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**Young Professionals
Regional Summit**

**Alerus Center
Grand Forks, ND
July 28 & 29, 2026**

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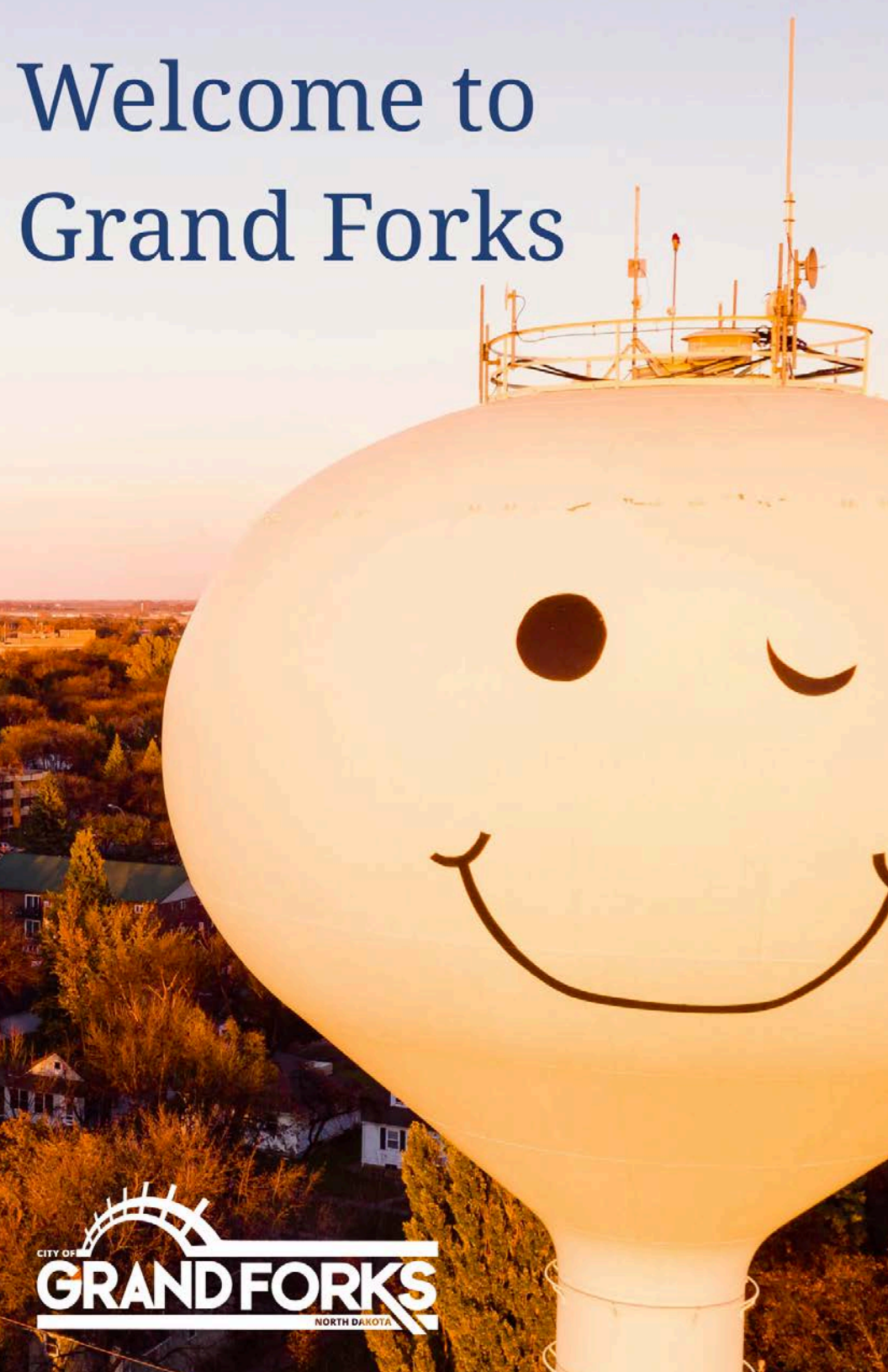


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GREATER GRAND FORKS
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

Welcome to Grand Forks



Welcome!

On behalf of the Greater Grand Forks Young Professionals, welcome to the 2026 Summit!

We are excited to have you join us for two days dedicated to learning, connecting, and building the future of leadership across our region.



Whether this is your first Summit or you've attended in years past, this year's Summit brings together outstanding keynote speakers, engaging breakout sessions, and professionals from a wide variety of industries who share a common goal: to continue growing as leaders. Leadership isn't defined by a title; it is demonstrated through the way we serve others, build relationships, embrace challenges, and create positive change.

Events like this are only possible because of the incredible support of our sponsors, speakers, volunteers, planning committees, and community partners. Thank you for investing your time, talent, and resources to make this experience possible. Your commitment to developing the next generation of leaders continues to strengthen our communities throughout the region.

Most importantly, thank you for being here. Your willingness to invest in yourself speaks volumes about the leader you are becoming. We encourage you to ask questions, meet someone new, share your experiences, and make the most of every opportunity these two days have to offer.

Welcome to the 2026 Young Professionals Summit. We're honored you're here, and we can't wait to see the impact you'll make long after this event concludes.

Have a fantastic Summit!

Dan Bryant

President, Greater Grand Forks Young Professionals

SUMMIT AT A GLANCE

AGENDA

5 Day 1 - Tuesday

9 Day 2 - Wednesday

SPEAKERS

11 Keynote Speakers

15 LIVE Speakers

23 GROW Speakers

28 LEAD Speakers

SPONSORS

34 Sponsors

36 Summit Map

AGENDA

TUESDAY, JULY 28

7:30 a.m. | Registration & Breakfast

8:30 a.m. | Welcome & Keynote

KEYNOTE SPONSOR: Easterseals Goodwill North Dakota

Building Meaningful Careers and Lives in Rural Communities

Speaker: *Megan Langley, Founder and Executive Director of Strengthen ND*

9:00 a.m. | Breakout Sessions

Track 1 - LIVE

Connecting Locally: Building Professional Networks in Smaller Cities

*Erica Dunsen, Administrative Director at Jersey Mikes Subs
Jenny Johnson, Story Maker Success Manager,
Tellwell Story Co.*

*Setareh Campion, Director of Programs, Fargo Moorhead
West Fargo Chamber of Commerce*

Track 2 - GROW

Intentional Growth: Mindset, Self-Leadership, and the Power of Daily Choices

*Mathias Ingman, Leadership Speaker & Growth Strategist
at Ignite Growth & Development*

Annie Wood, Chief of Staff, Tellwell Story Co.

Track 3 - LEAD

Say It Better: Growing Confidence in Providing Feedback and Resolving Conflict

*Nicholas Flom, UAS Account and Portfolio Director, Thales USA
Brooke Tofte, Account Executive at Anchor Marketing,
Jeff Beck, Senior Director of Online at The University of Mary*

10:15 a.m. | Networking Break

BREAK SPONSOR: AE2S

10:45 a.m. | Breakout Sessions

Track 1 - LIVE

Serving Beyond Your Title: Leadership in Advocacy and Community Organizations

*Amber Flynn, Owner/Realtor at Grand Real Estate
and Member of the Grand Forks Public School Board
Barry Wilfahrt, President & CEO at The Chamber
Grand Forks East Grand Forks*

Track 2 - GROW

Panel: Time Management Matters: Strategies for Focusing, Setting Priorities and Creating Smarter Systems

*Melissa Thury, Business Coach at Balance & Business
John Friend, Human Resources Manager, PS Industries, Inc.*

Track 3 - LEAD

Entrepreneurship in Action: Lessons From the Real World

*Rachel Rakoczy, Founder and Owner at Rachel's Property Solutions
Sandi Luck, Founder and Owner, Bully Brew Coffee, Board Room
Coffee & Taphouse, ND Coffee Roastery*

12:00 p.m. | Lunch & Presentation

Cybersecurity & Privacy Essentials: What Every Young Professional Should Know to Safely Manage Their Data

Professor Blake A. Klinkner, University of North Dakota School of Law

1:00 p.m. | Breakout Sessions

Track 1 - LIVE

Building Work That Works: Creating Environments People Want to Stay In

*Shilo Virginia Previti, Director of Advocacy at Live Well Grand Cities
Dalton Erickson, Executive Director, North Dakota
Human Rights Coalition
Anna Rosburg, CVE, Regional Vice President, Alerus Center -
Oak View Group*

Track 2 - GROW

Speak Up! Using Your Voice to Vouch for Your Team, Your Project, and Yourself

Lea Greene, Owner at Top Ten Communication

Mandy Iverson, RN, BSN, Community Mental Health Coordinator - Mental Health Matters at Grand Forks Public Health

Karel Sovak, Dean, School of Business at University of Mary

Track 3 - LEAD

From Peer to Leader: Practical Skills for First-Time Managers

Marla DeFoe, Senior Marketing & Advertising Manager at BBI International

Dee Baker, District Manager at Caseys

Kevin Miiller, President at ITCB Consulting

2:15 p.m. | Networking Break

BREAK SPONSOR: Visit Greater Grand Forks

2:30 p.m. | Breakout Sessions

Track 1 - LIVE

Keep Great People: Retention, Growth Paths, and Strong Starts

Brittany Love, Director of Prevention and Education at CVIC

Kristina Stepps, Director of Human Resources at CVIC

Evan Moser, Workforce Division ND Department of Commerce

Doug Peters, Leadership Speaker, Trainer, Coach at LeadershipFM

Track 2 - GROW

Building Financial Confidence: Tools for Smarter Money Decisions

Lance Hill, Leader of Education Outreach & Financial Literacy at Bank of North Dakota

Anna Larson, Senior Financial Advisor, Alerus

AGENDA

Track 3 - LEAD

Building Equitable and High-Performing Teams

Everett C Jones, Sr., Executive Director at Love in Action

Dr. Jeff Maliskey, Director, Pride Center, University of North Dakota

3:45 p.m. | Keynote

KEYNOTE SPONSOR: University of North Dakota

Work Smarter, Not Harder: Leveraging AI at Work

Autumn Ricke, Marketing Manager, Pinnacle Marketing Group

5:00 p.m. | Town Square Social

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THE VERY PROFESSIONAL BAR CRAWL

JULY 28TH, 2026
7:00 PM



Turn in a completed pub crawl map at Breakfast & Networking to be entered to win a downtown package provided by the Downtown Development Association!

Pub Crawl Map Checklist can be claimed at the Night Social in Town Square.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 29

7:30 a.m. | Breakfast & Networking

BREAK SPONSOR: iHeartMedia

8:30 a.m. | KEYNOTE

KEYNOTE SPONSOR: City of Grand Forks

Setting Unbreakable Boundaries: Protecting Your Energy Without Losing Momentum

Keynote Speaker: *Kelsey Buell, Founder at You Flourish Company*

9:30 a.m. | Networking Break

9:45 a.m. | Keynote

From Goals to Growth: Why You Can't Do It Alone

Keynote Speaker: *Kelsey Buell, Founder at You Flourish Company*

10:45 a.m. | Networking Break

EVENT SPONSOR BREAK: Northland
Community & Technical College

11:00 a.m. | Workshops

Track 1 - LIVE

Mentors, Mentees, and Momentum: How to Guide Others Through Growth

Steve Gander, Minnesota State Representative at MN House of Representatives

BG Tucker, Executive Director at College Possible Minnesota

Track 2 - GROW

Developing your LinkedIn profile: Best Practices and Tips

Marla DeFoe, Senior Marketing & Advertising Manager at BBI International

Mark Maliskey, Senior Marketing & Communications Manager at Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corporation

AGENDA

Track 3 - LEAD

**From Ideas to Execution: Leading Creativity
From Concept to Completion**

Tamara Bertram, Founder at Bertram Studio LLC

*Amanda Voigt, Director of Student Academic Success at
the University of North Dakota*

12:15 p.m. | Thank You and Farewell

1:00 p.m. | Summit After Party Social @ The Spud

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KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

MEGAN LANGLEY

Founder and Executive Director of Strengthen ND

Megan Langley is the Founder and Executive Director of Strengthen ND. Ms. Langley is a 2014 Bush Foundation Fellow, 2020 graduate of the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Social Impact Strategy, and an alumnus of the Harvard-Kennedy School of Government's Leadership in the 21st Century Program (2016), Women & Power Program (2023), and the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at Indiana State University.



Ms. Langley currently holds several state-based positions related to rural placemaking and economic and community development, including positions on the North Dakota Economic Development Foundation Board of Directors and North Dakota Rural Development Council. In addition to working across North Dakota, Ms. Langley is a member of the board of directors of Arts Midwest, Prairie Public, and former member of the National Endowment for the Arts' Steering Committee, which provides guidance to the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD), and The Rockefeller Foundation's Food Systems Game Changers Lab.

Most recently, Ms. Langley was appointed to the Federal Reserve Board's Community Advisory Council. Ms. Langley has also earned several awards for her work, including the Woman of Impact award from the North Dakota Women's Network (2022) and a Leading Lady of North Dakota (2021) from the North Dakota Women's Business Center.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Autumn Ricke

Marketing Manager, Pinnacle Marketing Group

Autumn Ricke is a designer, marketer, and analytical nerd based in Bemidji, MN. She's been assisting businesses with marketing for over 10 years. Her creativity attention to detail, and willingness to give anything a try has helped Pinnacle Marketing Group. not only promote their own brand, but their customers as well. She is passionate about helping others learn marketing strategies to succeed.

When she is not busy sharing unsolicited marketing advice you can find her coaching Junior Olympic Volleyball, Golfing, or tending her indoor jungle of houseplants.



KELSEY BUELL

Founder at You Flourish Company

Kelsey Buell is an authentic and enthusiastic team builder. She is also an accomplished violinist and singer having performed in front of audiences as large as 15,000. She has given hundreds of presentations on goal setting, preventing burnout, stress management, and leadership skills. As a former corporate recruiter, she conducted over 2,000 candidate interviews. And through her experience, she uncovered the fact that many people are disengaged in their jobs.

This led to her strong passion for training and development. She sees the value in investing in yourself and your team. Kelsey's goal is to help you discover ways to flourish in all areas of your life - both personally and professionally. She founded You Flourish Company as a way to invest deeply in those throughout her community of Fargo and beyond. She specializes in helping working moms find ways to balance their personal and professional lives through speaking, group coaching, and courses.



KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

BLAKE A. KLINKNER

Professor, University of North Dakota School of Law

Professor Blake A. Klinkner is an award-winning legal educator and author. Blake currently serves as an Associate Professor of Law at the University of North Dakota School of Law, where he teaches Civil Procedure, Cybersecurity Law, Law & Technology, Law Practice Management, and International Law. Blake directs UND's law study abroad program, and he takes law students to Brussels, Belgium and Amsterdam, The Netherlands during spring break each year. Blake also directs an undergraduate study abroad program at UND, Alpine Visions: Art, Innovation, and Culture in the German-Speaking World, which allows Blake to travel with students to Germany and Austria for several weeks each summer.



Prior to entering academia, Blake practiced in the areas of cybersecurity law, energy law, environmental law, natural resources law, and complex commercial litigation. As a practicing attorney, Blake advised clients on cybersecurity and privacy law, prepared comprehensive cybersecurity and privacy plans for businesses, and represented clients in cybersecurity and data breach litigation. Blake completed his undergraduate degrees at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität (Bonn, Germany), his master's degree at Northern Illinois University, and his juris doctor at the University of Utah College of Law.

Blake currently serves as the President of the Central States Law Schools Association, and he will welcome law professors from throughout the United States – and around the world – to Grand Forks in September when he hosts the 2026 Annual Scholarship Conference at UND. Blake recently received a Fulbright Specialist Award from the U.S. State Department, which will allow Blake to spend time in Istanbul, Turkey later this year to teach a course and related workshops pursuant to an international educational project titled Digital Bill of Rights: U.S. Constitution in the Age of AI. Blake was recently appointed by UND to serve in an international academic partnership between UND and Moldova State University in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova, and pursuant to this partnership, Blake will travel later this year to Moldova to provide training to the Moldovan national police force on cybersecurity, digital evidence, investigating and prosecuting computer crimes, and electronic records management.

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LIVE SPEAKERS

AMBER FLYNN

**Owner/Realtor of
Grand Real Estate**

Amber Flynn is a wife and mother of 3. She is a small business owner of a local real estate company and has been a realtor for 8+ years. Amber has served on the Grand Forks Public school board since 2016 and has held the roles a vice president and president of the board. Amber also serves on the Grand Forks Women's Fund.



Amber is an almost lifelong resident of Grand Forks, living in the city since she was 7, when the military transferred her family from England. Amber proclaims she is a leftie who grew up in a right handed world. This allowed her to find creative solutions and learn to navigate seeing things from different perspectives. In her free time you will find Amber acting as the family chauffeur for her kids, enjoying a karaoke night, and traveling.

ANNA ROSBURG

**CVE, Regional Vice President,
Alerus Center - Oak View Group**

Anna Rosburg is the Regional Vice President and General Manager of the Alerus Center for Oak View Group (OVG). Based in Grand Forks, North Dakota, she provides executive leadership for the Alerus Center while overseeing a portfolio of venues and strategic initiatives across the Midwest region.



Since joining the Alerus Center in 2017, Anna has led the venue through significant growth in live entertainment, sports, conventions, and community events. She has built a reputation for driving operational excellence, strengthening client and industry relationships, and developing high-performing teams.

A Minnesota native, Anna earned two Bachelor of Science degrees with honors from Johnson & Wales University in Denver—one in Advertising & Marketing Communications and one in Entrepreneurship—with concentrations in Management and Leadership. She is passionate about mentoring the next generation of venue professionals and advancing the live events industry through collaboration, innovation, and operational excellence.

LIVE SPEAKERS

ANNIE WOOD

Chief of Staff, Tellwell Story Co.

Annie Wood serves as Chief of Staff at Tellwell, where she ensures the team has the people, resources and processes needed to deliver on the promises they make to their Story Makers (clients). She leads the company's learning and development initiatives, helping teammates continually grow both personally and professionally while mastering their craft.



Annie also oversees the systems and workflows that keep projects moving from to-do to done. While also supporting the delivery of strategic, story-driven design, film and web projects. She is passionate about helping mission-driven organizations, including nonprofits, higher education institutions, educational support organizations and small businesses that connect with their audiences through meaningful storytelling.

BARRY WILFAHRT

President & CEO, The Chamber Grand Forks East Grand Forks

Barry Wilfahrt was named President and CEO of The Chamber Grand Forks, ND/East Grand Forks, MN, in January 2008. The Chamber has been part of highly successful collaborative efforts to maintain Grand Forks Air Force Base, create an emerging unmanned aviation sector, advance workforce development efforts and lead extensive community visioning focused on economic diversification and implementation of its action plan.



With more than 44 years of chamber leadership experience, including CEO positions in Melrose, Minn.; Crookston, Minn.; and Watertown, S.D., Barry has served on more than 180 national, state and local boards over his career. He continues to serve on the U.S. Chamber's Committee of 100 and National Accreditation Board and is one of just 16 U.S. Air Force-appointed Air Combat Command Civic Leaders. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Government from Saint John's University, a master's degree in Urban Studies from Minnesota State University, and is a Certified Chamber Executive (CCE).

LIVE SPEAKERS

BG TUCKER

Executive Director at College Possible Minnesota

BG Tucker leads College Possible Minnesota, leveraging her extensive education background. Her journey began in Virginia, leading to a BA in Latin American studies from Carleton College and an MA in higher education from the University of Minnesota. Tucker's dedication to educational access is evident in her diverse roles. She taught Spanish with Teach For America in Gary, Indiana, and then shaped college access as a founding counselor and director at KIPP Academy Lynn Collegiate in Massachusetts.



Her expertise extended globally with U.S. admissions counseling in London. Returning to Minnesota, she directed college and career counseling at Venture Academy in Minneapolis before joining College Possible. Her progression from senior director to executive director underscores her commitment to empowering students. Her experience spans classroom teaching, college counseling, and leadership, all focused on expanding educational opportunities.

BRITTANY LOVE

Director of Prevention and Education at Community Violence Intervention Center

Brittany Love, M.A. oversees a program that reaches more than 20,000 youth, adults, and professionals annually as director of prevention and education for CVIC. She and her team provide trainings to youth, adults, and professionals on interpersonal violence, childhood exposure to violence, trauma-informed practices, and healthy relationships.



Brittany has presented locally and nationally about CVIC's program success and the importance of prevention education in the organization's initiative to end violence in two generations. She earned her master's degree in sociology from the University of North Dakota and has eleven years of experience in the social justice field as a presenter/educator.

LIVE SPEAKERS

DALTON ERICKSON

Executive Director at North Dakota Human Rights Coalition

Dalton Erickson is a grassroots political and community organizer who has worked on building connections between organizations, engaging youth in the democratic process, and training people to become effective advocates.

They've organized events ranging from protests to lectures on government, political activism, economic injustice, housing rights, reproductive rights, and LGBTQIA2S+ rights.

Dalton's background of advocating for human rights with various communities, fostering engagement, and a humanity-based approach to leadership and life is why they joined the North Dakota Human Rights Coalition.



DOUG PETERS

Leadership Speaker, Trainer, Coach at LeadershipFM

Doug Peters is a leadership expert and a member of the Maxwell Leadership Certified Team, bringing over 25 years of experience building high-performing teams and developing leaders. As a former collegiate athletic director and interim Vice President for Student Affairs,



Doug has transformed organizations through strategic leadership development. A Certified DISC Consultant and Motivation By Appreciation Facilitator, Doug specializes in helping leaders of leaders unlock their potential and build cultures of excellence. His unique blend of athletic leadership experience and executive coaching expertise enables him to deliver practical, results-driven strategies that elevate both individual and organizational performance.

Currently serving as Board Chair for Visit Fargo Moorhead and Heart of Clay, Doug is passionate about adding value to organizations ready to grow their leadership capacity. His dynamic speaking style and access to exclusive Maxwell Leadership content make him an transformative speaker for organizations looking to improve productivity, performance, and profitability.

LIVE SPEAKERS

ERICA DUNSEN

Administrative Director of Jersey Mike's Subs

Erica Dunsen has had almost every job you could think of, not because she couldn't keep one but because while it was crucial to financially provide for her family, she simply wanted to reach her highest self.



Not allowing adversities stop her, her optimistic approach to achieving has prepared her to be the Administrative Director of Jersey Mike's Subs in town. Erica hopes that her story will inspire others as they choose to take themselves to the next level.

EVAN MOSER

Workforce Division North Dakota Department of Commerce

Evan Moser is a Grant Administrator with the North Dakota Department of Commerce's Workforce Division, where he has served for the past three years. In this role, Evan oversees key workforce development initiatives, including the Regional Workforce Impact Program and the Technical Skills Training Grant, helping communities and employers across the state build resilient, skilled talent pipelines. He brings a strong foundation in strategic planning and stakeholder engagement, drawing on his academic background—a Bachelor's degree in Marketing and an MBA from the University of North Dakota.



Evan is passionate about creating opportunities for workforce growth through public-private collaboration, and he works closely with industry leaders, educators, and local governments to align training programs with evolving economic needs. His work supports North Dakota's mission to retain talent, upskill workers, and foster inclusive economic development across all regions.

JENNY JOHNSON

**Story Maker Success Manager,
Tellwell Story Co.**

Jenny Johnson helps mission-driven organizations tell stories that create connection, clarity, and impact. At Tellwell Story Co., she partners with nonprofits and purpose-led teams to shape thoughtful strategy, meaningful film projects, impactful design, and result-driven websites that support long-term goals.



Relationship-building sits at the heart of her work. She loves being out in the community listening to people's stories, and helping connect good work with the right people. She is deeply passionate about nonprofits, social advocacy and coming together to create positive change.

KRISTINA STEPPS

**Director of Human Resources
at Community Violence
Intervention Center (CVIC)**

Kristina Stepps serves as the Director of Human Resources for CVIC, where she leads comprehensive HR strategies that empower staff to meet the organization's critical mission. With nearly a decade of leadership in the non-profit sector and over 20 years of experience in Division I intercollegiate athletics, Stepps excels at cultivating supportive, high-performance environments.



Throughout her career—including a distinguished tenure as Associate Athletic Director at Southern Illinois University—Stepps has remained dedicated to fostering individual growth and organizational excellence. Today, she oversees everything from talent acquisition and organizational development to employee wellness and compliance. Outside of the office, Stepps is a committed community volunteer and a dedicated foster for a local dog rescue. Stepps earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees from Central Michigan University, is a member of the Greater Grand Forks Human Resource Association and holds a SHRM-CP certification.

LIVE SPEAKERS

SETAREH CAMPION

**Director of Programs,
Fargo Moorhead West Fargo
Chamber of Commerce**

Setareh Campion currently serves as Director of Programs at the Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce, where she helps create experiences that bring people together and encourage connection and continued learning.



To her core, she is a connector with a passion for leadership, meaningful relationships, and intentional growth. Working at the Chamber has been a great experience as no two days are the same! It's an incredible privilege to serve our community and be part of the Chamber team.

Setareh is passionate about being people-first and enjoy building spaces where collaboration and personal development can thrive. Outside of work, she values spending time with the people and places that make the Midwest feel like home. She has a wonderful husband and four fabulous kids. Making people smile and laugh is her favorite thing to do!

SHILO PREVITI

**Director of Advocacy at
Live Well Grand Cities**

Shilo Virginia Previti is currently the Director of Advocacy at Live Well Grand Cities. With cross-sector experience including in the professional education field, the restaurant management industry, and with grassroots non-profits.



Shilo has plenty of lessons learned to share when it comes to communicating with all kinds of folks to move projects, ideas, and people forward in a wide variety of workforce settings. Shilo's current work bridges rural community advocacy, critical nutrition skills education, and strategic resource raising with detailed policy reviews and physical assessments, including audits of regional worksites, all with the goal of implementing positive change to advance a future with stronger quality of living outcomes in our region.

LIVE SPEAKERS

STEVE GANDER

**Minnesota State Representative
at MN House of Representatives**

Steve Gander is a native of East Grand Forks, MN. He attended college at the University of North Dakota and Optometry school at the Illinois College of Optometry. Gander completed clinical training at the Illinois Eye Institute and the West Side Veterans Administration in Chicago in 1987.



Gander and Rosalynd (Rhen) were married in 1990 and have two adult sons and three grandchildren. He is a member of Christ the King Church and enjoys running, hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, singing, SCUBA diving, and woodworking.

Steve is an optometrist and President of Opticare–Forks Vision Clinic in East Grand Forks and Crookston, Minnesota, where he has practiced since graduating from optometry school. He is an active member of state and national optometric associations. Gander has been a real estate investor since 1996.

His community involvement includes past leadership roles with the Rotary Club, Good Samaritan Nursing Center, Planning and Zoning Commission, Christ the King Church, Altru Health Resources, and the Chamber of Commerce. He has served on the East Grand Forks City Council, two terms as Mayor, and currently serves in the Minnesota House of Representatives.

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GROW SPEAKERS

ANNA LARSON

Senior Financial Advisor at Alerus

Anna Larson has nearly 10 years of financial services experience, with extensive experience in retirement & estate planning, wealth management, and benefits services. She holds a bachelor's degree in business management from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, and maintains Series 7 and Series 66 securities registrations.

Anna lives in East Grand Forks with her husband Chad and their three children.



JOHN FRIEND

Human Resources Manager, PS Industries, Inc.

John Friend is a results oriented human resource leader with experience developing, coaching and managing people and projects. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Business with an emphasis in Human Resource Management and a Master of Science in Human Resource Management from Capella University.

Since 2016, John has served as Human Resources Manager for PS Industries in Grand Forks, where he manages HR-related activities, advises on long-range planning and organizational strategy, and develops programs to support employee performance. He also serves as an adjunct instructor with the University of North Dakota College of Business and Public Administration.



KAREL SOVAK

Dean, Gary Tharaldson School of Business at University of Mary

Karel Sovak teaching and facilitation include courses in management, marketing, entrepreneurship and virtuous, servant-leadership, as well as Catholic Social Teaching in Business. He also leads mission-driven Catholic business education within the school to allow students to be lead by excellent role models.



LANCE HILL

Leader of Education Outreach & Financial Literacy at Bank of North Dakota

Lance Hill is the Financial Literacy Manager at Bank of North Dakota (BND). He has been employed at the bank for over 28 years. The financial literacy program at BND is designed to help educate North Dakotans about relevant topics of financial education. The program utilizes a partnership approach with other like-minded individuals and organizations to help create long-term improvements and financial well-being in people's lives.

Lance is active in several state and national financial literacy organizations. He is a Certified Educator in Personal Finance. A graduate of Minot State University, Lance is married to Debbie, and they have 3 adult children.



LEA GREENE

Owner at Top Ten Communication

Lea Greene is a crisis communication strategist, author, and military veteran who helps leaders stay calm, credible, and effective when the stakes are high. She serves as Director of Business Development for GovCom Solutions, an IT and AI firm supporting public sector clients with digital modernization and cybersecurity resilience.

Lea is the author of *Don't React: Act* and teaches organizations how to communicate clearly, manage conflict, and lead through uncertainty. Her work blends research, real-world experience from the U.S. Air Force, and more than 11 years living overseas, giving her a global perspective on leadership and human behavior. Lea speaks on leadership, conflict resolution, AI in the workplace, and navigating burnout with practical strategies that support both performance and well being. Raised on a farm in Lakota, she brings a grounded perspective shaped by service, community, and a belief that everyday leaders can make extraordinary impact.



GROW SPEAKERS

MANDY IVERSON

RN, BSN, Community Mental Health Coordinator; State Opioid Response Grant Manager at Grand Forks Public Health

Mandy Iverson is a proud two-time UND alumni with Bachelor of Science degrees in Biology: Pre-Health Emphasis and Nursing. Mandy has spent time working in various health care settings as well as several years with the Grand Forks School District in addition to her military obligations. She has been recognized for her efforts in her fields with the following Sanford Guardian award, Grand Forks Public Health Champion, CPT Linda Bray awardee, Women Warrior Wonder Wall inaugural awardee, and multiple military awards including a Bronze Star.



Mandy and her husband, Doug, have a puppy, Breezer Belfour, and make their home in Grand Forks, ND. Mandy is a Combat Veteran, 23-year member of the North Dakota Army National Guard she is currently a Plans Officer for Joint Force Headquarters, Domestic Operations and holds the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. She is a former Mrs. MN (2022) AND Mrs. ND International (2023) and is the CURRENT Miss Patriotic Pinup ND (2025). She enjoys volunteering with animal, Veteran and child focused organizations, running, yoga, and attending UND athletics with Doug.

MARK MALISKEY

Senior Marketing & Communications Manager at Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corporation

Mark Maliskey is the Marketing & Communications Manager at the Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corporation, where he has led the organization's brand, digital, and content strategy since 2022, work that helped attract a \$1 billion manufacturing investment, the largest in the region's history. He holds an MBA with certificates in Digital Marketing & Innovation from North Dakota State University and brings 10+ years of experience building marketing strategies for mission-driven organizations. An active member of Greater Grand Forks Young Professionals since 2020, Mark has served on the Executive Board, founded local groups focused on niche interests, and received the organization's Rising Star Award in 2023. He regularly presents on marketing and data strategy for organizations including the IEDC, EDA of ND, and NDPC.



GROW SPEAKERS

MATHIAS INGMAN

Maxwell Certified Leadership Speaker, Trainer Coach at Ignite Growth & Development

Whether speaking to high school students, business teams or community leaders, he inspires others to rethink what's possible by changing how they think, build habits and respond to challenges. Mathias is the founder of Ignite Growth and Development and a certified John Maxwell Team member, blending personal experience with proven leadership frameworks to create lasting impact. Mathias Ingman is a dynamic leadership speaker and personal growth coach, passionate about helping the next generation thrive through intentionality, mindset and resilience. Drawing from principles in books like *The 15 Invaluable Laws of Growth*, Mathias equips audiences with practical tools to take ownership of their future—one daily decision at a time.



MELISSA THURY

Business Coach at Balance & Business with Melissa

First and foremost, I'm a wife and mom. My husband Jeremy and I live in Jamestown, ND with our two daughters, Ramsey and Merritt. As a family, we love traveling, camping, card and board games, good food, and cozy movie nights.



I'm also a lifelong book lover, passionate about literacy, and a strong advocate for mental health — especially after watching people close to me face those challenges. So how did I end up here? After nearly 12 years in Healthcare Administration and over 7 years in direct sales, I realized I was craving something more aligned with my passions and strengths — teaching, connecting, and helping others grow. I finally followed that nudge in early 2025 and launched my coaching business.

Now, I get to do what lights me up: support women in building a business that fits their life, not the other way around. I believe you can have big goals and strong boundaries — and I'm here to help you create both.

BUILD YOUR CAREER. CREATE A BETTER FUTURE.

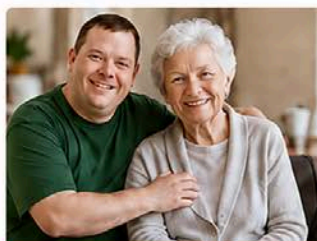
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When you grow your career with us, you help individuals thrive –
and strengthen communities across North Dakota.



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- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Companion care
- ✓ And more



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Empowering people with skills, training, and job opportunities to build brighter futures.



- ✓ Career pathways
- ✓ Job readiness & training
- ✓ Competitive employment
- ✓ Employer partnerships
- ✓ Building skills for success



RETAIL THAT GIVES BACK

Our stores fund mission-driven services statewide and provide jobs, training, and purpose.



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- ✓ Donations change lives
- ✓ Jobs and training
- ✓ Reducing waste
- ✓ Stronger communities



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AMANDA VOIGT

Director of Student Academic Success at University of North Dakota

Amanda Voigt is the Director of Student Academic Success at University of North Dakota, where she helps people turn ideas into action. She leads creative problem-solving workshops and hands-on programs for students.

Amanda loves making creativity feel accessible, fun, and doable, and giving folks simple tools to spark new ideas and tackle real challenges.



BROOKE TOFTE

Account Executive, Anchor Marketing

Brooke Tofte is a dynamic marketing professional and Account Executive known for her strategic approach to client partnerships and her passion for helping organizations grow.



Brooke brings a strong background in marketing and project leadership, with experience that spans relationship management, brand development, and supporting businesses through thoughtful, results-driven strategy. A lifelong learner, Brooke is driven to help others grow and succeed through fearless optimism and patient compassion—a personal philosophy that shines through in her work with clients, colleagues, and emerging professionals. Throughout her career, she has gained experience that has strengthened her expertise in communication, client service, and organizational development. She is recognized for her ability to translate ideas into actionable plans and foster environments where people and teams can thrive.

LEAD SPEAKERS

DEE BAKER

District Manager at Caseys

Over 25 years in management and 13 years as a district manager with chairperson experience with company and community projects. Top performing team builder in every organization.



EVERETT C JONES, SR.

Executive Director at Love in Action

Everett C. Jones, Sr. is a nonprofit executive, social entrepreneur, and community advocate dedicated to building stronger, more equitable systems of care in the Greater Grand Forks region.



As the Executive Director of Love in Action, Everett leads a Christ-centered organization focused on meeting essential needs, supporting individuals in crisis, and creating pathways toward stability, dignity, and purpose.

He is also the founder of BridgePoint Housing & Recovery, a developing initiative expanding innovative housing solutions—including SRO and recovery-oriented living—to address gaps in the local housing continuum.

With professional experience spanning organizational leadership, housing navigation, community development, and workforce readiness, Everett is known for his relational leadership style and ability to unify partners across sectors. His work emphasizes collaboration, cultural humility, and equitable practices that strengthen both teams and communities.

Everett brings a unique blend of strategic vision, lived experience, and faith-driven purpose to every space he enters. His personal journey, marked by resilience, transformation, and service fuels his passion for building high-performing, inclusive teams and empowering emerging leaders. Committed to leading with compassion and integrity, Everett continues to champion solutions that inspire hope and create long-term impact throughout the region.

JEFF BECK

**Senior Director of Online at
The University of Mary**

Jeff Beck brings nearly two decades of leadership experience to his role as Senior Director of Online at the University of Mary, where he leads strategic initiatives in online education and teaches as an adjunct instructor at the Gary Tharaldson School of Business.



A proud University of Mary alumnus, Jeff holds both a bachelor's degree in business management and an MBA. A passionate advocate for workforce development, Jeff is known for delivering high-energy leadership training that blends practical tools with dynamic storytelling.

He has personally mentored and promoted over 25 individuals into leadership roles, reflecting his deep commitment to cultivating purpose-driven professionals. Jeff thrives on helping others uncover their purpose, passion, and potential in the workplace.

JEFF MALISKEY

**Director, Pride Center,
University of North Dakota**

Dr. Jeff Maliskey (he/him) is the inaugural Director of the Pride Center at the University of North Dakota. His work focuses on 2SLGBTQIA+ identity support, gender and sexuality education, and advocacy. Dr. Maliskey brings more than a decade of higher education experience leading affinity-based resource centers and initiatives. As a first-generation LGBTQ+ scholar-practitioner, Dr. Maliskey understands the unique challenges that impact student success.



His practice is student-centered and justice-based, working toward equity and inclusion in higher education. As a scholar, his research focuses on queer historical inquiry to better understand contemporary 2SLGBTQIA+ experiences in higher education. His 2022 dissertation explored the queer history of the University of North Dakota through the lens of queer resistance and student activism.

LEAD SPEAKERS

KEVIN MIILLER

President at ITCB Consulting

Kevin Miiller, PE, MBA, author of *Finding Ways to Win & Doing More with Less* and John C Maxwell certified speaker, trainer and coach. With 30 years of management experience, Kevin's expertise ranges from construction foreman, engineering management, regional sales manager, and GM.



Taking his success in athletics to the business world, he has brought about growth factors of 60%, 200%, 300%, and 500%, in different industries and each in less than 5 years. Kevin's heart is to join forces with leaders and managers to help them solve problems, reduce stress and enjoy higher levels of success. Kevin believes that an organization's workplace culture is the biggest competitive advantage, and that culture starts with trustworthy, strategic leaders who have a people first mindset.

MARLA DEFOE

Senior Marketing & Advertising Manager at BBI International

Marla DeFoe is the Senior Marketing & Advertising Manager at BBI International, where she oversees the strategic placement of advertisements across publications and online platforms.



In addition to her expertise in marketing, social media management, and public relations, she plays a key role in the success of BBI International's events and initiatives and has been instrumental in the growth of the company's internship program. With 17 years at BBI International, DeFoe brings a wealth of experience in marketing, advertising, event promotion, and communications. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Communication with a minor in Theater Arts from the University of North Dakota.

A native of Drayton, ND, she currently resides in Thompson, ND, with her husband, Jason, and their two children. She serves on the Board of Directors for the Greater Grand Forks Women's Leadership Cooperative, provides marketing and administrative support to the Public Arts Commission, and has offered her marketing and event planning expertise to support the Grand Forks Children's Museum.

NICHOLAS FLOM

**UAS Account and Portfolio
Director at Thales USA**

Nicholas Flom is an aviation professional who has been focusing on the UAS industry for the past 15 years. Mr. Flom has spent time as an entrepreneur starting a small airline, working for state government and consulting for one of the big 4 professional services companies.



Mr. Flom is currently the UAS Account & Portfolio Director for Thales USA where he is responsible for strategic UAS account integration. This role capitalizes on Mr. Flom's experience as the market lead for state and local governments focused on AAM for Deloitte Consulting. Mr. Flom was previously the Executive Director of the Northern Plains UAS Test Site where he was responsible for Vantis, the state of North Dakota's statewide beyond visual line of sight initiative.

RACHEL RAKOCZY

**Founder and Owner at
Rachel's Property Solutions**

Rachel's Property Solutions was founded in May 2017 by **Rachel Rakoczy** in Grand Forks, ND. This business is locally owned and operated by a disabled U.S. Army veteran (PTSD). We are a cleaning company branching out to many different ventures.



SANDI LUCK

**Founder and Owner, Bully Brew
Coffee, Board Room Coffee &
Taphouse, ND Coffee Roastery**

For the last 18 years, **Sandi Luck** has been a serial entrepreneur and she was a college professor at the University of North Dakota. Her entrepreneurship journey includes being the founder and owner of 12 companies in the Midwest (100% woman owned).



LEAD SPEAKERS

7 Bully Brew Coffee Houses (Grand Forks, East Grand Forks, Hallock, Warren, McIntosh, Devils Lake, and Fargo), 2 Coffee, & Taphouse (Board Room in Grand Forks), and the ND Coffee Roastery (a large manufacturing warehouse where the coffee beans are roasted and packaged for not only Bully Brew Coffee but several other coffee shops in the Midwest). The ND Coffee School is connected to the Roastery where they teach coffee entrepreneurs how to successfully open and run a coffee house.

She also owns an AIRBNB called Nora's Place. Sandi does not do this alone - she has a leadership team of women who are movers and shakers.

TAMARA BERTRAM

Founder at Bertram Studio LLC

Tamara Bertram is a consultant, facilitator, and educator specializing in creative problem solving, innovation, and collaborative systems work. She works with nonprofit organizations, businesses, educators, entrepreneurs, and community leaders to help teams clarify complex challenges, generate practical ideas, and move initiatives from uncertainty to action.



Tamara regularly presents at creativity and innovation conferences, including the Florida Creativity Conference, CPSI, and leads hands-on workshops for local nonprofits, small businesses, and community organizations, including workshops offered through the Grand Forks Chamber of Commerce. Her sessions combine structured frameworks with real-world examples that help participants apply new ideas immediately.

With over 20 years of experience across education, arts leadership, and nonprofit work, Tamara brings a practical, engaging approach that supports collaboration, sound decision making, and effective implementation.

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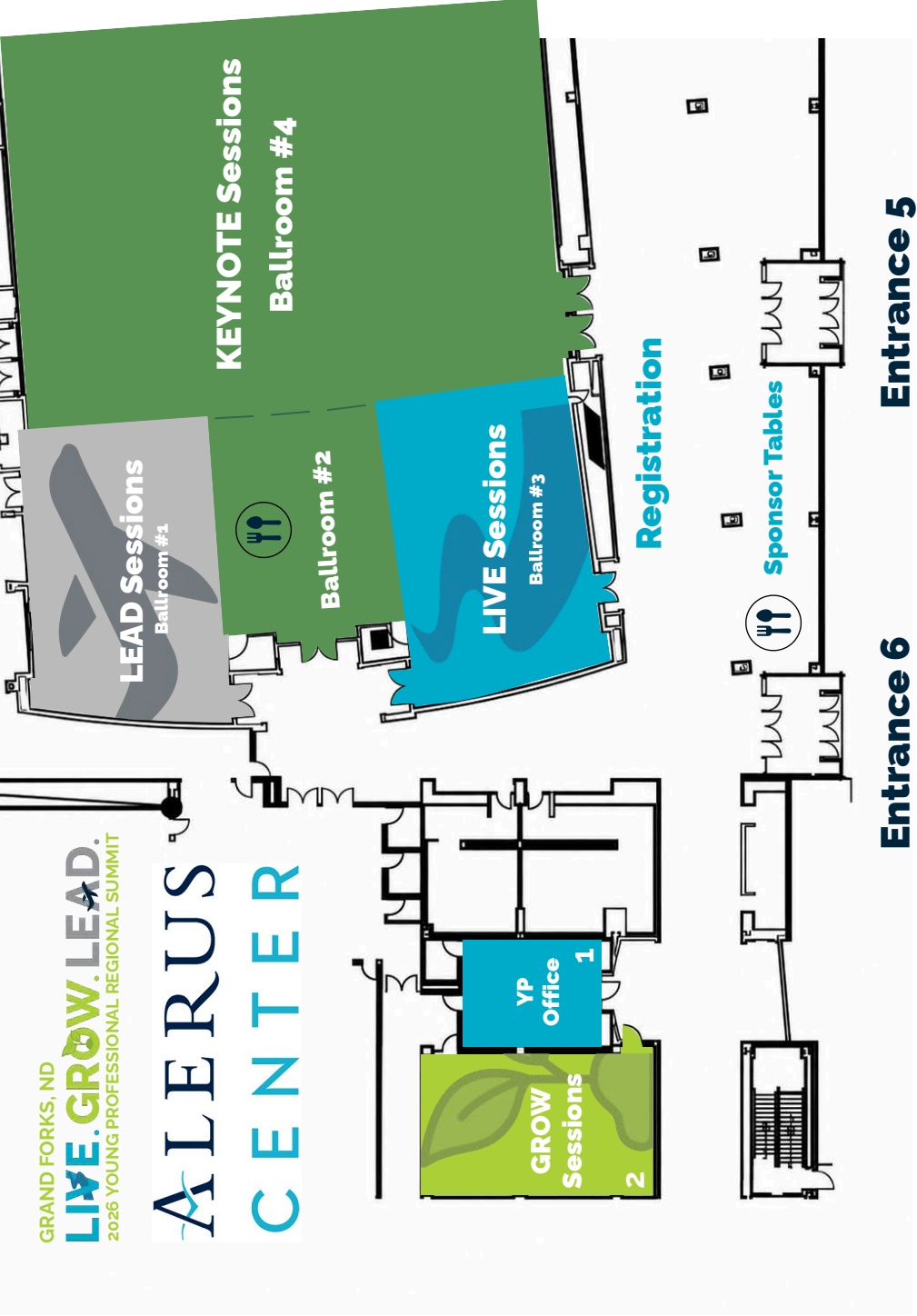
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