of that comprehensive initiative, CWC also invested approximately \$100,000 designing and building out the Innovation Lab space. Now, community members can utilize the Innovation Lab to prototype products or even light manufacture 3D parts or items.

To ensure that all community members have access to the space, CWC has partnered with PitchEngine in Riverton. Their partnership initiative, “The Bootstrap Collaborative”, will expand use of this space by offering short courses and programs applicable to entrepreneurship, and host a website dedicated to community resources for entrepreneurs. The partnership is already seeing significant successes from an academic and business standpoint.

“From an academic standpoint we have found some amazing cross-disciplinary uses for the lab and the technology,” McAuliffe said. “For example, the Anthropology class contacted us with the need to scan and print a replica of a skull. They did not want the skull to be handled, so an MRI was sent to our Physics Professor, who then converted it to a printable 3D image and successfully replicated the skull, so it could be sent to the University of Wyoming for facial reconstruction. It was an amazing success. We also have a manufacturer in the area that sends one of their engineers to the lab on a regular basis to prepare small prototypes of products. She even printed a 3D “hand” to function on one of their assembly lines to pick up items”

The Central Wyoming College Innovation Lab welcomes entrepreneurs, business owners, and anyone wanting to learn more about technology and software. It’s also available for those seeking to use the co-working space for creative meetings.

POWELL MAKERSPACE

The Powell Makerspace was championed by two former Microsoft executives, Rick and Judith LaPlante, who saw the opportunity to bring technology closer to the community. According to PEP Executive Director Christine Bekes, “PEP became engaged because, from an economic development perspective, a Makerspace meets our goals of supporting entrepreneurial development, increasing workforce skills and creating an entrepreneurial ecosystem.”

Entrepreneurs in the area are also utilizing the space to prototype ideas, enhance their business or incubate their food business. This is because Bekes has taken a uniquely rural approach to identifying the tools and courses that should be available within their space. Here, members and others will find a variety of technical equipment but also a commercial kitchen and co-working space. This has allowed a wider variety of businesses and entrepreneurs to benefit from the space, some of whom have already graduated into their own business location.

Students are benefiting from the Powell Makerspace as well. Technical students at Powell High School, including those on the robotics team, are utilizing the technical equipment to enhance their education and realize their visions. In 2018, students built their own robotics parts, propelling them to qualify for super regionals in the robotics competition.

MAKING THE FUTURE POSSIBLE

The creators of future technology, the next big idea, and the simple solutions to our everyday challenges could already be living in Wyoming. With access to makerspaces, they can now bring their ideas to life. The sky’s the limit for where they will take us and what impact they will have on Wyoming’s economy.

USING LEGISLATION AND A HACKATHON TO CREATE A BLOCKCHAIN ECOSYSTEM

Billionaires converging in Wyoming? For many this may conjure up images of people in expensive outdoor gear skiing down the slopes in Jackson Hole. Not quite. This time they are coming to UW for business and to support the growing blockchain industry in Wyoming. “Attracting the growing blockchain ecosystem should be a huge win for the citizens of Wyoming,” said Caitlin Long, a Laramie native who is volunteering as co-founder of the Wyoming Blockchain Coalition and chairman of WyoHackathon.

BLOCKCHAIN REPRESENTS SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITY FOR WYOMING.

Long has been diligently working to raise awareness across the state about the opportunity she sees to create a hub for blockchain technology companies in Wyoming. This awareness campaign culminated with legislation in 2018 that eased outdated laws preventing some blockchain companies from doing business in Wyoming, clarified that blockchain tokens are exempt from property taxes, and enabled some blockchain tokens (called utility tokens) to be issued in Wyoming. She wasn't alone in this campaign but had the privilege of receiving support from blockchain technology pioneers like Joe Lubin, the founder of ConsenSys.

To thank supporters for their efforts, she has planned the WyoHackathon in conjunction with UW's College of Engineering and Applied Science. Held on September 7th–9th, the hackathon--a competition for software developers to “hack” together code to solve specified challenges--brought more than 200 participants from across the country and the world. Among them will be leading blockchain entrepreneurs and even a few billionaires who actively support the industry, including Lubin, Overstock.com CEO Patrick Byrne and renowned software engineer Jeff Garzik.

WyoHackathon is a celebration of sorts, but was also an opportunity to bring engineers from across the nation to Wyoming so that they can experience for themselves how blockchain-friendly the State truly is. Among the prizes in the competition is one for the best new business idea that benefits Wyoming, for which Long put up the initial \$5,000 and challenged others to add to it. The hope is that many will choose to work and open companies here.

“The WyoHackathon provides an opportunity for the global blockchain community and the State of Wyoming to converge, thank each other, collaborate, and keep Breakin' Through,” said Long.

BUILDING AN ECOSYSTEM IS IMPORTANT FOR ATTRACTING COMPANIES.

This is the first time a state has put efforts behind creating a blockchain ecosystem, and it has attracted worldwide attention to Wyoming and UW. Wyoming is leading the nation in becoming blockchain friendly and as a result, start-ups are coming to the state. Blockchain is an emerging technology, so these companies represent the innovators, early adopters, and tech mavens that could eventually be viewed as the founders of the industry. Wyoming can capitalize on this by continuing to attract them to the state and supporting their growth once here.

THIS TECHNOLOGY IS ALREADY HAVING AN IMPACT ON WYOMING BUSINESSES.

Blockchain is already promising to revolutionize a historic Wyoming industry – cattle ranching. Beefchain, a local startup that is working with UW, is using the technology to promote the Wyoming beef industry. In the past, it was difficult to prove where cattle came from and, therefore, difficult to market Wyoming beef. Thanks to Beefchain, this is changing. They are now able to track cattle from the ranch to the shelves, something that has made it possible to open up additional markets, giving local ranchers the opportunity to export their beef at a premium price. This is possible because blockchain creates a new opportunity for transparency and building consumer trust.

HOW WILL CREATING A BLOCKCHAIN ECOSYSTEM HELP TO GROW WYOMING'S ECONOMY?

The State of Wyoming enacted five trail-blazing blockchain bills during its 2018 legislative session, and it garnered international attention. This attention is drawing entrepreneurs, investors, and business owners to the state, all of which has the opportunity to create jobs and drive revenue.





WHY A BLOCKCHAIN MANUFACTURER CHOSE TO LOCATE IN WYOMING

What would you do to guarantee that your business was on firm legal footing? For companies in the blockchain space the answer is easy - move to Wyoming. The majority of states have failed to pass legislation around the classification or regulation of blockchain businesses. For most, this creates a risky situation. No legislation means that individual agencies and local governments have the authority to treat each blockchain company with a different set of rules, restrictions, and guidelines. This is no way to operate and makes it difficult, if not impossible, to develop a business plan and operate strategically. As a result, many blockchain companies have chosen to locate overseas. Fortunately, Wyoming is doing things differently. In 2017, the legislature was forward-thinking and passed bills that gave blockchain companies a utility classification. These bills have created a framework companies can safely operate from, leading more blockchain companies to choose Wyoming as their headquarters.

NODE HAVEN CHOSE WYOMING BECAUSE OF PRO-BLOCKCHAIN LEGISLATION

Prior to selecting Wyoming for their business location, NODE Haven reviewed options around the world, and in the US. The 2017 legislation was the primary reason the blockchain hardware manufacturing company chose to base their headquarters here. “When we saw Wyoming was friendly to cryptocurrency and blockchain we found a community that was willing to work with us and that allowed us to stay in the U.S. Wyoming having rules and laws in place makes it safer for blockchain businesses to operate here. That legislation made it possible to place our corporate office in Wyoming” commented NODE Haven CEO Charles Dusek.

NODE Haven was one of the first companies to take advantage of the legislation giving blockchain companies the same designation as a utility company. “Other blockchain companies are coming to Wyoming as well, which is good for the ecosystem and for collaboration” said Dusek.

ABOUT NODE HAVEN

The company will manufacture the equipment that makes mining for Bitcoin possible, something that until now has been controlled by a small group of manufacturers. These cryptocurrency mining and equipment manufacturers decide if they want to use their most advanced equipment in their own mine or sell the equipment to other miners. Typically, they do what is most profitable, so the larger manufacturers take the best equipment for their own mine and sell their old equipment to independent miners who cannot compete when using the lesser grade equipment. NODE Haven is leveling the playing field by enabling independent miners to access advanced technology as it becomes available. Independent miners will purchase a token from the company that will work like a membership and give them access to the latest equipment.

WYOMING LAWS AND SEC REGULATIONS WORK TOGETHER

NODE Haven has begun selling its’ token. Since the equipment is not yet available, they chose to offer it as a security through a Reg D offering. The company’s legal team used the Wyoming bills to craft how the token is used within their platform to ensure that the company is both Wyoming and SEC compliant. This includes taking steps like having a third-party website verify an investors accreditation status. Wyoming’s legislation gave the company confidence in their ability to meet all requirements and regulations in an environment where ambiguity equals risk.

NODE HAVEN HAS THE ABILITY TO DOMINATE THE INDUSTRY

NODE Haven intends to close its round at the end of 2018, begin manufacturing in Q1 of 2019, and have their product ready to ship by mid-2019. By offering their token at a rate of cost plus ten percent, independent miners will experience a significant savings and have the ability to become more profitable. The company is at the very heart of the blockchain and Bitcoin industry. It is quite possible that within a couple years, their equipment will be used by cryptocurrency miners throughout the country and the world.

FUTURE LEGISLATION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

“Wyoming is the most cooperative state for blockchain companies but there is more that can be done.” According to Dusek, proposed laws could make it easier for banks to accept Bitcoin as a form of currency. This is necessary for businesses who are being paid in cryptocurrency but need to convert it to dollars before paying suppliers and employees. Securely storing cryptocurrency is also important, but many banks will not work with a company who deals in cryptocurrency since there is a legislative black hole around this issue. It is currently too difficult for them to measure from a risk perspective. Passing legislation could solve this challenge and open traditional financial markets to Wyoming blockchain companies.

Wyoming has taken significant steps to attract businesses like NODE Haven to the state. Blockchain companies are choosing Wyoming, so the question really becomes how to keep them here and how to help them grow. Passing additional laws related to currency may be one way to do so.



*“Wyoming is the most
cooperative state for
blockchain companies.”*



EVANSTON SOFTWARE COMPANY EXPANDS IN WYOMING AND UTAH

Independent Software Solutions, Inc. (ISS) is a provider of custom software solutions, IT support, website creation, hosting, and network administration. Based in Evanston, the company got its start providing custom software development, maintenance, and support to county governments and state behavioral health institutions. The company has now expanded to serve individual consumers and businesses throughout the state of Wyoming and Utah. They are exporting a high-demand Wyoming product – talent combined with personal attention and common sense.

CHOOSING TO START A BUSINESS

Owner Bryan Johnson started ISS at the prime of his career. Although he had experienced success as a high-level developer, he felt that his opinions were often ignored. Believing that there was a better way to develop software and meet the daily needs of clients, he went out on his own. This has allowed Johnson and his team to spend more time directly servicing clients' needs, instead of spending that time in corporate meetings.

He chose to locate his software company in his hometown of Evanston, where he was drawn back to the community, climate, and mountains of his youth. When an opportunity arose to tackle a development project for an Evanston company, he moved home and set up shop.

"I think it is hard for people not raised in Wyoming to understand the things that I missed by not being here," Johnson said. His return to Evanston was good for business as well. He was able to secure county software development and maintenance contracts from counties that wanted to work with an experienced local provider.

When asked why counties and other businesses have hired ISS, Johnson pointed out that he's a small business that's providing big service.

"We will go out of our way to ensure the client is happy and that we are meeting their business or personal needs. What we do is very personal and customized when it comes to software development. If you are part of a business and ever have a thought about how your business could be better if only you had software that did exactly what you need, we can help you with that, right here in your own state."

BASED IN WYOMING. ABLE TO WORK ANYWHERE.

ISS employees operate out of their Evanston location. From there, they serve local customers and travel throughout the state and Utah to provide IT services and support for their software. Most of their clients are based in Uinta County, but the company's reach extends across Wyoming and into Ogden and Rich County, Utah. "Businesses in Utah are willing to pay for travel costs if they receive good service" commented Johnson.

OPENING A STOREFRONT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO RECENT GROWTH

While the company's clients are located across two states, it has been the opening of a retail storefront in Evanston that has driven much of the company's recent growth. While the business trend is to move storefronts online, Independent Software Solutions found that some customers had a need for face-to-face tech support. Instead of placing a call to an IT support desk to ask technical questions, receive troubleshooting support, discuss equipment needs, or purchase parts, ISS customers can now walk into their location, meet with someone face to face, and receive direct assistance. This level of personal connectivity is often lacking in the tech space and Johnson found his customers appreciated the effort. So much so, that their Utah business has come from word-of-mouth referrals – not advertising. Their local Evanston business has also expanded through word-of-mouth referrals as local customers have told other individuals and business owners about the services available in their hometown.

"People here want somebody that's honest and that they can rely on," Johnson says. "We fit those requirements and provide service that is above what they expect. It can be a more personal level and people enjoy that."

FUTURE GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

"Ultimately, our business is expanding and that is because of the community we are in," he adds. "As we bring on more business clients and provide services for everyday customers at the store, we keep growing. The community urges citizens to shop local and that helps immensely."

ISS is also looking to expand their government software across the state and encourage local governments to keep Wyoming tax dollars in Wyoming by contracting with local companies. "I believe the five counties we currently work with would agree that the software we have created is very user friendly and meets all the needs they have. Our response time is high on support and I know that we have legislative changes programmed and released to our counties before any of our competitors." This success is something the company plans to build upon as they continue to grow.

POTENTIAL FOR OTHER TECH COMPANIES

The story of Independent Software Solutions, Inc. is more than a story about a local boy who grew up, moved away, had a successful career, and found a way to come back home. It's a story about the innovative spirit of Wyoming's citizens. Very often, it is possible to find a better way to do things, the Wyoming way, and start a business to prove it. Wyoming entrepreneurs like Bryan Johnson are finding that their brand of business is getting a warm reception from in-state and out-of-state customers. It's also helping creating abundant opportunities for Wyoming companies to grow.

NGL CONNECTION IS LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY TO BRING HIGH-SPEED INTERNET TO RURAL AREAS

Necessity is the mother of invention. Gregory and David Jones, founders of NGL Connection, grew up without Internet access. Rather than bemoan their loss, they put their minds to solving the problem. The solution they developed as teenagers has grown into a business that delivers high-speed internet to thousands of homes in rural Wyoming.

THE SOLUTION

As teenagers growing up outside Craig, CO, the Jones brothers had no way to access the Internet. Their desire to get online was so great that they figured out how to send the signal through the air utilizing a friend's existing service. They were soon asked to provide the service for their neighborhood, and thus, the business was born.

The technology utilized by the Jones' brothers' company makes it possible to provide high speed internet service to rural areas through a network of links carried by towers to antennas on the structures receiving NGL Connection's services.

MOVING TO WYOMING

There was a viable and targeted need for wireless service in rural areas of Wyoming. Knowing their technology could solve the problem, the Jones brothers purchased an existing company in Wyoming, allowing them to replicate their solution throughout NGL Connection's service area.

Since that time, they have successfully built a wireless internet company that provides service to over 2,300 people in southwest Wyoming and extends into rural parts of northern Utah. The company exists because necessity is the mother of invention.

THE COMPANY TODAY

Today, NGL Connection is a technology company that provides wireless internet service in southwest Wyoming and small parts of Utah. Their services extend from Randolph UT in the west to just east of Lyman WY; and from the area near the Wyoming/Utah border north to Pinedale. They specialize in serving areas that are very remote and have very limited, if any, affordable high speed internet options.



The company has also expanded to provide personalized IT. They provide remote management and technician services for both businesses and residential clients. This allows NGL Connection employees to service computers that are located anywhere in the country. Additionally, they repair computers and resolve hardware issues. To do so, they have 21 employees located in Evanston, Kemmerer, and Big Piney.

PIONEERING SOLUTIONS. FOCUSED ON INNOVATION.

The Jones brothers pioneered a solution to rural Wyoming, and rural America's current challenge – how to access high speed internet without investing millions or billions in infrastructure improvements. While the Wyoming legislature is actively tackling this issue, small business innovation delivers the solution. Wyoming's pro-business, pro-growth environment helped to make this possible. Where the regulatory environment of other states may have made it difficult for the Jones brothers to implement their technology, Wyoming wasn't. As a result, a Wyoming company has grown and more importantly, families and businesses in rural Wyoming now have the high-speed internet connections they need to participate in the global marketplace.

WEDA SUCCESS STORIES 2018

CAMPBELL COUNTY

ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT

ADVANCED CARBON PRODUCTS INNOVATION CENTER

On July 17th, the Campbell County Commissioners approved the subdivision plat for the Fort Union Industrial Park. Approval of the plat clears the way for Energy Capital Economic Development to purchase 9.5 acres of land in the park, which will be used to build the Advanced Carbon Products Innovation Center (ACPIC “Ice Pick”). Funding for the land purchase and building comes from a \$1.5 million Wyoming Business Council grant.

ACPIC will be a center where lab research can be conducted on how to refine coal and turn it into products. This lab is designed to take research to the next stage by proving that concepts can be commercially viable.

“There is an incredible amount of lab research that demonstrates refining coal into products such as carbon fiber, asphalt, fuels of all types, activated carbon, char for agricultural use and much more are very practical,” Phil Christopherson, CEO of Energy Capital Economic Development, said. “In most cases, the research has stayed in the lab and has never developed into marketable commercial products. Times are changing, and there are opportunities to take existing research and commercialize it for new and profitable products.”

Energy Capital Economic Development is partnering with the University of Wyoming School of Energy Resources on the project. The School will use ACPIC for commercialization of some of its research, and private businesses will also be able to lease space in the building.

Construction on the building is expected to begin in late 2019, and the center should be operational spring of 2020.

“ACPIC will provide a new market for Powder River coal,” Christopherson said. “The amount of coal used initially will be small, but as products are developed, the next step would be commercial industrial manufacturing plants to make those products. Over time, and with many different products, the amount of coal used could be significant. This would have a very positive impact on the local economy.”

Gillette

ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT

CRAZY DAISY FLORAL

Janelle Mason opened her independent boutique floral and gift shop, Crazy Daisy Floral, a year and a half ago. Born in Wyoming and raised in Montana, Janelle attended design school at Floral Design Institute in Portland, OR and worked in flower shops across the West before opening a store of her own in Gillette. In addition to offering a fresh selection of flowers for all occasions, Crazy Daisy Floral also offers fun sign painting classes.

Janelle worked with Susan Jerke, Wyoming Small Business Development Center Network Regional Director, to look into the purchase of an existing floral business. The Wyoming SBDC Network also helped her to come up with a business valuation. With the proper knowledge in hand, Janelle decided to open a shop of her own instead. The Wyoming SBDC



Network then worked with Janelle to develop her business plan, prepare a loan proposal and gather market research data. This support was critical for helping Janelle to get her business off the ground. Her floral shop is now an integral part of the Gillette community.

ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT

INCUBATOR FUELS BUSINESS GROWTH

Floyd Wilson decided to become an entrepreneur in April 2014 after seeing the need for oil field service contractors. Working out of his home for three years, Floyd began offering lease operator, roustabout, flow-back watch and other services to oil extraction companies. In July 2017, he outgrew his home office and leased space in Energy Capital Economic Development’s FUEL Business Incubator in Gillette.

FUEL stands for Fostering Upstanding Entrepreneurial Leaders. The incubator was officially named the FUEL Business Incubator and a grand opening was held in September. The incubator provides office space, equipment, mentoring and training to entrepreneurs and growing businesses. Entrepreneurs also receive mentoring from the Economic Development Enterprise Center, Energy Capital Economic Development, and the local Small Business Development Center – all of which are located in FUEL.

In addition to Floyd’s business, the incubator hosts nine businesses ranging from consulting, to mineral-industry support businesses, and a video game development company. With his new office space and support from FUEL, Floyd has continued to see his business, Squaw Creek Services, grow. He currently has 16 employees and annual revenue is around \$1.5 million. Floyd hopes to grow his company to 20 to 25 employees and gross at least \$2.5 million a year.

Floyd and Squaw Creek Services embody entrepreneurship. The FUEL Business Incubator is set up to help businesses like Squaw Creek Services succeed--businesses that create jobs and help diversify the economy.



“We value our great partnerships with organizations like Carbon County Road & Bridge that enable us to make positive impacts and meaningful investments in communities as we move forward with Energy Vision 2020,” said Rita Meyer, Rocky Mountain Power’s Wyoming vice president.

FREMONT COUNTY

Riverton

EXISTING BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

IDEA

AgTerra is a software company developing mapping and electronic data collection applications for the agriculture and natural resource industries. Their solutions are widely used throughout the United States and Canada in pesticide application tracking and reporting; sugar beet production, harvest reporting and grower payment; forestry and wildfire applications, wildlife applications and more.

Pertech Industries, Inc. is a privately-held U.S. corporation specializing in the custom design, development, and manufacture of scanners, inkjet, impact, and direct thermal printers, and printer mechanisms. Their products are widely used in the banking, gaming, money order and kiosk markets. Pertech also offers depot-level repair, contract design, and contract manufacturing services.

Recently, AgTerra needed assistance designing and manufacturing dataloggers for some of the solutions it delivers, so they approached Pertech, an ISO 9000 certified manufacturing facility, to see if they could help. Over the past year, they have worked with AgTerra to manufacture its SprayLogger and other datalogging devices. To continuously improve lead-time and quality, Pertech purchased new printed circuit board assemblies (PCBAs) equipment and offers these cost-effective contract design and manufacturing services to current and new customers.

The two companies have benefited from their collaborative relationship. AgTerra is delivering more robust devices that have had virtually no failure during field operations. The company has dramatically reduced hardware technical support, while increasing customer satisfaction and sales. Pertech’s new equipment purchase has led to the hiring of ten more employees for their operations and an expansion of their service offerings to existing and new customers.

Some people in Wyoming do not think technology can thrive. AgTerra and Pertech are examples of companies delivering hardware and software products that are 100 percent built in Wyoming. They compete on the national and international stage with some of the best companies out there. This makes their employees proud.

ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT

LIL’ TIFFANY’S SPA

An experienced Latina business woman, Teresa Kuhbacher has always loved children and, after owning a daycare center, she decided to open a children's spa for manicures, pedicures and facials. As soon as she opened her doors for children's birthday parties and special events, parents began requesting her services. She listened and expanded her business model to include spa services for adults as well. She is currently adding a hair stylist and remodeling in order to expand her services even further.

Teresa worked with the Wyoming Small Business Development Center Network throughout the entire process. When the business was in the idea phase, Teresa enlisted the help of Wyoming SBDC Network Regional Director Susan Jerke to write a business plan, project cash flow, and form an LLC. When Teresa was ready to hire employees, she worked with Susan to set up payroll.

“Teresa is a strong, positive woman who thoroughly researched her market,” Susan says. “She exhibited patience and persistence as she took classes, passed exams and overcame barriers to open her business. She has succeeded in creating a welcoming place for children, families, and adults to relax and enjoy the pampering services of her spa.”

CARBON COUNTY

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

ROCKY MOUNTAIN POWER

Rocky Mountain Power’s Energy Vision 2020 projects include the start of the Gateway West Transmission line project and a total of 1,150 MW of new wind energy capacity starting early 2019. According to Cindy Wallace, Executive Director of Carbon Co. Economic Development Corporation, this is expected to attract more than 1,000 construction jobs to Carbon County and an estimated \$70 million during construction. This also includes an additional annual tax revenue of \$11 to \$14 million. This project is a success for Carbon County!

Other recent projects include the completion of the new Ekola bridge, as well as the resurfacing of 10 miles of County Road 121 in Carbon County. Funded by Energy Vision 2020, the \$3.2 million bridge and road improvements are part of the company’s infrastructure development plan to support construction of the expanded Gateway West transmission line across southwestern Wyoming.



Lander

ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT SPEEDGOAT COFFEE ROASTING

Greg Skidmore has turned his passion for coffee into an early success that shows no sign of slowing down. Speedgoat Coffee Roasting in Lander sells small batch roasts and currently reaches its customers through local farmers markets and a subscription service. Greg is also working on expanding into a new space and hopes to open a retail store in the next two years.

To get his idea off the ground, Greg met with Sarah Hamlin, Regional Director for the Wyoming Small Business Development Center Network. Sarah helped Greg to create a business plan and financial projections for a loan submission. The Wyoming SBDC Network also helped Speedgoat Coffee Roasting with their accounting practices and offered general marketing advice. Thanks to this assistance, Greg received a microloan from the Wyoming Women's Business Center.

"Greg has taken the local market by storm and has created a strong following of local clientele," Sarah says. "It's exciting to see Speedgoat continue to grow!"

ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT PINGORA YARNS

Pingora Yarns grew out of Carrie Johnson's love for the fiber arts. As an avid knitter looking for high quality and local yarn to work with, Carrie saw the lack of yarn stores in Fremont County as an opportunity. After two years of planning, Carrie retired from her teaching position at Lander Valley High School and made the store a reality. Pingora Yarns provides quality regional fiber from Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Colorado, Utah, and Nebraska. Carrie also offers a wide variety of classes in knitting, crocheting, and felting.

Carrie met with Wyoming Small Business Development Center Network Regional Director Sarah Hamlin to make a business plan, create a financial projection, develop a website, come up with social media strategies, and receive advice on several other general business matters.

"Carrie attended two Start Your Own Business classes with me prior to our first one-on-one meeting," Sarah says. "She has taken every hurdle as a small business owner in stride, from educating herself about POS systems to integrating into the community and finding a new location at the last minute. We are lucky to have Carrie and Pingora Yarns in Lander!"

GOSHEN COUNTY

ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT COBBLESTONE HOTEL

The Cobblestone Hotel is groundbreaking! Goshen County Economic Development Corporation (GCEDC) completed a Hotel Feasibility Study that proved a need for a 54-bed hotel to support the tourism economy. In 2017, Goshen County welcomed over 97,000 overnight visitors which generated \$27.7 M in travel spending, resulting in 280 jobs with \$1.5M in travel-generated taxes. GCEDC then wrote and was awarded a Targeted Brownfields Assessment grant through the EPA. This allowed them to complete an environmental assessment for the redevelopment of a blighted property on Main Street for use as a potential hotel.

GCEDC is pleased to announce that they were able to assist the developers in prepping this brownfield site on Main Street for the future new home of a three-story, 54-room Cobblestone Hotel. The addition of this \$5.8M property will bring 12 new jobs and have an economic impact of \$435K in tax revenues for the state and \$315K for the City over a five-year period. Additionally, GCEDC leveraged \$1.2M in New Market Tax Credits to make this community funded project happen. The new hotel has also been awarded funding through the GCEDC Progress Program which is funded by the ¼ cent economic development sales tax.

This project reflects the tourism efforts that are in full swing now that GCEDC has merged with the county's Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center. In the past year they have leveraged state dollars to install signage infrastructure and participate in co-op marketing programs, in addition to attending tourism trade shows to help promote the area.

ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT NEW BUSINESSES

Entrepreneurism is alive and well in Goshen County. To date GCEDC has assisted 104 businesses with a total of 33 in this fiscal year. 25 have opened, creating 44 jobs with a 90% success rate. The Goshen Enterprise Center (a Wyoming Business Council funded project leverage with the ¼ cent economic development sales tax funds) hosts four tenants, making it the only private incubator in the state.

Lingle

COMMUNITY CENTER

The Wyoming Business Council awarded the Town of Lingle \$365,567 for the \$1.1M Community Center multi-use facility. This is an effort to revitalize the Legion Post #63/Community Center, making it into the main building for the Legion #63 post and Women's Auxiliary, along with a storm shelter and a community gathering space. The current facility does not meet current safety code or ADA standards and is not salvageable. Demolition of the building will leave a vacant space on Main Street and the loss of the building also leaves residents without access to a storm shelter or community gathering space. This project will give local residents a place to hold meetings, gatherings, elections, wedding receptions, graduation celebrations, showers, craft fairs and miscellaneous events. The project will go out to bid Fall of 2018.

Torrington

ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT

EVERGREEN PLAZA ASSISTED LIVING PROJECT

Currently, GCEDC is pursuing a \$3M grant through the Wyoming Business Council for a \$7M, 23,980 square-foot, 30-unit assisted living facility. The Evergreen Plaza Assisted Living Project will be constructed on a 3-acre site which the City of Torrington redeveloped and donated to the Goshen Care Center Joint Powers Board (GCC JPB). GCC JPB will own the facility, which will be leased to Welcov Healthcare to operate. Welcov Healthcare currently operates the Goshen Care Center and Evergreen Court Living Center. The project will meet the demand for assisted living as identified in market studies done in 2012 and 2018 and will keep more seniors in the community who might otherwise seek assisted living in Nebraska and other communities. Healthcare is the largest employer and fastest growing economic sector in Goshen County and this expanded level of care for seniors will promote a continuum of care while creating 39 jobs. Additional project benefits include supporting a population of up to 37 senior residents; savings of \$64, 834 per person per year savings to the Wyoming Medicaid program; local tax revenues of \$325,701 in property and sales tax to the local community; \$3.8M of capital investment. Healthcare is the leading employer for the county and the GCEDC is aligning career pathways with Eastern Wyoming College and Goshen County School District for this new pipeline of workers for this project.

LARAMIE COUNTY

Cheyenne



ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT

ENDLESS CHRISTMAS

While the Christmas season lasts for only a short time, a pair of Cheyenne business partners would like to see the spirit of Christmas continue throughout the year. Leann Dooley and her partner, Darren Blauser, opened their Christmas-oriented shop in June 2017. While Christmas-themed crafts are well-represented in the store, a large selection of other Wyoming-made items are also available.

The Wyoming Small Business Development Center Network provided valuable assistance to Leann and Darren before the launch of Endless Christmas. John Privette, the Wyoming SBDC Network's regional director for Goshen and Laramie counties, helped with the business plan development and financial projections that resulted in the owners being able to secure bank financing and subsequently open the store.

To get the word out about her business, Leann maintains a strong presence on social media sites like Instagram and Facebook. She also belongs to a referral network and the local chamber of commerce. In the future, Leann would like to expand their retail sales and do more for the community.

ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT, EXISTING BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

MICROSOFT

Dennis Ellis is leading the Microsoft TechSpark program in Cheyenne, a program designed to spur innovation and regional growth. "Wyoming is building strong momentum to diversify our economy while strengthening traditional energy, agriculture and tourism sectors. I'm excited Microsoft is aiming to make technology a fourth leg of Wyoming's economy which will help create good career opportunities for everyone," said Ellis (Greenwald, 2018). Through TechSparks, Ellis is working with local partners on issues that include developing digital skills, increased internet connectivity, nonprofit support, digital business transformation, and nonprofit support.

Microsoft President, Brad Smith, wrote, "The TechSpark initiative focuses on five program areas: digital transformation, digital skills and computer science education, career pathways, rural broadband, and support for nonprofits. In each region we will have a signature project which will be a major investment that we hope will help accelerate a community's transformation.

Our hope is that TechSpark will help communities and businesses work better together to address critical economic challenges at the local level. We believe this model of a deep, long-term community partnership can help communities address their unique needs and create a future-ready workforce and be a catalyst for economic investment and opportunity for all Americans" (Brad Smith, 2018).

Microsoft's TechSpark initiative is aligned with the momentum happening throughout the state and the efforts being put into promoting innovation and the further use of technology. Their investment in the state is helping to move Wyoming's economy forward.

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EXISTING BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

TROPHY CREATIVE

In December 2016, Sara Weber and Shawndae Ogle purchased Wyoming Trophy & Engraving, an awards and personalization business that had been part of the Cheyenne business community since 1964. Now known as TROPHY Creative, the business has added branding and personalization solutions such as embroidery, screen printing, laser engraving, graphic design, and promotional products. TROPHY Creative's goal is to be a one stop shop for all the community's gift and business branding needs.

To get started, Sara and Shawndae worked with John Privette, Wyoming Small Business Development Center Network Regional Director, to develop a business plan and determine the business valuation. They used that information to successfully obtain commercial financing with an SBA loan guarantee.



"John was a great source of information and support in our journey to buy the business," Sara said. "That's the atmosphere we want for TROPHY - we want TROPHY to be a place people feel comfortable collaborating, sharing and hanging out."

TROPHY Creative now has six full-time employees and one part-time employee.

Pine Bluffs

EXISTING BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

PINE BLUFFS DISTILLING

Pine Bluffs Distilling's Rock Ranch Vodka & Rusted Ring White Whiskey is going national and will soon be available in five states, as well as Wyoming. With the assistance of industry expert Tom Carr, Chairman and CEO of Carr Spirits, Rock Ranch Vodka and Rusted Ring White Whiskey will be put on the shelves in Arizona, New Mexico, Kansas, Colorado and Oklahoma by October. Vodka and whiskey lovers in South Dakota will be able to purchase Pine Bluffs Distilling's spirits after January 1, 2019. In addition, discussions are underway to sell the two products in six more states by the end of 2019.

Rock Ranch Vodka and Rusted Ring White Whiskey are made entirely of Wyoming grains and are the product of months of growing, harvesting and hard work by Pine Bluffs Distilling, which is owned and operated by Chad and Kathy Brown and Gene Purdy of Pine Bluffs, Wyoming. "We've put our heart and soul into producing these spirits, and it's finally paying off," said Chad Brown. "We look forward to now sharing our premium 'farm-to-distillery' Wyoming vodka and white whiskey nationwide."

Mixologists describe Rock Ranch as the "Swiss Army Knife" of vodkas because it works just as well in mixed drinks such as Bloody Mary's or Moscow Mules as it does in a basic dry martini, making it the only vodka a person ever needs. Fans who currently enjoy Rusted Ring White Whiskey say it is unique and celebrates Wyoming's colorful past. Rusted Ring is a specially-blended corn, wheat, and barley whiskey made from locally grown ingredients.

NATRONA COUNTY

Casper



ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT

GRAB AND GO GOURMET

Maggie King is a classically trained chef who decided to turn her dream into a reality. After seven years of teaching cooking classes at Natrona County High School she decided to put her culinary degree and skills back to use in Wyoming by starting Grab and Go Gourmet—a shop where customers can purchase fresh, healthy meals to go. Her greatest initial hurdles were finding a good location and financing the venture.

After considering several buildings, Maggie was able to lease the ground floor of the 12/24 Club in Casper. Maggie worked with Cindy Unger, Wyoming Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network business advisor, for help with business planning and financial projections. Having also owned a restaurant, Cindy was a great person to brainstorm with in the initial phases of planning Grab and Go Gourmet.

Almost a year later, Maggie is smiling as she completes her first Estimated Tax Return, because the fact that she has to pay taxes means that her business is making money. Maggie also provides catering for events and creates “take and bake” frozen dinners that can feed a family of up to eight. She is also staying true to her teaching background by offering cooking classes in her community on Saturdays.

PARK COUNTY

Powell



ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT

ELITE WEST REALTY

On February 1, 2017, Amanda Zaddock opened the doors of Elite West Realty in Powell. She had grown up in a family that always seemed to be buying, selling, or remodeling properties. Later, she acquired experience in the worlds of banking, property management, and real estate.

Upon opening Elite West Realty, Amanda reached out to Bruce Morse, the Wyoming Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network’s Regional Director for Big Horn, Hot Springs, Park, and Washakie counties. Together, they explored ways to incorporate Amanda’s ideas into a winning strategy. The Wyoming SBDC Network’s Market Research Center also took an in-depth look at Amanda’s online presence. Additionally, the center provided a wealth of demographic and psychometric information to assist Amanda in her decision-making.

“It was really helpful having someone go through our entire website, pick it apart and let us know what aspects looked great and what aspects needed help,” Amanda said. “Online marketing is really our focus. I think that’s where the buyers and clients are, that’s where everyone goes these days.”

After the launch of Elite West Realty, it didn’t take long for Amanda’s business to take off. Her husband, David, soon joined her in the firm. Amanda also brought in three additional agents and moved into a larger office to accommodate the brisk growth. Halfway through 2018, Elite West Realty was nearing the goals it had set for the entire year.

Elite West Realty is now expanding its reach across the northern Bighorn Basin. A midsummer snapshot of listings included properties in Powell, Byron, Cody, Greybull, Lovell, and Basin.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

POWELL IS BUILDING A NEW CONFERENCE AND COMMUNITY CENTER

As an All American City, Powell is a charming community that regularly hosts regional events such as the Park County Fair, trade shows, and expos. To expand upon the opportunity to attract visitors to Park County, the city of Powell will use a \$2,623,724 Wyoming Business Council grant to build a 10,000 square-foot conference and community center to complement a privately developed 70-80 room hotel. The project will increase Powell's room capacity by 50 percent, create 30 new jobs and boost sales tax revenues from visitors. The conference center and hotel will further position Powell as an attractive location for conferences, regional meetings and events. It will also help the community to build upon the activities happening at Northwest College. Simultaneously, the hotel, along with events held at the new conference and community center, may make Powell more attractive to tourists visiting nearby Yellowstone National Park.

Cody



ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT

BIG HORN PAINT

Andy Shearer, owner of Big Horn Paint in Cody, tries to take the guesswork out of painting projects. To help ensure optimal results, he stocks only premium-quality paints and stains. He also uses his custom tinting and matching expertise to ensure customers have the right products for their jobs.

After working part-time at Big Horn Paint for several years, Andy entered discussions with the previous owner about buying the business. But valuation and price were major sticking points. So, in 2016, he contacted Bruce Morse, the Wyoming Small Business Development Center Network's regional director for Big Horn, Hot Springs, Park, and Washakie counties, for assistance. After a false start or

two, Andy and the previous owner finally reached an agreement, and the sale was completed in July 2017.

"I wouldn't have bought the business if not for Bruce helping get the numbers in line," Andy said. "I wouldn't have gone through with the purchase if it hadn't been for the SBDC."

After finalizing the deal, Andy immediately went to work sprucing up the store, overhauling the accounting systems, streamlining his supplier list and negotiating better prices. His prices overall have dropped an average of 10 percent across the board. Andy also has increased his inventory by about 30 percent and hired new staff to improve customer service. The bottom line is that Big Horn Paint's sales have doubled when compared to year-earlier figures.



ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT

CANYON HAND THERAPY

In 2011, Allison and Beau Tipton opened Canyon Hand Therapy in Cody. Since then, they have been using resources available to Wyoming entrepreneurs to continue growing their business. At Canyon Therapy, the team provides physical and occupational therapy health care services that work with patients across the Big Horn Basin to reduce pain, improve function, and increase strength and mobility.

Allison was a participant in one of the first Cody Business Boot Camp programs of which the Wyoming Small Business Development Center Network was a founding partner. The Wyoming SBDC Network also provided the business with some benchmark financial information for their industry. The Wyoming SBDC Network's Market Research Center performed a website optimization analysis for the business, and shortly thereafter they had SBDC Regional Director Bruce Morse do a Financial Health Check-up.

The company has shown steady growth since inception in terms of both gross revenue and net profit. The company has added employees each year as well, with a total of 8 currently on the payroll.

BUSINESS EXPANSION

GUNWERKS IS EXPANDING IN CODY

The city of Cody is working with the Wyoming Business Council to aid a local company, Gunwerks in their expansion. Founded in Burlington in 2008, Gunwerks now boasts 58 employees designing, manufacturing and testing precision rifles, optics, rangefinders and ammunition, in addition to offering training programs for long-range shooters in Burlington and other locations around Cody. The city of Cody is using a \$6 million grant and loan package from the Wyoming Business Council to construct a 36,080 square-foot facility to aid the expansion of Gunwerks. Once construction is complete, Gunwerks will lease the building from Forward Cody. Securing the funds to construct the building was essential for helping to make the company's Cody expansion possible. With a facility to grow into, the company will be moving forward with their growth plans. They are expected to create 52 new jobs and increase payroll by more than \$3 million – a significant win for Cody's economy.

SHERIDAN COUNTY

Sheridan



EXISTING BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

WYOMING ROOFING

Ryan Gregory is president of Wyoming Roofing, a residential and commercial roofing company based in Sheridan. His business provides all types of roof systems as well as insulation, awnings, and gutter protection. Additionally, the company manufactures metal roofing. Overall, the firm employs about 32 people.

Before buying the business in 2012, Ryan contacted Susan Jerke, the Wyoming Small Business Development Center Network's Regional Director for Campbell, Crook, Johnson, Sheridan, and Weston counties, for help with start-up questions. Since then, Susan also has helped with such matters as human resources issues and training grants.

"She was just a great advocate," Ryan said. "It's a wonderful service. I don't know if I would have been able to do it without her."

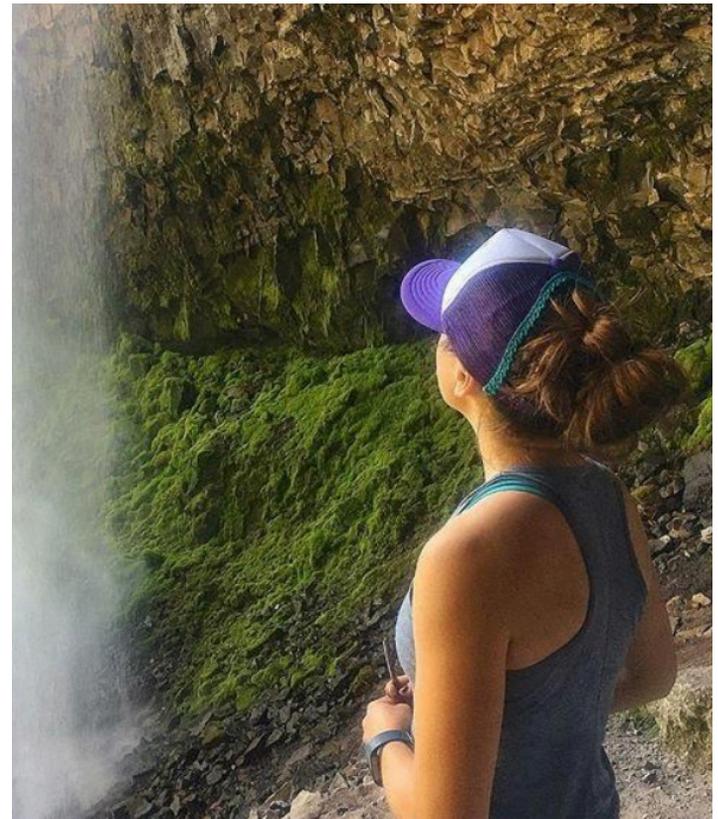
Under Ryan's leadership, Wyoming Roofing has experienced steady growth. In addition to its branch office in Gillette, the company envisions several more branch offices in coming years.

"We plan to have five offices in the state of Wyoming by 2021," Ryan said.

EXISTING BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

SHERIDAN BUSINESSES ARE ACCEPTING CRYPTOCURRENCY

Forward Sheridan and Downtown Sheridan introduced the idea of bitcash enabled businesses to some of our local retailers. Quite simply the business proposition is to open sources of revenue (customers) to an emerging market - digital currency. Sustainability of existing business, especially retail, is a challenge so there was a positive response to the concept of exploring a new market. Spencer Kuzara, a local block chain programmer reached out and requested that Future Sheridan (FS) convene some businesses to discuss the option. FS reached out to six businesses, the Chamber of Commerce, Sheridan Tourism, and the Mayor, who all spent an hour learning about the opportunity. Crypto or digital wealth is estimated to be around \$150B and growing. More importantly, a new market demand is emerging for places where the bitcoin crowd can purchase goods or services using bitcoin. Currently, there are some options for purchasing real estate, Microsoft Products, Expedia Hotels and goods or services from several national businesses. Knowing this, the key is to identify the best means for implementation. As this time, we have six businesses in Sheridan that are bitcash /bitcoin enabled. People can stay, eat, purchase clothes, buy tack and enjoy craft beers using bitcash. This is a remarkable opportunity for Sheridan businesses to gain national exposure by having their information displayed on www.where.cash and other directory sites. As Wyoming continues to entertain cryptocurrency /coinbase and potential changes in digital banking, Sheridan has emerged as a frontrunner. According to Jay Stender, CEO of Forward Sheridan, "If you can use Venmo or PayPal, you can use bitcash – something Sheridan businesses are making it easier to do."



SWEETWATER COUNTY

Rock Springs

ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT

JOGEE'S JUICE BAR

For health-conscious consumers, JoGee's Juice Bar is like an oasis in the desert. The Red Desert of Sweetwater County, to be exact. JoGee's Juice Bar in Rock Springs offers a wide selection of healthy and delicious choices found nowhere else in the area. Menu items include a variety of smoothies, energy bowls, juices, salads, and sandwich wraps.

JoGee's is owned by Jo Lynn and Gene Emerson. The business launched on March 20, 2018, but before they opened their doors, Jo Lynn contacted Rob Condie, the Wyoming Small Business Development Center Network's regional director for Lincoln, Sublette, Sweetwater, and Uinta counties. Rob reviewed Jo Lynn's business plan and offered valuable suggestions for improvements. They also discussed business locations and financing, and Rob provided Jo Lynn with tools to perform such tasks as cash-flow projections.

So far, Jo Lynn says business has been good. To get the word out, she markets on social media, through radio spots, and at special events held in the community. Jo Lynn is already thinking about the future. Eventually, she would like to own a facility rather than rent and perhaps have a commercial kitchen. Green River residents have encouraged Jo Lynn to open a business there as well.

TETON COUNTY

Jackson

ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT

TRUCKETTE HAT CO.

In the summer of 2014, Stacie Tunison of Jackson was backpacking in the Wind River Mountains, wearing her usual gear including a mesh "trucker" cap. The hat, however, simply did not allow Stacie to wrap her hair in a bun. So, she took a knife and simply cut out the back of the hat, thus planting the seed for Truckette Hat Co. – maker of a modified trucker-style hats designed for active women. To help her bring this product to customers, Stacie turned to Sarah Hamlin, the Wyoming Small Business Development Center Network's Regional Director for Fremont and Teton counties.

"As Stacie was getting started, we spent time discussing who her ideal customer was," Sarah said. "Having a well-defined target market, combined with Stacie's infectious energy both in-person and her online marketing channels has helped her create a loyal Truckette family."

Together, Stacie and the SBDC worked on an online marketing plan, graphic designs, bookkeeping, strategic planning and more. "One of the most influential things Sarah helped me with was a connection with the University of Wyoming," Stacie said. "UW law students did a huge search through the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and helped me find all patents on any type of related product. I don't know how I would have ever been able to do that otherwise."

Stacie has since filed for a patent on her Truckette hat design and also has a trademark on her logo. In the summer of 2018, Stacie successfully completed a Kickstarter campaign, raising 130% of her \$6,000 goal.

Evanston

EXISTING BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

HIGH COUNTRY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH (HCBH)

The City of Evanston and Uinta County have experienced several economic successes in the past year. In September 2017, High Country Behavioral Health (HCBH) exercised their option to purchase the 9,000 sq. ft. building, which had been built utilizing a Wyoming Business Council-Business Ready Community grant. The project, which included \$1 million from the WBC, \$1 million from (HCBH) and infrastructure and property costs from the City of Evanston, created a multi-purpose medical space, which has now been successfully returned to the private sector with plans for future expansion. The project has established and maintained more than a dozen permanent positions and kept an essential business within the community. The revenue recaptured from this project in the form of lease payments and the final purchase is currently being used to assist with other local economic development ventures.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND LEADERSHIP AND PUBLIC POLICY

ROUNDHOUSE READY FOR BUSINESS (PHASE II)

The Roundhouse Ready for Business (Phase II) project is also nearing completion. In 2016, the City of Evanston received a \$3 million grant from the Wyoming Business Council to prepare the three (of four) unused sections of the historic railroad roundhouse for business purposes (The first section was restored in 2009 and is used as public event space). The project included window and brick restoration and utility extension to the nearly 50,000 sq. ft. (65,000 sq. ft. total) building once utilized by Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) to repair engines and railcars along UPRR's mainline. The project has been immensely impactful in that it has also inspired two separate philanthropists to donate to the project. The donors have provided funds to construct doors and windows on the north side of the three unused sections, making them much more investment ready. During this phase, the city has received several inquiries from businesses wanting to operate in the refurbished portions. Aesthetically, the renovation has greatly improved the entrance into Evanston's Union Center Business Park. What was once a blighted, boarded up structure is now a beautiful, unique and iconic business space.

LEADERSHIP AND PUBLIC POLICY

MARKETING EVANSTON

The City of Evanston also received a USDA (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture) Rural Development grant in July 2018. The grant will help to create a variety of marketing materials, including professional photographs, videos, brochures, pamphlets, posters, and other literature to promote and advertise several of Evanston's (city-owned) structures and sites available for business development. In addition to these city-owned business sites, the project will include several of the community's public attractions, such as parks, schools and recreational areas. The materials will emphasize the many benefits of locating and/or expanding a business, institute or event to the community.



ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT

WRAP-N-SNAPS

Jackson businessman Sam LaCasse has developed a practical way for children to display and share their passions. The Wrap-n-Snaps system consists of bracelets and a variety of interchangeable snaps, which are attached to the bracelets. Sam officially launched his new business in October 2017. Within a few months, Wrap-n-Snaps was already receiving plaudits in the marketplace, including a coveted 2018 Family Choice Award.

Sarah Hamlin, the Wyoming Small Business Development Center Network's Regional Director for Fremont and Teton counties, helped Sam with social media development and offered tips on how to increase followers on a variety of platforms. At the same time, the Wyoming SBDC Network's Market Research Center provided a website analysis report. Sam also has received trade show assistance from the Wyoming Business Council.

Sam said interest in Wrap-n-Snaps continues to increase. His products now appear in stores around the nation – even in Puerto Rico – as well as online at retailers like Amazon.com

UINTA COUNTY

LEADERSHIP AND PUBLIC POLICY

UINTA COUNTY PLANNING GRANT

The County was awarded a planning grant (\$50,000) to prepare a regional targeted industry implementation plan. The region includes Uinta and South Lincoln Counties, which are both economically and geographically similar. The plan, once completed, will create a comprehensive and realistic strategic blueprint to both recruit and cultivate identified target industries in the region. Through the planning process, the region will determine image, assess economic baseline and define competitive advantages, while also creating a comprehensive marketing strategy to attract a more diverse spectrum of targeted industries, as well as, strengthen and retain existing businesses. The planning grant was awarded to Thomas P. Miller & Associates out of Indianapolis, IN.

WYOMING
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
ASSOCIATION
W E D A

WEDA
1401 Airport Parkway
Suite 300, Cheyenne
WY 82001

307-772-9146

INFO@WYOMINGEDA.ORG

WYOMINGEDA.ORG