

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Innovation Center at Saratoga Celebrates Inaugural *Entrepreneurship Is Everyone's Business* Cohort and Pitch Day Winners

MALTA, NY — The Innovation Center at Saratoga proudly celebrates the successful first cohort of its inaugural *Entrepreneurship Is Everyone's Business* program, recognizing a remarkable group of participants who demonstrated innovation, determination, and entrepreneurial thinking throughout the program.

The *Entrepreneurship Is Everyone's Business* program was designed to equip aspiring main street businesses, artists, creators, and business consultancies with the knowledge, tools, and confidence to transform ideas into viable ventures. Over the course of the program, participants received nine weeks of courses from area business experts followed by six weeks of mentoring from SCORE counselors. They will continue with monthly meetups to continue supporting their progress.

We held the Pitch Day competition on Wednesday, June 17, where participants presented their business concepts and growth strategies before a panel of local judges. Each presenter demonstrated creativity, preparation, and a commitment to addressing market opportunities and community needs.

"We are incredibly proud of this inaugural cohort and all they have accomplished," said Beth Moeller, Founder of the Innovation Center. "Their dedication, resilience, and willingness to challenge themselves embody the entrepreneurial spirit. This program demonstrates that entrepreneurship is not limited to a select few—it is a mindset and skill set that can create opportunities for individuals, businesses, and communities alike."

The following participants were recognized as the 2026 Pitch Day winners:

- First Place (\$1,000): Kaeli VonHaggin of Kael Von Art
- Second Place (\$500): Mariah Day of A Day's Delightful Carvings
- Third Place (\$250): Richard Krusemark of Stained & Confuzed

We want to congratulate the entire cohort for their enthusiasm, vision, and participation, all of which made this program successful. In addition to our winners, members of the cohort include:

- Ken Blatt
- Kathleen Caporta
- Jason Derby
- Shelly Dwyer
- Peter Signorelli

The success of the Entrepreneurship Is Everyone's Business program would not have been possible without the support and expertise of its Pitch Day judges:

- Amy Bloom, Saratoga Arts
- Nicole Deyo, Pursuit
- Matt Hosek, Small Business Development Center
- Jack Kelleher, NBT Bank

The organization also extends its sincere appreciation to NBT Bank and Phillips Lytle, LLP, program sponsors, whose investment helped make this initiative possible:

"Partnerships with our judges, sponsors, mentors, and community supporters have been essential to the success of this program," said Moeller. "Together, we are helping create an environment where innovation can thrive and where aspiring entrepreneurs have access to the resources they need to succeed."

Building on the momentum of this inaugural class, the Innovation Center at Saratoga looks forward to continuing the *Entrepreneurship Is Everyone's Business* program and supporting future entrepreneurs as they launch, grow, and strengthen businesses that contribute to the region's economic vitality. Our next cohort will begin in early 2027.

PHOTO CAPTION:

(L-R) Judge Jack Kelleher of NBT, Judge Nicole Deyo of Pursuit, First Place Winner Kaeli VonHaggin, Second Place Winner Mariah Day, Third Place Winner Richard Krusemark, Judge Amy Bloom of Saratoga Arts, and Judge Matt Hosek of SBDC pose following the inaugural Entrepreneurship Is Everyone's Business Pitch Day on June 17, 2026. Photo courtesy of The Innovation Center at Saratoga.

About the Innovation Center at Saratoga (ICS)

The Innovation Center at Saratoga, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) makerspace and community collaboration space supporting inventors, creators, and the innovators of the future. More information can be found at <https://innovationcentersaratoga.org>.

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