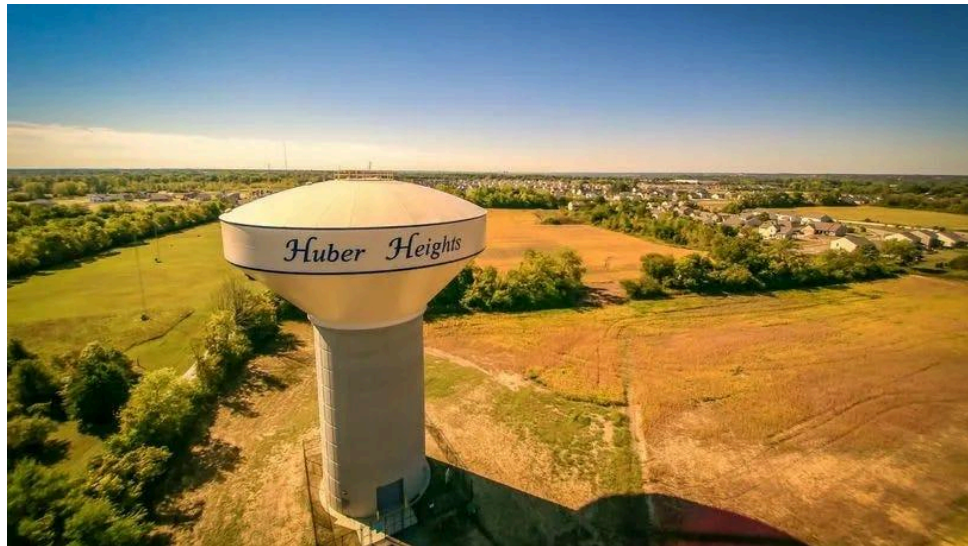




# BUSINESSFIRST!

for a greater dayton region

**MARCH 2026**



## March Outreach Specialist Meeting

Highlighting Huber Heights! The next BusinessFirst! Outreach Specialist Meeting will be March 18 at 9:00 AM. See Huber Heights' new Government Center at 6151 Brandt Pike and connect with your peers and resource partners.

- Jason Antonick will talk about new developments in Huber Heights
- Vanessa A. Glotfelter, Transportation Improvement District, will share valuable insights on transportation infrastructure projects that impact regional growth
- Joseph M. Geraghty, Port Authority, will discuss how they can facilitate economic development projects in your community

This meeting will deliver great information, connections, and fresh perspectives. We hope to see you there!

**[REGISTER HERE!](#)**



## April Virtual Resource Meeting

Silver Is Gold is a new workforce initiative from Montgomery County and The Collaboratory that connects employers with experienced retirees ready to re-engage in the workforce. This program helps businesses tap into a knowledgeable, reliable talent pool while offering retirees flexible opportunities to share their expertise and stay active in our community.

Speakers, Susan Warren of Montgomery County Workforce Development and Peggy West and Peter Benkendorrff of Dayton Collaboratory, will provide information on this program and how your companies can work with Silver is Gold.

**[REGISTER HERE!](#)**



### ExecutivePulse is Getting a Major Upgrade — and It's Built for How You Work

For our jurisdiction members, you will notice that ExecutivePulse will look and feel a lot different soon — in the best way. The ExecutivePulse team is rolling out a fully modernized platform, redesigned from the ground up with economic development professionals in mind.

Here's what's new:

**A cleaner, more intuitive interface.** The updated UI is faster, easier to navigate, and works the way you actually think about your work — whether you're logging a BR&E visit, or reviewing your pipeline before a board meeting.

**Stronger BR&E and business attraction tools.** New workspaces make it easier to track business health, flag at-risk



### BusinessFirst! Resource Rally

**March 24, 2026; 9:00 am - 12:00 pm**  
**Benham's Grove, Centerville**

BusinessFirst! is hosting a Resource Rally event on March 24 for small business owners to learn more about local tools that can help them to grow their businesses. The free event will have panels to speak on Access to Capital & Financial Resources, Workforce Development, Library Resources & Buy Local, and Expand & Renovate – Know Before You Build. The event starts at 9am at Benham's Grove. There is no cost, but we ask businesses to register at <https://bit.ly/4ujxJqK>

Share this information with the businesses you work with. Contact Gwen Eberly for

employers, and document expansion opportunities. A dedicated business attraction pipeline gives you a cleaner way to manage prospects from first contact through announcement.

**Better usability across the board.** Less clicking, fewer steps, and a layout that puts the most important information front and center.

**Coming soon — Outlook integration and AI-powered insights.** Soon, a native Outlook add-in will let you log activity and sync communications directly from your inbox. And next quarter, ExecutivePulse will introduce a conversational AI module — simply ask a question and get instant answers from your own data, no reports to run or filters to set.

These upgrades reflect what the Business First network has been asking for, and we're excited to see them in action across our members. We will be bringing ExecutivePulse into town later this spring for hands on training, so watch for that date!



### **Justin Sommer appointed as BusinessFirst! Executive Committee President**

BusinessFirst! is pleased to announce the appointment of Justin Sommer as the new President of the Executive Committee. Justin currently serves as the Executive Director of the Preble County Development Partnership and brings more than a decade of economic development leadership to this role.

Throughout his career, Justin has championed business retention and expansion, regional collaboration, and community-driven growth. His deep experience across local and regional initiatives positions him well to guide the Executive Committee as BusinessFirst! continues strengthening economic vitality throughout the greater Dayton region.

more information.

### **EVENT REGISTRATION**



### **Greater West Dayton Incubator**

The Greater West Dayton Incubator (GWDI), established in 2019, is an initiative of the University of Dayton through the School of Business Administration's L. William Crotty Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership. Created to expand access to entrepreneurial education and business support, GWDI serves as a bridge between university resources and the West Dayton business community.

GWDI provides training, technical assistance, mentorship, and strategic connections that help entrepreneurs launch, stabilize, and scale their businesses. Through programs such as the Urban Elevation Accelerator, Business Blitz workshops, and weekly co-working sessions, the incubator strengthens business fundamentals while connecting entrepreneurs to Dayton's broader economic ecosystem.

Justin is replacing past president Steve Brodsky who has led the BF! Executive Committee for many years. Please join us in congratulating Justin on this appointment. We look forward to his leadership, vision, and commitment to supporting the businesses and communities that make our region strong.

Since its founding, GWDI has focused on removing barriers to entry for small business owners by creating accessible programming, cultivating partnerships with financial institutions and business support organizations, and fostering a collaborative environment rooted in community impact. As an arm of the University of Dayton, GWDI reflects the institution's commitment to regional prosperity, economic mobility, and community engagement. By equipping entrepreneurs with tools, networks, and visibility, GWDI contributes to a more inclusive and thriving Dayton business landscape.

Visit [www.thegwdi.com](http://www.thegwdi.com) for more information.



## Exciting Trends and Key Concerns in the Macro and Local Economy for the Year Ahead

**Friday, March 20, 7:30 am - 9 am**  
**Sinclair Community College, Bldg 12**

What does 2026 hold for the Dayton region? Join Dr. Kevin Willardsen of Wright State University for a concise look at key economic trends, sector performance, and what they mean for the year ahead.

**[EVENT INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION](#)**



## Preble County Chamber EXPO

**Friday, March 20, 3 pm - 7 pm and**  
**Saturday, March 21, 9 am - 1 pm**  
**Preble County Expo Building, Eaton**

The 2026 Preble County Chamber EXPO is coming March 20–21, 2026, and we're excited to announce that exhibitor and sponsorship sign-ups are officially open!

The EXPO is one of our largest events of the year and a fantastic opportunity to:

- Showcase your business
- Connect with the community
- Network with fellow Chamber members and business owners
- Increase your brand visibility
- Build new relationships and meet potential customers

Sponsorship opportunities are available.

**[EVENT INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION](#)**



**Small Business  
Development Centers**

## From Idea to Identity: Messaging and Branding

### Re-entry Reverse Career Fair

**March 25, 2026, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm**  
**Reibold Building, Dayton**

The Re-entry Reverse Career Fair offers a unique opportunity compared to traditional career fairs. Instead of employers setting up booths for job seekers to approach, graduates of the Re-entry Career Alliance Academy (RCAA) and the Dayton Equity Center Workforce Development programs will be at tables marketing themselves directly to targeted recruiters attending the event.

#### [EVENT INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION](#)

**March 25, 2026, 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm**

Struggling to clearly explain what you do and who it's for? This hands-on workshop helps you sharpen your message, define your ideal market, and tell a compelling story that actually resonates. We'll cover brand alignment and consistency so your website, social media, sales conversations, and marketing materials all work together. You'll leave with clearer messaging, a stronger brand foundation, and practical tools you can use immediately—no jargon, no guesswork.

Speaker: Kim Klopfenstein, CBA

Co-Sponsor: The Entrepreneurs' Center

#### [EVENT REGISTRATION](#)



**Department of  
Development**

Minority Business Assistance Center

### The Procurement Access Series: Session 1, April 2026

**April 8, 2026, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm**

The Dayton Region Minority Business Assistance Center (MBAC), in collaboration with the City of Dayton Human Relations Council (HRC), presents Session I of The Procurement Access Series, a three-part initiative designed to expand small business access to public contracting opportunities and strengthen participation in government procurement.

Participants will gain valuable insight into how public agencies purchase goods and services, what steps businesses must take to become eligible vendors, and how to position their company for future contracting opportunities. By demystifying the procurement process, this session aims to reduce barriers to entry and equip small businesses with the knowledge and tools



### Sinclair College: Career Fair

Sinclair Community College's 25th Annual Career Fair is right around the corner — and employers can still sign up to participate!

**APR 17** **Wednesday, April 15, 2026**  
**12:00 PM – 3:00 PM**  
**📍 Building 12, The Great Hall**

This event brings together 100+ hiring organizations and connects you with talented students, alumni, and community members seeking full-time, part-time, and internship opportunities.

Why participate?

- ✓ Build your talent pipeline
- ✓ Increase your brand visibility on campus
- ✓ Connect with career-ready candidates
- ✓ Support workforce development in our region

needed to successfully compete for government contracts.

This program is ideal for small and minority-owned businesses seeking to better understand the public purchasing landscape, expand their customer base, and build stronger relationships with state and local procurement offices.

### EVENT INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION



University of Dayton

Center for  
Leadership

## University of Dayton Center for Leadership: Development Programs

For 20 years, senior leaders have come together at the University of Dayton to learn from some of the most highly regarded and influential management thinkers worldwide. Each year, the Center presents a variety of one-day executive-level programs that address the topics most relevant to senior-level leaders. Programs are delivered in a workshop format, mixing content, conversation, and skill practice, so that leaders can apply what they learn and impact their organization immediately.

Rather than commit to a weeklong program, you can customize your development and choose which programs best address your needs - whether you are looking to improve personal effectiveness and productivity, create a culture of innovation and creativity, or implement sustainable change efforts. At the UD Center for Leadership, you are in control of your leadership education.

### EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Don't miss this opportunity to engage with motivated job seekers and showcase what your organization has to offer.

Spots are filling quickly — register today! <https://bit.ly/48MpJod>



## Montgomery County JFS; Workforce; Office of Re-entry in Temporary Offices.

Since 1996, the County has operated key programs and initiatives at the Job Center, including Job and Family Services, Workforce Development and the Office of Re-entry. A new Job Center will allow the County to more effectively meet residents' needs while maintaining sustainable operations. County leadership is focused on ensuring residents can access services in a way that is efficient, welcoming and responsive. The programs housed at the Job Center play a critical role in supporting families, strengthening the workforce and building long-term stability throughout the community.

### **Temporary Service Locations**

To maintain uninterrupted access to services, the following programs will relocate to temporary sites beginning in **late spring** while construction of the new facility begins:

Adult Career Services  
Business Solutions Center  
1435 Cincinnati St., Suite 300  
Dayton, OH 45417

For more information about employment and workforce services, visit the Montgomery County Job Center website at: <https://thejobcenter.org/>

Youth Career Services  
Employment Opportunity Center  
4303 W. Third St.  
Dayton, OH 45417  
More information about the Youth Resource Center program is available on the Job

Center website at:

<https://thejobcenter.org/youth/youth-resource-center/>

Job and Family Services

Southview Center

25 Thorpe Dr.

Dayton, OH 45420

For more information about Montgomery County Job & Family Services, visit their website at:

<https://www.mcoho.org/460/Job-Family-Services>

A firm move date and construction timeline will be shared once finalized.



Created in 2001, the nationally recognized BusinessFirst! program uses a customer oriented approach to economic development that connects businesses to resources in the Dayton Region. We are the single-point of contact for all of your business needs. BusinessFirst! has provided assistance to over 7,800 businesses in the Greater Dayton Region - we are here to assist your company, too.

BusinessFirst! for a Greater Dayton Region

Erin Doherty

Phone: (937) 225-4642

If you have any information, events, job openings or articles that you would like featured in our newsletter, please let us know.

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