



INFORMER

Official Newsletter for the Innovation DuPage Community

ID Staff Out of Office: Martin Luther King Jr. Day

In observance of Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) Day, ID Staff will be out of office on Monday, January 19. We will return to regular office hours the following day, Tuesday, January 20.

Welcome New Members!

- **Jojosuperfast** - Joe Sheehan
- **Arusha Consulting** - Heather Sattler
- **Abhrio** - Ganesh Gopalan
- **RoseBud Ice Cream** - Sam Rose
- **8City Outreach LLC** - Mel Brooks
- **Sunrise Solar LLC** - Ragheed Alfarra
- **Artemis Energy LLC** - Joy Holowicki
- **Catavus** - Marco Salinas
- **Brotherhood Electric LLC** - Gregory Lee

Opportunities

ID Member Industry Clusters

Innovation DuPage has launched a new meeting series, designed to connect ID Members working in the same industry. Industry Clusters will give you the opportunity to:

- Network with peers in your field
- Share resources and tools
- Discuss trends and challenges
- Request future speakers and programming

Clusters will meet 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m. in our event space, right after our regular Member Meetups (9:30–10:30 p.m. on Wednesdays). You're welcome to attend both! Here's the schedule for the next quarter:

- Jan 7 – Technology
- Jan 21 – Consumer Goods & Services
- Feb 4 – EdTech & Education
- Mar 18 – Marketing

More details and invitations coming soon. Questions? Reach out to **Elina Conley**, ID's Entrepreneur in Residence.

NIU MBA Capstone Program



Northern Illinois University
Your Future. Our Focus.

Northern Illinois University's MBA Capstone Program offers an exciting opportunity for local companies to receive comprehensive strategic business plans developed by Executive MBA student teams. Under the guidance of Professor Ed Buckley, these teams integrate their expertise in sales, marketing, finance, operations, and technology to create value for participating organizations. More than 15 Innovation DuPage member companies have participated in and benefited from this program. If your company is interested in having an MBA team develop a business plan, please contact Ed Buckley by **February 28th** at ed.buckley@allqualityinc.com or **(847) 778-6960**.

Amex Shop Small Grants Program

To help small businesses grow, innovate, and support their local communities, American Express is teaming up with Main Street America this Small Business

Saturday® to launch the Amex Shop Small Grants Program. The Program will provide an initial \$5 million to fund 250 grants of \$20,000 each to eligible small business owners across the US.

To be eligible for this program, applicants must:

- Own a for-profit, independently owned small business
- Operate out of a physical “brick-and-mortar” storefront
- Be located in one of the 50 U.S. states or Washington, DC (Businesses located in U.S. territories are not eligible)
- Currently employ 20 or less FTE (Full Time Equivalent) employees

They are seeking proposals for projects to help your small business grow, innovate, and support your local community.

[Learn More and Apply Here by January 16](#)

Energy Efficiency Rebates Available for Illinois Small Businesses

The **Illinois Green Business Association** (IGBA) has partnered with **Intuit**, the maker of Quickbooks, and the **Green Business Engagement National Network** (GBENN) to offer energy efficiency and electrification grants up to \$1,000 for 30 businesses in Illinois!

This is a practical opportunity to reduce utility costs, lower your energy use and emissions, and gain recognition for your environmental efforts.

To qualify, your business must:

- Be located in Illinois
- Have fewer than 100 employees or ≤\$2.5M annual revenue
- Participate in the Illinois Green Business Program (free for applicants)
- Complete projects by May 30, 2025

[Apply here by February 21](#)

Seeking Clean Tech Companies!



Innovation DuPage is actively looking for startups and small businesses working in the clean energy or clean technology industry - or referrals to companies that could benefit from our targeted support.

[To Learn More](#)

Coming Up



Join biweekly Member Meetups at Innovation DuPage! Network, enjoy bagels & coffee, and learn from spotlight members & resource experts.

The next Member Meetup will be on January 21 from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. followed by the Consumer Goods and Services Cluster Meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Member Spotlight: Shaiska Malca of Pura Vida Talk

Member Resource: Jeannie McGrory of WGN Radio 720 AM

If you can't make it in person, attend virtually through our [Zoom Link](#)

[Sign up](#) to present at a future Member Meetup

ID CEI Workshop: The 7 Investor Secrets Every Fundable Startup Gets Right



The 7 Secrets Every Fundable Startup Gets Right



Monday, January 26th, 2026
In-Person: 5:00 – 7:00 PM

- Learn the seven core conditions investors look for—from market clarity to profitability to right-fit capital.
- Build the business and financial acumen every fundable founder needs, especially for capital-intensive and first-of-a-kind technologies.
- Walk away with a practical framework to test your assumptions, gather 'receipts,' and de-risk your path to viability.

Shubha K. Chakravarthy 535 Duane St. Glen Ellyn, IL 60137



The Clean Energy Incubator Program is hosting its first workshop at Innovation DuPage! Program participants and Innovation DuPage members are welcome to attend.

Join investor and workshop leader Shubha Chakravarthy to learn the seven core conditions investors look for—from market clarity to profitability to right-fit capital. You'll walk away with a practical "success map" to guide product development, customer acquisition, revenue strategy, and long-term growth.

[To Learn More and Register](#)

ID January Workshop: Present with FOCUS



Present with FOCUS:
A public speaking workshop for small business leaders



Wednesday, January 28th, 2026
In-Person: 5:30 – 7:00 PM

- Learn how to engage a group in person
- Project confidence to your clients, prospective investors, and your team
- Reduce nervousness and distracting behavior
- Modify your message for different audiences
- Gain buy-in through clarity and preparation

Scott Hubbard 535 Duane St. Glen Ellyn, IL 60137



The way you communicate can make or break critical moments in your business. Join us January 28 as Scott Hubbard from Hubbard Communication teaches his framework for presenting with confidence. You'll learn how to engage audiences, reduce nervousness, and deliver clear, compelling messages.

[To Learn More and Register](#)

Female Founders: Vision, Mindset & Strategy Night



Female Founders: Vision, Mindset & Strategy Night



Jules Wilhelm

Thursday, February 5th, 2026

In-Person: 5:30 – 7:00 PM

- Where do you want to be this time next year—personally, professionally, and financially?
- What vision is calling you forward when you remove self-imposed limits around growth, income, and impact?
- Which strategic actions will move you there?

535 Duane St. Glen Ellyn, IL 60137



Join fellow female founders for an evening of reflection, planning, and connection led by Jules Wilhelm, Innovation DuPage member and founder of EQ-Niversity. We'll create space to think bigger, examine the mindset patterns that shape your decisions, and map out the future you actually want to build. You'll leave with a clear vision for 2026, aligned goals, actionable next steps, and a network of supportive women who understand the entrepreneurial journey.

Wine and cheese included.

The 2nd Annual Midwest Innovation and Entrepreneurship Summit



College of DuPage and Innovation DuPage Present
The Midwest Innovation and Entrepreneurship Summit

Thursday
Feb. 26
9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Social hour with refreshments

Jack H. Turner Conference Center
 Student Resource Center
 (SRC 2000)

Free attendance
 Lunch and refreshments provided

Learn more and register
<http://bit.ly/47R686Z>



AI, Quantum and the Future of Work

The Midwest is famous for getting things done. Since the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, the Chicago area has been a hub of innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurs.

Join College of DuPage President Dr. Muddassir Siddiqi, along with a host of thought leaders and experts, for the second annual Midwest Innovation and Entrepreneurship Summit. Moderated by Jon Hansen of WGN Radio, the summit will explore emerging markets with industry trailblazers from organizations including Intel, Lenovo and more.

Featured Sessions

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the Future of Work
- Critical Resources to Build Your Entrepreneurial Team
- Practical Strategies for Funding Your Startup
- Emerging Markets: Quantum, Fintech, Advanced Manufacturing and Clean Energy
- Inspirational Success Stories from Successful Entrepreneurs



For ADA accommodations, please email access@cod.edu with the event title in the subject line and your accommodation request. Please email two weeks in advance.
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Register Here

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

Share a recent win – big or small. It could be featured in our next letter! Email your accomplishment to [Hannah Macey](#).

Resources

[Clean Energy Incubator Program](#)

[Member Portal Login Page](#)

[Member Meetup Signup Sheet](#)



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

Keep up with Innovation DuPage on social media!



Innovation DuPage | 535 Duane St. | Glen Ellyn, IL 60137 US

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