



NORTH DAKOTA
Women's Business
CENTER



2025 ANNUAL REPORT

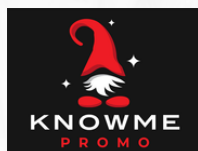
Amplifying the economic voice of business owners through
advocacy and access to critical resources.

OUR PARTNERS + PROGRAM SPONSORS



U.S. Small Business Administration

Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As NDWBC celebrates its 25th anniversary, I am filled with immense gratitude for the journey we've shared alongside thousands of small business owners across North Dakota. For a quarter of a century, our mission has remained steadfast: amplifying the economic voice of entrepreneurs and fostering a future where every business owner has the opportunity to thrive.

This past year we expanded our reach with virtual intensives and launched new community chapters, ensuring that resources and support are accessible statewide. At the same time, we confronted pressing challenges like the childcare crisis, equipping providers with tools to build sustainable businesses and strengthen workforce participation.

Our data proves that our programming is successful and creates powerful networks for growth. Graduates leave with enhanced financial literacy, strategic planning skills, and renewed confidence to scale their businesses. These outcomes reflect the heart of NDWBC.

Looking ahead, we are excited to introduce Voxa, our new community engagement platform, designed to deepen collaboration and provide on-demand resources for the challenges our clients face most. We are also amplifying our friendraising efforts to build partnerships that advance economic equity and prosperity for all.

Thank you for standing with us as we continue to champion small businesses and create opportunities that strengthen North Dakota's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Together, we are building a brighter, more prosperous future for all.



Christy Dauer, NDWBC Executive Director



OUR VISION

The leading voice, resource, and partner for women business owners.

OUR MISSION

Amplify the economic voice of business owners through advocacy and access to critical resources.

SUPPORT OUR MISSION



Simply scan the QR code to make a difference today. Your help matters!

WHO IS NDWBC?

A community of entrepreneurs, corporate executives, and economic development thought leaders with a shared goal of small business support. We are dedicated to amplifying the economic impact of our clients.



Velva Strong Women, Strong Connections Event Successful



North Dakota Women's Business Center (NDWBC) is the leading voice, resource, and partner for women business owners and leaders that communities thrive when these women succeed. During the recent Strong Women, Strong Connections event held on November 22nd, local business community leaders and supporters were brought together for a session of inspiration and networking. NDWBC Executive Director Christy Deane opened up the meeting with Tanya Lee, Project Manager and a member of the NDWBC Advisory Committee. One of two successful local business women guest speakers was Mary Brackins, who is a baker specializing in designer cookies. Mary talked about the importance of collaborating with several types of businesses to enhance or create more value for your product. "I also think it's important how to handle negative criticism," she explains, "and how to create an alternative product." She believes having a "don't sweat the small stuff" attitude in business is a key point for her. She stressed that not everything will always go as planned. Delays happen, prices go up, among other minor incidents. It's not the end of the world and worrying will accomplish nothing. She was excited about this event and very honored to be involved. Taylor Mattingley started out a few years ago rebranding furniture that excelled into painting and opening up Velva Painting. Taylor is now a full time painter in Minot and the surrounding area. As a wife and mother of three, raising her own business allows her the freedom to spend time with family and enjoy her second passion of hunting and fishing. Kristina's message to people understanding their first try point for her. She stressed that you may not always be a success or the perfect choice for the lifestyle you want. "You're not giving up if it doesn't work out," she said. "That is life's way of telling you something else bigger and better is coming, but don't sit and wait. Go out and find it. Find a year person and turn it into a career." Kristina Brackins was also scheduled to speak, but was not able to attend due to a scheduling conflict.



NDWBC ROADMAP TO SUCCESS

The NDWBC team deliberately challenges our clients, ensuring they become capable, well-rounded entrepreneurs. By means of our Roadmap to Success, our no-fluff training and resources advance clients as they make important connections and build their confidence to address their challenges.



Business Accountability

With the right education and training, our clients get tools and resources to move their business goals forward in a genuine relationship with our trusted coaches.



Impactful Connections

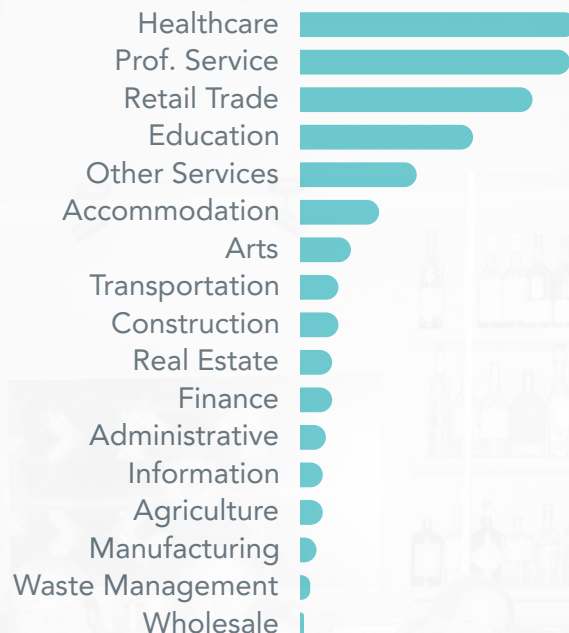
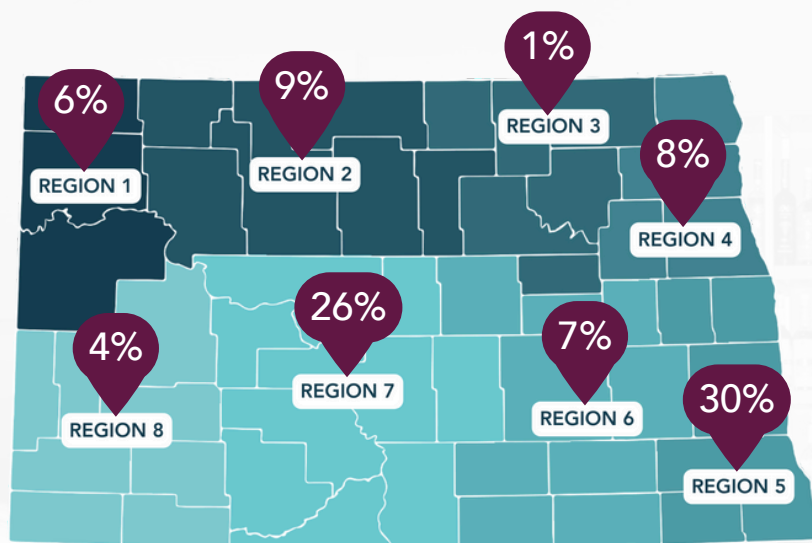
Our programs enhance our client's networks and encourage honest, non-competitive discussions, helping them build momentum to invest in their businesses.



Enhanced Credibility

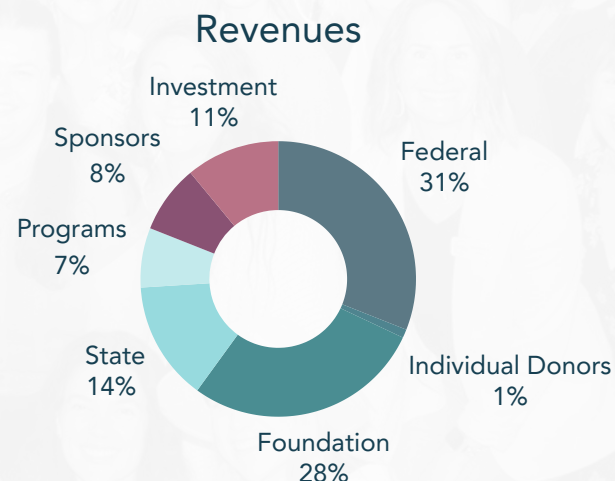
Our clients can leverage their position with certifications as they build their brands and expand their reach all while building on viable businesses.

CLIENTS SERVED



HOW WE MAKE AN IMPACT

OCTOBER 1, 2024 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2025 FISCAL YEAR STATS



ADVANCING CHILDCARE BUSINESS SUCCESS



\$225K INVESTED IN NORTH DAKOTA
CHILDCARE BUSINESSES

 **99% WOULD RECOMMEND THE
INTENSIVES PROGRAM**

 **90% EXPECT REVENUE GROWTH**

**PROGRAM
PARTNERS**



**STEARNS
BANK**

In 2025, we continued expanding our childcare business education offerings to strengthen financial understanding, business leadership, and long-term sustainability in North Dakota's childcare sector. We graduated our 3rd and 4th Childcare Intensive cohorts—a ten-session program focused on business acumen, financial clarity, and operational leadership.

This year, we held a Childcare Accelerator, a growth-oriented program powered by a grant award. Through a partnership with Stearns Bank and the Association of Women's Business Centers, each of the ten Accelerator graduates will receive a \$10,000 grant to implement a strategic business project developed during the course.

NDWBC Childcare Intensives Accelerator has been a true game-changer for my business. Before joining, I had the passion and vision to grow my business, but this program gave me the roadmap, tools, and confidence to make it happen...

Thanks to NDWBC, I'm now expanding into a larger facility, creating new jobs, and serving more families in my community. This program doesn't just teach you how to run a childcare business — it empowers you to build something lasting, meaningful, and sustainable for your community. I'm deeply grateful for the opportunity and the incredible team who made it possible.

Mary Grace Brendel
Little Blessings Academy
Bismarck, ND



I absolutely love this class; it has certainly been life-changing for me. I went from an in-home childcare to a center with the help of this program. I feel empowered and well-equipped to continue the work that I started. I feel like if or when I need help, I have been provided with resources. I am beyond grateful for the NDWBC team, the mentors, the guest speakers, and my peers who have become family — as well as the incredible partnerships with Child Care Aware of North Dakota, Stearns Bank, and the Association of Women's Business Centers (AWBC), whose collaboration and support have helped make this journey possible.

Tonette Brackins
Little People's World
Fargo, ND



TRANSFORMING IDEAS INTO STATEWIDE SUCCESS

WESTERN NORTH DAKOTA EXPANSION



NDWBC is working to expand in-person offerings in Western North Dakota. Over the past year our staff has held open office hours, free business coaching, and business collaboration meetings in Dickinson. Building on this presence, NDWBC is a partner in the newly established Western North Dakota Entrepreneurial Cohort System, a regional initiative launching in Dickinson. The program aims to connect entrepreneurs and key partners through education, economic development, and community collaboration to accelerate business growth, support startups, and expand opportunities.

BUSINESS LEADERSHIP INTENSIVES

NDWBC's Business Leadership Intensives covered business strategy, financial planning, and strategic management. The program concluded with a pitch competition where graduates showcased their ideas, and the winner received a free marketing package.

The program deepened my understanding of my business's audience, marketing needs, financials, leadership style, and strategies for navigating difficult conversations.



**Victoria Anderson, Rooted Counseling
Fargo, ND**

DAY AT THE CAPITOL



We hosted our inaugural Day at the Capitol event in Bismarck, welcoming 120 attendees and receiving support from Governor Armstrong. The event offered business owners a direct forum to engage with their local legislators and discuss the importance of small businesses.

INNOVATE ND



NDWBC guided two entrepreneurs through Innovate ND, a voucher-based reimbursement program that helps North Dakota entrepreneurs grow by funding customer and market research.

Beyond financial assistance, the mentors and advisors in Innovate ND provided invaluable support and connections that fueled our business growth.

**Jon Melgaard
Hand-Off Events
Fargo, ND**

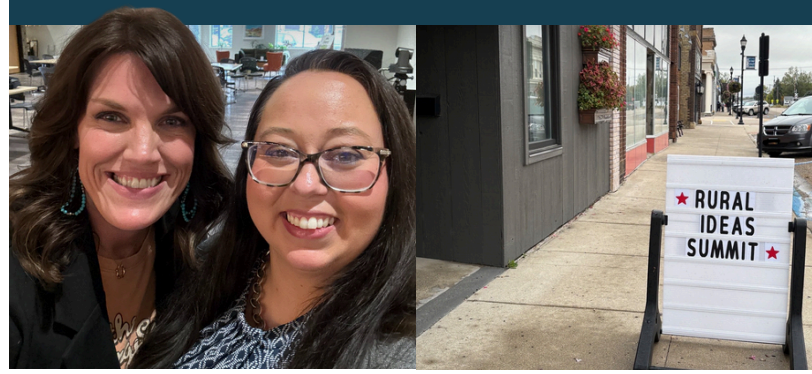


FROM FIELD TO FEAST



We joined FARRMS on their Fargo Area Farm Tour, where our team members interacted and shared ideas with another ND organization that supports entrepreneurs. This tour highlighted the need for industry-specific programming while leveraging the knowledge of the greater entrepreneurial community, as well as the importance of agri-tourism in North Dakota.

OAKES RURAL IDEAS SUMMIT



We engaged in energizing and affirming conversations with rural champions in Oakes. The summit underscored the power of collaboration, creativity, and community-driven solutions in small towns. Our presence reinforced our commitment to supporting rural entrepreneurs and small businesses as vital contributors to North Dakota's economic resilience.

FOOD DISCUSSIONS IN DC



The AMS Regional Food Business Center conference was held in Washington, DC and brought together leading organizations to strengthen collaboration, align on program delivery, and coordinate with USDA and national partners. As a partner in the North Central Regional Food Business Center, a leading Center for this initiative, NDWBC was invited to present with Region 5 partners on their innovative strategy for quickly mobilizing regional stakeholders to advance collaborative solutions in food-based business systems and increase data-driven collaboration.

FELICITE MOORMAN KEYNOTE



In February, through a partnership with NDSU, we hosted nationally recognized entrepreneur Felicite Moorman at a Strong Women, Strong Connections event in Fargo. This event brought together women leaders, business owners, community members, and young entrepreneurs and offered insights on leadership, innovation, and resilience while creating meaningful connections. The event reinforced our commitment to strengthening regional collaboration and providing high-impact professional development opportunities for current and future business leaders.

MAKING IMPACTFUL CONNECTIONS



STRONG WOMEN, STRONG CONNECTIONS

"I truly enjoyed the [Strong Women, Strong Connections] event and look forward to attending another. Also, thank you for offering these services and resources."

Emily Schock
Velva, ND



This year, our team proudly hosted four Strong Women, Strong Connections events. Each gathering drew an impressive turnout, creating vibrant spaces for networking, learning, and inspiration. These events brought together women from diverse backgrounds to share ideas, build relationships, and strengthen community ties, reflecting our commitment to fostering meaningful connections across North Dakota.

STRONG WOMEN COMMUNITY CHAPTERS

Each chapter creates events tailored to local needs, from networking and skill-building to inspiring conversations. This flexibility strengthens engagement and fosters meaningful connections that benefit individuals and businesses alike.

GRAND FORKS

WEEKLY, FRI, 11 AM - 12 PM
ND COFFEE ROASTERY

VELVA

1ST THU, 9 AM - 10 AM
AMERICAN LEGION

BISMARCK

1ST & 3RD WED, 11 AM - 12 PM
FIRST WESTERN BANK

JAMESTOWN

2ND TUES, 5:30 PM - 7 PM
JAMESTOWN ART CENTER

FARGO

1ST FRI, 11 AM - 12 PM
ROERS ON 45TH





WOMEN'S BUSINESS SUMMIT

Our goal was to create an event for owners that is in a league of its own. Over the course of three days, Summit engages owners in meaningful conversations and peer-to-peer sharing.

Summit accelerates business growth through deep connections and hands-on training. It provides an environment for growth-oriented owners to think bigger as they scale their businesses.

2025 EVENT RECAP

100

ATTENDEES

14

BREAKOUTS

15

SPEAKERS

18

SPONSORS

13th

ANNUAL
EVENT

3

DAYS

INDUSTRIES OF ATTENDEES



Entrepreneurship can often feel lonely when you live in a rural community. Connecting with women entrepreneurs in person from all walks of life, backgrounds, and experiences, like at the ND Women's Business Summit, has been a great way to build my network, feel inspired, learn something new, and gain new insights. Not to mention, being reminded of the support and help that's available to women entrepreneurs in our great state.

Victoria Volk
Owner of The Unleashed Heart





A big part of my early success came from the North Dakota Women's Business Center. I attended their summit in Medora, and that single event opened the door to so many connections. The NDWBC community gave me trusted relationships, and all my first clients came directly from people I met there, and connections made by their leadership.

Kayla Deitch
Owner of Execla



MAY 5 - 7, 2026



MEDORA, ND

LEAD BOLDLY

Join us for an unforgettable summit experience—reserve your ticket before they're gone.



TO LEARN MORE, VISIT
www.ndwbc.com/summit



BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN VISION & CAPITAL

Funding remains a significant barrier for women entrepreneurs, and NDWBC works to address it through practical support. Our business coaching, grant workshops, and Voxa—an on-demand platform with tools for cash flow, budgeting, and funding strategy—help entrepreneurs move from uncertainty to informed decision-making.

By improving access to capital and financial guidance, women-owned businesses are better positioned to stabilize, expand, and hire. These outcomes strengthen local economies and contribute to sustained community growth.

ANONYMOUS FUNDING SURVEY

This year, we enhanced our comprehension of the funding landscape with our Anonymous Funding Survey, which collected insights from more than 930 small business owners. The survey is available on the NDWBC website, is accessible to everyone, and seeks to gather information about the financial needs of small business owners.

930+ SURVEY RESPONSES

74%

NEED IMMEDIATE
FUNDING

60%

HAVE A
BUSINESS PLAN

66%

CONFIDENT TO
ASK FOR A LOAN

64%

NEED LESS
THAN \$50,000

"My community is very passionate about having family owned businesses and not having big corporations. So with my business it will keep the originality of our community and bring the community together."

Anonymous Participant



TOP 4 REASONS TO SEEK FUNDING

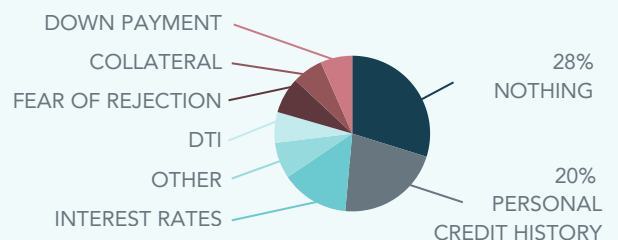
STARTUP EXPENSES

SUPPLIES AND INVENTORY

ASSETS/EQUIPMENT

SALES/MARKETING

BARRIERS TO TRADITIONAL FINANCING



"My biggest concern when building my net worth is the unpredictable state of the economy and its potential impact on my business growth."

Anonymous Participant

CONNECT. LEARN. GROW.



WHY VOXA WAS CREATED

Voxa was built to better support entrepreneurs beyond in-person programming and to provide ongoing, practical value as they grow their businesses.

CONNECTION WITHOUT BARRIERS

Clients wanted a way to stay connected after events, engage with a statewide community of small business owners, and collaborate without sharing personal contact information.

CENTRALIZED RESOURCES

Voxa serves as a single platform to house and deliver more than 100 tools and resources designed to support business development at every stage.

CONTINUED, AFFORDABLE EDUCATION

Voxa offers a structured and affordable way for entrepreneurs to continue learning on their own time through courses led by professionals and regional business leaders.



OUR BUSINESS COACHES ARE READY TO CONNECT

I am new to NDWBC and am just learning about the resources available. I am currently utilizing the business coaching service; they have provided me great advice and additional resources, contacts etc. to explore.

Penny Harmsen, Senior Care Authority
Fargo, ND

200+

RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO CLIENTS





FIVE STAR REVIEWS



THE REVIEWS ARE IN AND THEY SPEAK VOLUMES ABOUT OUR MISSION AND IMPACT



There is always something new to learn and NDWBC creates a space where the growth can truly happen.

Patti Shelkey



ND Women's Summit was great. As a first timer, I wasn't sure what to expect, but I really enjoyed it and learned so much. I will be back again.

Christine Nelson



The knowledge I gained has been invaluable, and I am excited to implement these strategies in my role.

Yolanda Rojas



From the very beginning, the team was incredibly easy to work with, offering clear communication and prompt responses to all of our questions

Ashleigh Lee



Through the classes I enjoyed exploring and learning more about a wide range of subjects.

Sue Mueller



During just one business coaching call, I gained a clear vision for my business and walked away with actionable steps to scale my current products.

Jacey Erickson



I need to start using more of your awesome programs!

Angie Milakovic



On top of the knowledge and tools that were given to me and my group which already exceeded my expectations, we also started building a community.

Ronja Corum



Thank you so much for accepting me in the business leadership intensive program. It was awesome, and I am using the things I learned into practice!

Amanda LaCroix

OUR TEAM



Christy Dauer
📍 Fargo



Elizabeth Phares Oren
📍 Wahpeton



Paige Shockman
📍 Horace



Sadie Schaeffer
📍 Fargo



Mark Wagner
📍 Bismarck



Lindsey Hochhalter
📍 Bismarck



Rochelle Villa
📍 Williston



SCAN QR CODE

To learn more about our team, board of directors, and advisory committee.



OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We value our Governing Board of Directors for their guidance in fulfilling our mission. Their diverse expertise enhances program effectiveness, secures financial resources, and ensures strong oversight to protect NDWBC's assets.



Kathy Cochran
📍 Fargo



Briselda Hernandez
📍 Minot



Sandi Luck
📍 Grand Forks



Lindsey Rath-Wald
📍 Bismarck



Jill Cederberg
📍 Fargo



Abigayle Kleven
📍 Grand Forks



Danielle Powelson
📍 Williston



Stephanie Arniel
📍 Horace



Sydney Boschert
📍 Fargo

OUR ADVISORY COMMITTEE

We are grateful to our dedicated Advisory Committee who polish our best-in-class programming. Our partners challenge us to be better, serve more deeply, and truly take on the mind of our clients.

📍 Dickinson

📍 Bismarck

📍 Minot

📍 Rugby

📍 Bismarck

📍 Grand Forks

📍 Fargo

Angela Barber Adventure Academy

Ashton Hauff The Good Kids

Shannon Michels Karma Convenience Stores & Pinks Bar & Grill

Tanya Lee Tanya Lee LLC & Fénix Flame Villas

Karmen Sorenson Goldman Sachs

Sandi Luck Bully Brew & ND Coffee Roastery

Kate Rutten, L3HarrisTechnologies

JOIN OUR MISSION TODAY

EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

There are many ways that you can support our work to advance economic development in North Dakota. From business owners to community supporters, there is a place for you to share your talents as we shape a better future for all entrepreneurs. Don't see where you align, but know you want to partner? Send us an email at info@ndwbc.com to start the conversation today.



BECOME A COMMUNITY AMPLIFIER

Help us connect entrepreneurial dreams with the vital knowledge, networks, and resources required for success. We appreciate your consideration of a donation to support our mission—whether you contribute \$5 or \$500, every contribution makes a difference. Together, we can create a positive impact!

SCAN ME



**SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER AT
WWW.NDWBC.COM FOR MORE OPPORTUNITIES**

OTHER WAYS TO PARTNER WITH US



PARTNERSHIPS & SPONSORSHIPS

Are you interested in collaborating? Reach out to us to explore how you can make a difference.



OFFER YOUR TIME THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers are essential to our non-profit by providing tremendous impact to our programs and events.



SPEAKING OPPORTUNITIES TO SHARE YOUR TALENTS

Contribute your insights by providing fresh perspectives, telling powerful stories, and inspiring practical actions.