

News & Success Stories from Around the Region

July 2019



Northwest Colorado Small Business Development Center welcomes new regional director

Welcome **Erin McCuskey**, new Northwest SBDC Regional Director. Erin is a long-time Eagle County resident, and brings to this role a keen awareness of the unique challenges and opportunities in region's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Her background includes business consulting, development, and HR, and she is also conversational in Spanish. Erin has a passion for helping small businesses and building community.

The Colorado Small Business Development Center Network is dedicated to helping existing and new businesses grow and prosper in Colorado by providing free and confidential consulting and no- or low-cost training programs. The CSBDC has locations around the state with a team of business experts ready to help you create and retain jobs, secure loans, increase sales, win government contracts, obtain certifications and more. Consulting experts work in partnership to provide entrepreneurs with crucial information that can mean the difference between success and failure.

The Northwest SBDC serves the NWCCOG region including the counties of Eagle, Grand, Jackson, Pitkin and Summit. It is hosted by Eagle County Government. Contact information for Erin:



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The SBDC has a new website! Visit <https://www.coloradosbdc.org/>



Summit County awarded USDA Technical Assistance for Summit Prosperity Initiative

Summit County is one of 47 rural communities and regions that will receive technical assistance to help create and implement long-term economic development plans through the USDA Rural Development's Rural Economic Development Innovation (REDI) initiative. The USDA and its partners are bringing local leaders and economic development experts together to build prosperity in America's rural cities and towns through this initiative.

Summit County has been awarded free technical assistance for the **Summit Prosperity Initiative**, an effort spearheaded by the Summit Chamber of Commerce with participation from stakeholders across the county including town governments, county government, non-profits, the housing authority, the Family and Intercultural Resource Center, the Summit Foundation, the business community, and the workforce center. The goals of the Summit Prosperity Initiative include: (1) Considerably improve overall livability for the residents of Summit County (2) Develop a long term framework to support county-wide collaboration to become a strong community prepared for the future; (3) Engage local businesses, non-profits, residents and governments to support economic prosperity; (4) Identify and support community projects that have regional economic significance.

The Summit Prosperity Initiative seeks to develop a comprehensive plan informed by community engagement that focuses on prosperity elements that can build a sustainable, prosperous community achieving the delicate balance between providing for economic opportunity while protecting our other community values - the very reasons we love living here. These elements include affordable housing, community health and equity, responsible tourism, and infrastructure. The project is slated to kick off this fall, with a targeted completion date of August 2020.



CareerWise an Win-Win for Eagle County

source: Vail Valley Partnership eNews, 7/10/19

Two years ago , Eagle County was accepted as the first rural community to implement the CareerWise apprenticeship program. The first year saw five apprentices start with local businesses, earning a wage, learning soft skills, securing high school credit and taking college level classes to enhance business acumen. In year two the program welcomed 8 more businesses and 14 new apprentices in positions as varied as estimator for the Gallegos Corp., dietary aide for Vail Health, personal banker at Alpine Bank, hotel management and maintenance with Vail Resorts and many more. In its second year, CareerWise is making an impact on the Vail Valley. CareerWise has been a win-win situation for Eagle County. It's in the best interest of the business to look to our own backyard for talent, in the interest of the student as it will open a myriad of doors, and it's certainly great for our schools to diversify and deepen their offering to our students.

[Learn more about CareerWise here.](#)

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