



From the Managing Director.....

Innovation DuPage Member Survey

Please take 5 minutes to complete our FY2024 Annual Survey. About 15% of ID Members have participated so far, and your input is critical to the discussion of our collective growth. To access the survey, [click here](#).

Welcome New ID Members!

- **Alter Co.:** Alter Co., founded by ICF-certified coach Jovan Ramos, specializes in leadership development and organizational clarity. Through personalized coaching, workshops, and assessment tools like the Leadership Clarity Scale, they help leaders and organizations transform challenges into opportunities by focusing on personality, processing, and power dynamics to achieve sustainable success.
- **Chicago Biofuels LLC:** Chicago Biofuels LLC, founded in 2007 by Rob McHugh, began with biodiesel production from recycled cooking oil and has grown into a comprehensive clean energy company. Based in Chicago, they specialize in sustainable fuel solutions, logistics management, and innovative research partnerships to advance clean energy development.
- **G&M Custom Embroidery:** G&M Custom Embroidery is a family-owned business specializing in custom embroidery and patch creation, with particular expertise serving the motorcycle community. With over 15 years of experience, they offer personalized embroidery services for apparel, accessories, and custom patches, providing same-day sewing services for their customers.
- **Inkprint Custom Apparel LLC:** Inkprint Custom Apparel specializes in high-quality custom apparel and promotional products, offering screen printing, embroidery, decals, signs, and heat press transfers. Based locally, they combine decades of experience with modern technology to create personalized designs for teams, businesses, and organizations.
- **Inspired Education LLC - Peak Principal Consulting:** Peak Principal Consulting, founded by Dr. Christina Podraza, specializes in coaching new school principals through their crucial first year. Drawing from her 25 years in education, Dr. Podraza provides focused support in leadership development, data analysis, and building positive school culture, while also offering customized workshops and keynote presentations for educational leaders.
- **Michelle Gentile Interiors + Home:** Michelle Gentile Interiors, based in Downers Grove, Illinois, is a full-service interior design firm specializing in residential spaces. Through their collaborative approach, they transform homes with custom design solutions ranging from single-room makeovers to complete home renovations, creating beautiful, functional environments that reflect their clients' lives.
- **Viraj Thakor:** Viraj plans to launch an embroidery and quilting venture, starting as a home-based business focused on custom designs and traditional quilting. Her vision includes creating personalized pieces while building a brand that could grow with market demand.

LinkedIn Badges

Enhance your professional profile by adding Innovation DuPage to LinkedIn!

- Members can add "Innovation DuPage Member" under the "Experience" tab
- Mentors can showcase their contributions under "Volunteering."
- Owner-2-CEO Program graduates can add their achievement under "Licenses & Certifications."

Updating your profile helps tell your unique entrepreneurship journey while connecting with our dynamic ID community.

Much Appreciated

Thank you to Jules Wilhelm, founder of EQ-Niversity and recent Owner-2-CEO graduate, for presenting as our Member Spotlight. Attendees learned about her innovative approach to emotional intelligence training in the workplace, including her impressive results in reducing employee turnover in senior living facilities to just 2.6% compared to the industry average of 15-20%. Another thank you to Demetri Koroyanis and Kristin Celing of Synegen, one of our valued investment partners, for sharing their expertise as an ID Member Resource. Their presentation helped members understand how to leverage CRM systems effectively and use data tracking to make smarter business decisions and drive growth.

Coming up:

- **NaperLaunch Academy - Growing a Business, 02.26:** Hosted by the Naperville Public Library, this four-week series is focused on growing your business. In this program, you will learn the essentials of writing a business plan and a strategic marketing plan, utilizing library resources specifically designed to support your entrepreneurial journey. Additionally, you'll discover six fundamental professional selling skills and how to effectively apply them in sales transactions. To maximize your learning experience, participants are expected to attend all four sessions and complete homework assignments outside of class. This program is offered via Zoom. To learn more and register, [click here](#).
- **Fundraising Roundtable, 03.04:** Join our quarterly Fundraising Roundtable, exclusively for Innovation DuPage members, designed to assist you in securing capital for your business. In this next session, Entrepreneur In Residence Melissa Villanueva will guide you through leveraging the Illinois Small Business Capital and Infrastructure Grant Program. With up to \$245,000 in non-matching funds available, you'll learn how to craft a standout application for facility expansion, infrastructure improvements, or property acquisition. Network with fellow entrepreneurs, gain insider tips on navigating the application process, and receive direct feedback on your growth plans. To register, log in to the [Member Portal](#) and select "Member Events" on your dashboard. Once there, you'll find the Fundraising Roundtable event and can complete the registration process.
- **Member Meetup, 03.05:** Join us at our next Member Meetup to hear from Nick Hudson of Eno Homecare presenting as our Member Spotlight. Learn about his journey in the non-medical home care industry, where his company provides trusted care services focused on quality, safety, and exceptional customer service.
- **WGN Radio, Your Money Matters: Kevin Flowers and Ileen Kelly, 03.06:** Tune in to Your Money Matters with Jon Hansen on WGN Radio 720 AM, March 6th at 6:30 p.m., to hear Innovation DuPage member Kevin Flowers of KD Dynamic Solutions and Ileen Kelly of the Illinois APEX Business Development Center. Join them for an engaging discussion about business growth opportunities and strategies for small business success in today's market.
- **2nd Annual Government Contracting Summit, 03.11, 03.12:** The Illinois APEX Accelerator presents its 2nd Annual Government Contracting Summit on March 11-12, 2025, at 7600 Roosevelt Road, Forest Park, IL 60130. This two-day event runs 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. on Day 1 (doors open 8:00 a.m.) and 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. on Day 2. The summit brings together key government agencies including the Department of Defense and NASA, major prime contractors like Walsh Federal and Caterpillar, local municipalities, and innovation hubs. Interested exhibitors and sponsors can [register here](#).
- **ID Workshop: The Strategic Roadmap, 03.19:** Join us at 5:30 p.m. at Innovation DuPage, where Adam Lejeunekopp, CEO of Madak, will share their proven Strategic Roadmap process for growing companies. As the creative team behind our own brand guide and website redesign, Madak knows how to blend strategic thinking with exceptional design. Learn how to analyze your business, identify growth opportunities, and create data-driven marketing plans that deliver maximum ROI - using the same proven approach they bring to all their clients. To learn more and register, [click here](#).

Sign up to present at an upcoming Member Meetup

Showcase your business at a Member Meetup! We're looking for members to present as our Member Spotlight, ID Member Resource, or host a Problem Solving session. This is your chance to present your work, share your achievements, and connect with fellow entrepreneurs. Sign up [here](#).

Let us help you share your success with the ID community!

Share a win from this week – big or small. It could be featured in our next letter! Email your accomplishment to: IDmaceyh@innovationdupage.org

Reminder: Innovation DuPage is open for members as a coworking space 24 hours a day, 7 days a week!

Many thanks, and have a great week,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Dan Facchini".

Dan Facchini,
Managing Director,
Innovation DuPage