

## Northwest Iowa Dream Big Grow Here Finalists Announced

Earlier this month entrepreneurs submitted their dream to start or expand a business in the Northwest Iowa Dream Big Grow Here grant contest and recruited family, friends and customers to vote for their entry. Nearly 8,000 total votes were cast and today we are announcing the top three vote-getters, along with two additional entrants chosen by a selection committee, who will advance to the regional competition. These finalists will have the opportunity to present their idea to an audience and judges in a pitch event for a chance to win thousands in cash prizes. The five finalists are:

- Northwest Iowa Firearms from Hull (James Van Veldhuizen)
- Awaken Yoga from Le Mars (Carmen Ohm)
- SnSLabz from Rock Rapids (Daniel Stillson)
- Grace Boutique from Sibley (Melinda Nasers)
- Brightside Café & Deli from Sioux City (Juan Munoz)

The economic development organizations in northwest Iowa will host the pitch-off event on Thursday, November 14<sup>th</sup> at the Oscar Carl Vineyard (1473 Buchanan Ave) in Sioux City. A social hour with food and beverages will begin at 5:00 p.m. During this time, each finalist will have a booth set up to showcase their business for attendees to visit. At 6:00 p.m. each finalist will have 6 minutes to present their business, followed by 5 minutes of Q & A from the panel of judges. The winners of the competition will be announced at 7:30 p.m. with first place receiving \$4,000, second place receiving \$2,000 and third place receiving \$1,000 to grow their businesses.

The Northwest Iowa regional contest is sponsored and organized by Iowa's West Coast Initiative and Northwest Iowa Developers and includes the following counties: Cherokee, Lyon, Monona, O'Brien, Osceola, Plymouth, Sioux and Woodbury. Siouxland Economic Development Corporation is also a sponsor of the event. The event is free and open to the public. Additional information about each entry and the finalists can be found by visiting <https://www.dreambiggrowhere.com/Vote.aspx>.