

# Supporting Small Business Growth in Valdez

## ALASKA WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER

A PROGRAM OF BUSINESS IMPACT NW  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE U.S. SBA



[www.businessimpactnw.org](http://www.businessimpactnw.org)

# Why We're Here

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- ▶ Report on partnership outcomes, share business community observations, and discuss future opportunities.

# Who We Serve

- ▶ Tourism • Retail • Trades • Professional Services • Childcare • Food • Maritime

# How We Got Here



# Why Small Businesses Matter

Jobs • Local Ownership • Year-Round Economy •  
Community Resilience



# What the City Investment Supports

Training → Coaching → Connections →  
Capital Access → Business Growth

# 2026 Year-to-Date Impact

43  
Businesses  
Served

50.7 Jobs  
Created &  
Retained

\$21,000  
Capital  
Accessed

2 Capital  
Infusions

1 Business  
Start

Metrics as of  
June 9, 2026

# Beyond Training

- ▶ Coach • Connector
- Convener • Catalyst



The poster features a background image of the Valdez Museum entrance with a statue of a prospector. In the foreground, there are two beer cans (Valdez Brewing Co. Odyssey and Pilski), two wine glasses, and a platter of cheese and crackers.

*Valdez*  
**STORYTELLING  
COCKTAIL HOUR**

PREPARING FOR THE  
CITY'S 125TH ANNIVERSARY

**TUESDAY**  
4:00 – 6:00 PM

BEER, WINE &  
REFRESHMENTS  
PROVIDED

CONNECT.  
SHARE.  
CELEBRATE VALDEZ.

*An evening of storytelling, hometown pride & preparing for the City's 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.*

# Building the Valdez Business Ecosystem



Valdez Businesses at the center



City • BINW • SBA • PWSC • UAF Center for Innovation • Alaska Blue Economy Center • Lenders

# Business Success Stories

Sky's Skin @ Coastal Bronze



Sam's Spot



Stamm Homes LLC

# Bringing Expertise to Valdez

- ▶ ~50 attendees
- ▶ 14 presenters + City Department Power Hour

## COV POWER HOUR



**KASEY WALKER**  
CAPITAL FACILITIES DIRECTOR  
TOPIC: BIDS, CONTRACTS, & CURRENT PROJECTS

**KATE HUBER**  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR  
TOPIC: NEW PERMITTING SOFTWARE & BUSINESS LICENSES



**SARAH JORGENSEN-OWEN**  
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER  
TOPIC: THE CITY OF VALDEZ 125TH CELEBRATIONS

**SHERI PIERCE**  
CITY CLERK  
TOPIC: CITIZEN'S ACADEMY



**JAY FULK** FULK LAW OFFICE

Jay Fulk owns and operates a law practice in Fairbanks and is an entrepreneur with a decade of experience running a wedding DJ business across Alaska. He and his wife also manage a Turo-based business in Fairbanks. Jay holds degrees in justice and business finance from UAF and earned his law degree in Boise. A father of three, he enjoys coaching youth basketball, traveling, and spending time outdoors, especially boating in Valdez.



**JEFF CONROY** CONROY LEADERSHIP CONSULTING

Jeff Conroy is a nonprofit executive, author, and leadership consultant with more than 30 years of experience. He champions intentional, people-focused leadership grounded in clarity and accountability, shaped by early work in fundraising, governance, and community engagement. As founder of Conroy Leadership Consulting, he helps organizations strengthen leaders, grow revenue, and implement practical strategies. Jeff is the author of three books, co-hosts the No More Leadership BS podcast, and holds a Master's in Organizational Leadership.



**JENNIFER CHRISTENSEN** SPARKSTORY MARKETING

Jen is the CEO of SparkStory, an AI-driven marketing agency helping small businesses grow smarter and more profitably. A 3+ inc. 5000 marketer and award-winning CMO, she has over 20 years of experience scaling companies, including driving 10x growth and successful exits. Jen is passionate about making advanced marketing and AI tools accessible to purpose-driven businesses. As a national speaker and trainer, she focuses on ethical, practical, results-driven marketing strategies.



**JORGE ARCINIEGA** SEED MEDIA

Jorge Arciniega is a brand strategist and creative leader with Seed Media, where he helps businesses and organizations clarify their messages, strengthen their brands, and grow with purpose. A husband, father of four, and Valdez resident for more than 20 years, he is passionate about serving others through clear communication, creative strategy, and meaningful brand development. Jorge is dedicated to helping people connect with the right audience and build momentum through the power of story.

## PRESENTERS

# Leveraging Local Investment

3X value delivered to conference attendees

\$28,500 estimated expert value delivered through conference experts



# Conference Outcomes & Next Steps



Action plans created



New statewide connections formed



Valdez Business Meetup launched



Emerging local business leadership and collaboration

# Opening Doors to Statewide Opportunities



UAF CENTER FOR INNOVATION



ALASKA BLUE ECONOMY CENTER



MARICULTURE



STARTUP SUPPORT



CAPITAL ACCESS

# What We're Seeing



More full-time businesses



Fewer hobby businesses



More growth-oriented entrepreneurs



Greater interest in funding



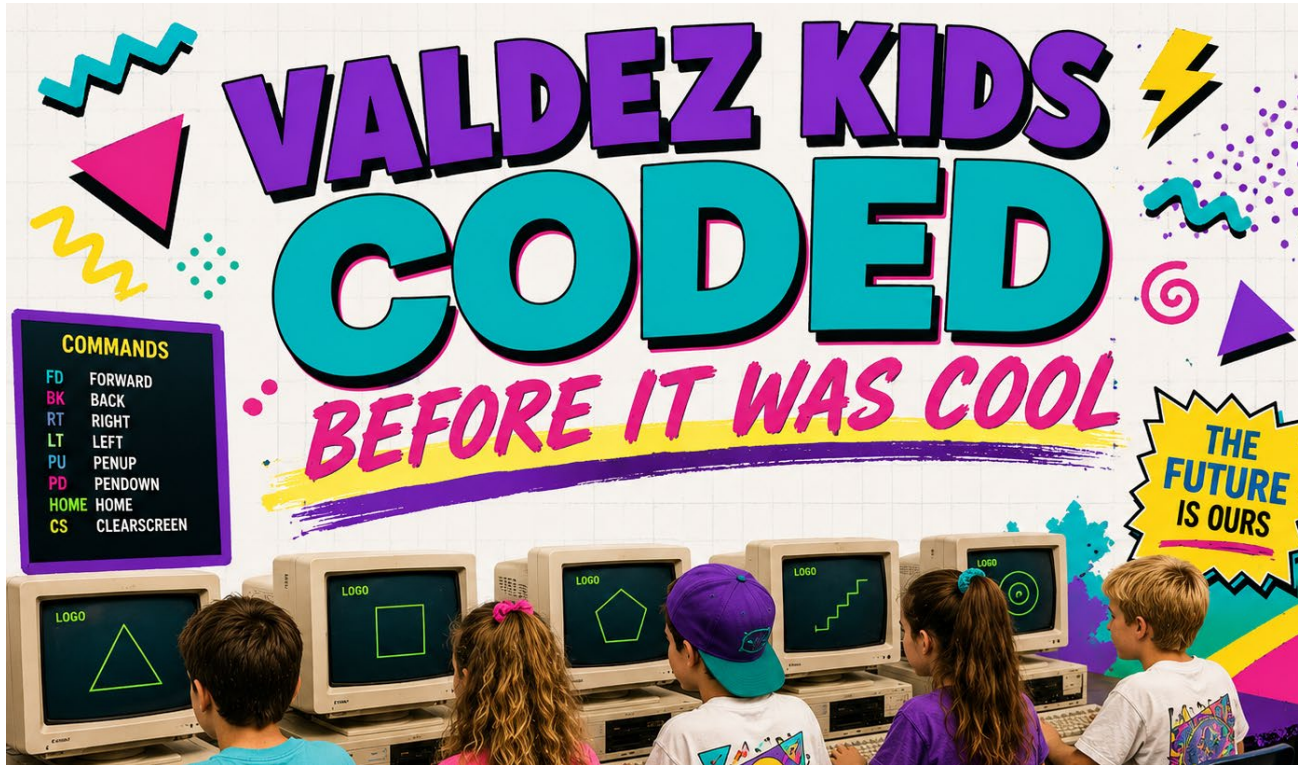
Emerging business leadership

# What Businesses Need

Workforce • Capital • Marketing • Technology •  
Financial Literacy • Housing

# Building on a Strong Foundation

- ▶ 2026: Profitability, sustainability, younger entrepreneurs, capital access, workforce pathways



# Preparing for the Next Era

Digital fluency • AI-powered tools • Automation •  
Marketplace expansion

# Future Opportunity



North Star Goals



Quarterly business outlook tracking



Measure business progress, not just activity



SMALL BUSINESS FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

# Thank You

Questions & Discussion