

National Small Business Week

★ 2026 ★



SMALL BUSINESS SKILL SHARE

MAY 7, 2026 · 9:00 AM-11:45 AM

Innovate Springfield, 1 Horace Mann Plaza

Skill Share pairs National Small Business Week's spirit with expert-led training. Sharpen your edge, streamline operations, and secure your business's future - all in one morning.

***This year we're doing more than just celebrating your business...
we're fueling your next growth chapter with the tools
modern entrepreneurs need.***



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**Innovate
Springfield**

ABOUT...



Visit the offices of the Illinois Small Business Development Center for assistance in starting or growing your business. You can take advantage of a variety of services... from our growing catalogue of information-packed seminars to our extensive library of business and personal resources. Or, visit with any of our impressive roster of advisors. We are here to help find the answers to all of your business questions. Plus, nearly all of the services and programs provided by the Illinois SBDC are offered at no cost to the client.



Illinois Local is a Springfield-based membership community built to help local businesses support, grow, and celebrate one another. Members connect through monthly networking events hosted by fellow members throughout Illinois's capital city, and the organization amplifies their stories through features on its website, a monthly newsletter, and an active presence on social media. Illinois Local is more than a networking group; it's a thriving ecosystem where Springfield-area businesses show up for each other.



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS | SPRINGFIELD

Innovate Springfield

Innovate Springfield is the University of Illinois Springfield's downtown business incubator and innovation hub, serving as a catalyst for entrepreneurship, innovation, and economic growth in central Illinois by cultivating entrepreneurial ventures, developing talent, and bringing together startups, creators, and social change makers in a collaborative environment where ideas become viable businesses. Founded in 2014, it was designed to accelerate statewide job creation and economic development.



SPEAKERS...



LONDON KAUFMAN

Data Scientist - ACERTUS

Landon Kaufman is a Data Scientist with over six years of experience in artificial intelligence and machine learning. He specializes in building and deploying AI solutions that drive real business impact, with a focus on generative AI, large language models, and emerging agentic systems.



DEVON TRAVOUS

Acting State Purchasing Officer & Small Business Specialist, Capital Development Board

Devon Travous serves as the Acting State Purchasing Officer and Small Business Specialist for the Capital Development Board's Chief Procurement Office. In this role, he supports procurement operations and works to expand opportunities for small businesses within state contracting. Devon earned his Master of Business Administration from the University of Illinois Springfield in 2024 and has been serving the State of Illinois since that time. He prioritizes building strong, collaborative relationships that help small businesses successfully navigate state procurement.



NICK KERN

Vice President and Loan Officer, Growth Corp

Nick Kern joined Growth Corp in 2010 and as Vice President and Loan Officer is responsible for helping business owners gain access to quality capital through the SBA 504 Loan Program. This unique financing allows business owners to own their space, grow with confidence, and build something that lasts. With over 16 years of experience, Nick can make it easier to buy or build commercial real estate with low down payments and long-term fixed rates - paired with local, hands-on support guiding you every step of the way. His company is ranked a top 10 National lender for SBA 504 loan volume and is the Midwest's largest SBA 504 lender.



DR. BRYNE WILLEY

Chiropractor, AlignLife of Springfield Chiropractic & Natural Health Center

Dr. Bryne Willey is a chiropractor with more than a decade of experience educating, empowering, and treating the Springfield community to live healthier, more balanced lives. He provides education and care related to misalignment, stress, toxins, allergies, gut dysfunction, immunity, and sleep. In 2013, Dr. Willey launched AlignLife of Springfield Chiropractic & Natural Health Center, where he continues to deliver whole-body wellness and preventive care. He earned his Doctorate from Logan College of Chiropractic, along with a Master's in Sports Science and Rehabilitation.

AGENDA

TIME	SESSION	SPEAKERS
9:00 - 9:30	REGISTRATION AND NETWORKING Coffee and refreshments will be available	
9:30 - 9:45	WELCOME & OVERVIEW	Kevin Lust Rob Kerr
9:45 - 10:05	SKILL SHARE 1 AI for Business	Landon Kaufman
10:05 - 10:25	SKILL SHARE 2 Illinois Government Contracting	Devon Travous
10:25 - 10:35	Morning Break	
10:35 - 10:55	SKILL SHARE 3 Business Lending	Nick Kern
10:55 - 11:15	SKILL SHARE 4 Stress Management	Dr. Bryne Wiley
11:15 - 11:30	PANEL Q & A	
11:30 - 11:45	NETWORKING AND LIGHT LUNCH	
11:45	PROGRAM CONCLUDES	

READ MORE FROM OUR SPEAKERS...

SPEAKER 1	SPEAKER 2	SPEAKER 3	SPEAKER 4
			
LANDON KAUFMAN, <i>ACERTUS</i>	DEVON TRAVOUS, <i>Capital Development Board</i>	NICK KERN, <i>Growth Corp</i>	DR. BRYNE WILLEY, <i>AlignLife of Springfield</i>

Notes:



Thank you for
attending!

