

PRESS RELEASE



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Sonnenburg, Peggy Bakes win 2024 NEW Launch Alliance Pitch Event

Creative Crusts Pizza, Kristin's Kitchen Bakery also among New North entrepreneurial winners

NEW NORTH, Dec. 5, 2024 – Peggy Bakes, producer of a baked granola product, was the winner of the NEW Launch Alliance Pitch Event, held Dec. 4 at TitledownTech in Green Bay. Creative Crusts Pizza and Kristin's Kitchen Bakery took second and third place, respectively. The three winning entries emerged from a group of 12 entrepreneurial pitches which had advanced from local pitch competitions held across Northeast Wisconsin in mid-November.

Along with receiving prize money, the three winners will be invited to give an update to an even wider investor and business audience during the New North Summit on June 5, 2025 at Lambeau Field.

"I continue to be impressed by the depth and breadth of creative business ideas within the New North," says Barb LaMue, president and CEO of New North Inc. "Any one of our 12 participating entrepreneurs could have been chosen as a winner. The continued growth of these companies and many others will be a catalyst for economic growth in our region. We thank WBD Inc. for its financial support of the pitch events, along with TitledownTech as our venue sponsor, CLA as our reception sponsor and Headway.ai for supporting the application platform."

The winning entrepreneurial pitch was **Peggy Bakes**, presented by Peggy Sonnenburg of Valders. She received the first-place prize money of \$2,000. Her baked granola product is "clean," free of refined sugars and gluten-friendly. It uses high-quality, nutrient-dense ingredients and natural sweeteners without artificial additives, and appeals to consumers who want healthier, simple snack choices.

Sonnenburg started the business this past summer. A scratch baker throughout her life, she went from an idea to launch in just four weeks, and was profitable by the eighth week. Sonnenburg began primarily in Elkhart Lake, adding three other markets in late July, and launched the company's website on Oct. 1. Peggy Bakes already has 47 orders, across 12 U.S. states, in the website's first eight weeks of operation.

The idea for [Peggy Bakes](#) came from the fact that Sonnenburg couldn't find a granola product without a lot of sugar, she says. Along with the use of quality ingredients, the company prides itself on recipes that are innovative, including its top two sellers, cherry pecan and lemon blueberry, which contains fresh lemon zest.

Sonnenburg expects to utilize the prize money for additional digital advertising and an enhanced social media presence, beginning in January 2025. She also hopes to expand into wholesale product distribution, growth that requires a move to a commercial kitchen.

Second place and \$1,000 in prize money went to **Creative Crusts Pizza** of Little Chute, presented by Shawn Brokaw. The product's proprietary crust is made from chicken breasts, a recipe finalized near Thanksgiving in 2023. The business then began in mid-February of this year within a shared kitchen in Kaukauna. Today it operates from a dedicated kitchen in Chilton.

The chicken-based pizza crust is designed for those who haven't been able to enjoy traditional pizza due to health or dietary restrictions. Its appeal to consumers, according to Brokaw, is that it tastes good and feels like a real pizza. It also is high in protein, while being lower in calories and carbs. Eating one-half of the company's 10-inch cheese pizza provides 42 grams of protein and just 11 grams of carbs, along with a normal amount of calories.

[Creative Crusts Pizza](#) has grown through word of mouth and in-person samplings at events. It hopes to create future partnerships with gyms and health centers, reaching customers who value healthy eating. Brokaw says that the product's success is dependent on "breaking down the barriers" of the consumer's pre-conceived notions of it.

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Brokaw is optimistic that being a winner in the pitch contest will provide the product with additional exposure, and he plans to utilize the prize money for both equipment and advertising.

Third place was won by **Kristin's Kitchen Bakery**, presented by Kristin Lambrecht of Wild Rose. Lambrecht learned to bake in her grandma's kitchen as a child, later creating treats for family and friends. After first starting her business in October 2023 as a home baker, she realized her dream of owning her own bakery, when she opened a physical location in February of this year.

Lambrecht's small rural community lacked fresh, custom-baked products, an affordable community space, and a drive-thru option. Her solution provided a quality food option with convenience to the area, along with serving as an inclusive gathering space.

[Kristin's Kitchen Bakery](#) serves Waushara County, along with neighboring counties Waupaca, Green Lake and Marquette. It offers, among other things, breads, baked donuts, cakes/cupcakes, scones, cinnamon rolls and brownies.

Lambrecht indicates that her prize winnings will be directed towards expansion within her current building and additional equipment.

Others making entrepreneurial pitches at the competition were AppEase, Inc. (presented by Nicole Tilot), Becoming Us/The Hessed Project (presented by Judy Kouene-Brown), Hillbilly Acres Signs & Designs (presented by Michele Ploor), Offpaths Innovations LLC: dba Card Poppers (presented by Ken Manninen), Rosebud (presented by Tyler Heilberger), Sourcer AI (presented by Alex Suscha), Sunshine and Sass Creations (presented by Jessica Wegener), The Kind Body Co. (presented by Tiffany Dufek and Megan Srnka), and UnBar (presented by Ayden Fowler).

Judges for the pitch competition were Lexi Hanson of CLA, Kyle Kuntz of WBD Inc., Stephen Pounds of Vadar Alpha, and Anna Steinfest of AFF Research.

In all, 31 entrepreneurial pitches were made during the local qualifying events in collaboration with 12 local partners. These events – Accelerate Sheboygan County, Audible, Envision This, Fast Pitch, LevelUp and Lighthouse Launch – were hosted by the Sheboygan County Economic Development Corp., Lakeland University, SBDC at UW-Green Bay, Greater Green Bay Chamber, Door County Economic Development, Kewaunee County Economic Development, UW Extension Kewaunee County, FVTC Venture Center, Oshkosh Chamber, UW-Madison Extension, Progress Lakeshore and Envision Greater Fond du Lac.

The [NEW Launch Alliance](#) was formed to support business discoveries and idea creators in Northeast Wisconsin, connecting entrepreneurs, mentors, investors, educators, accelerators and other resources.

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About New North, Inc.

New North, Inc., is a 501(c)3 non-profit, regional economic development corporation fostering collaboration among private and public sector leaders throughout the 18 counties of Northeast Wisconsin, known as the New North region. The New North brand unites the region both internally and externally around talent development, brand promotion and business development, signifying the collective economic power behind the 18 counties. The counties include Brown, Calumet, Door, Florence, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Marquette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano, Sheboygan, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago. www.thenewnorth.com

About WBD Inc.

WBD Inc. helps businesses finance owner-occupied commercial real estate, utilizing the SBA 504 loan program, and reinvests in economic development activities in line with its mission to grow businesses, create jobs and build communities. It serves all of Wisconsin, Minnesota and a portion of Michigan's Upper Peninsula with a portfolio of more than \$1 billion. www.wbd.org

Media contact: Jeff Blumb, media@blumbcc.com or 920.328.5454