

TUESDAY, JULY 28

Registration & Breakfast | 7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

Welcome & Keynote #1 | 8:30 – 9:00 a.m.

Building Meaningful Careers and Lives in Rural Communities

- Rural communities create unique environments where relationships, collaboration, and purpose drive success. This session explores how embracing rural strengths enhances both career development and personal fulfillment.
 - **Speaker:** *Megan Langley, Founder and Executive Director of Strengthen ND*
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Breakout Sessions #1 | 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.

Track 1 – LIVE

Connecting Locally: Building Professional Networks in Smaller Cities

- In rural or small-urban communities, networking is personal, relational, and often long-term. This session explores how engaging locally, showing up consistently, and building trust can open doors professionally and strengthen community ties.
- **Speakers:** *Erica Dunsen, Administrative Director at Jersey Mikes Subs; Jenny Johnson, Story Maker Success Manager, Tellwell Story Co.*

Track 2 – GROW

- **Intentional Growth: Mindset, Self-Leadership, and the Power of Daily Choices**
 - What you think, practice, and repeat shapes who you become. This panel focuses on how an intentional mindset, self-leadership, and small daily actions compound into meaningful personal and professional growth.
 - **Speakers:** *Mathias Ingman, Leadership Speaker & Growth Strategist at Ignite Growth & Development*

Track 3 – LEAD

- **Say It Better: Growing Confidence in Providing Feedback and Resolving Conflict**
 - How we communicate during moments of tension defines our effectiveness as leaders. This session examines feedback, conflict resolution, and mindset tools that help professionals communicate clearly, respond intentionally, and build stronger teams.
 - **Speakers:** *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*

Networking Break

Breakout Sessions #2 | 10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Track 1 – LIVE

- **Serving Beyond Your Title: Leadership in Advocacy and Community Organizations**
 - Advocacy and community leadership require collaboration, trust, and commitment. This panel highlights how individuals can contribute meaningfully through boards and community organizations while strengthening the places they live and work.
 - **Speakers:** *Amber Flynn, Owner/Realtor at Grand Real Estate, 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**
 - How you structure your day shapes how effective you are at work. This panel highlights practical strategies for managing time, maintaining focus, and creating routines that support productivity and long-term growth.
 - **Speakers:** *Melissa Thury, Business Coach at Balance & Business with Melissa, John Friend, Human Resources Manager, PS Industries, Inc.*

Track 3 – LEAD

- **Entrepreneurship in Action: Lessons From the Real World**
 - This panel explores practical, experience-driven lessons from entrepreneurs who have built and sustained businesses through action, adaptability, and persistence.
 - **Speakers:** *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*

Lunch & Presentation

- **Cybersecurity & Privacy Essentials: What Every Young Professional Should Know to Safely Manage Their Data**
 - Explores how individuals and organizations can protect sensitive information, build strong digital habits, and navigate an increasingly complex online landscape. Learn practical strategies for managing personal and professional data securely, understanding emerging risks, and fostering a culture of accountability and trust in digital spaces.
 - **Speaker:** *Professor Blake A. Klinkner, University of North Dakota School of Law*

Breakout Sessions #3 | 1:00 – 2:15 p.m.

Track 1 – LIVE

- **Building Work That Works: Creating Environments People Want to Stay In**
 - Belonging is a powerful driver of engagement and retention. This panel examines how organizations and community leaders build cultures of trust, inclusion, and shared purpose that strengthen both teams and the communities they serve.
 - **Speakers:** *shilo virginia previti, Director of Advocacy at Live Well Grand Cities*

Track 2 – GROW

- **Speak Up! Using Your Voice to Vouch for Your Team, Your Project, and Yourself**
 - This panel focuses on using clear, confident communication to advocate for your team, your work, and yourself. Learn practical ways to lead conversations, present ideas, and speak up with credibility in meetings and professional settings.
 - **Speakers:** *Mandy Iverson, RN, BSN, Community Mental Health Coordinator; State Opioid Response Grant Manager at Grand Forks Public Health; Lea Greene, Owner at Top*

Ten Communication; Karel Sovak, Dean, Gary Tharaldson School of Business at University of Mary

Track 3 – LEAD

- **From Peer to Leader: Practical Skills for First-Time Managers**
 - First-time managers are often asked to lead without a playbook. This session breaks down how to transition from individual contributor to people leader, communicate clearly, manage competing priorities, and develop an engaged team. Panelists will share practical frameworks, lessons learned, and simple habits that help new leaders stay steady, effective, and human.
 - **Speakers:** *Marla DeFoe, Senior Marketing & Advertising Manager at BBI International, Dee Baker, District Manager at Caseys, Kevin Müller, President at ITCB Consulting*
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Networking Break

Breakout Sessions #4 | 2:30 – 3:45 p.m.

Track 1 – LIVE

- **Keep Great People: Retention, Growth Paths, and Strong Starts**
 - Strong retention is built through clear growth paths, supportive culture, and access to skill development. This session connects workforce programs, onboarding practices, and leadership strategies that keep talent engaged long term.
 - **Speakers:** *Brittany Love, Director of Prevention and Education at Community Violence Intervention Center; Evan Moser, Workforce Division North Dakota Department of Commerce; Doug Peters, Leadership Speaker, Trainer, Coach at LeadershipFM; Kristina Stepps, Director of Human Resources at Community Violence Intervention Center (CVIC)*

Track 2 – GROW

- **Building Financial Confidence: Tools for Smarter Money Decisions**
 - Building financial stability starts with understanding the basics. This session focuses on essential financial skills and accessible resources that support smarter decisions around spending, saving, borrowing, and planning for the future.
 - **Speakers:** *Lance Hill, Leader of Education Outreach & Financial Literacy at Bank of North Dakota; Anna Larson, Senior Financial Advisor, Alerus*

Track 3 – LEAD

- **Building Equitable and High-Performing Teams**

- Diversity, equity, and inclusion are essential drivers of organizational performance, workplace culture, and effective leadership. This session explores practical DEI strategies for building psychologically safe, inclusive teams and demonstrates how equity-centered leadership strengthens retention, engagement, innovation, and long-term success.
 - **Speakers:** *Everett C Jones, Sr., Executive Director at Love in Action; Dr. Jeff Maliskey, Director, Pride Center, University of North Dakota*
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Keynote #2 | 3:45 – 4:15 p.m.**Tech, Innovation, and AI in the Workplace**

- This session examines how technology and AI are changing everyday work, leadership expectations, and career development, with insight into how professionals can adapt and stay competitive.
 - **Speaker:** *Autumn Ricke, Marketing Operations Manager, Pinnacle Marketing Group*
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NIGHT SOCIAL IN TOWN SQUARE 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

- Enjoy live music, yard games, local food trucks, and plenty of opportunities to connect with the community. After the Night Social ends at 7:00 PM, we invite anyone who is 21+ to join us for The Very Professional Bar Crawl in downtown Grand Forks!

WEDNESDAY, JULY 29

Breakfast & Networking | 7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

Keynote #3.1 | 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.

Setting Unbreakable Boundaries: Protecting Your Energy Without Losing Momentum

- This interactive workshop focuses on recognizing early signs of burnout and learning how to set clear, values-aligned boundaries that protect time, energy, and focus. Drawing from You Flourish Company’s boundary-setting framework, participants will explore how overcommitment, unclear expectations, and lack of boundaries quietly erode performance and well-being and how to interrupt that cycle before burnout takes hold. Attendees leave with practical language, tools, and reflection prompts they can apply immediately to sustain their work and personal lives.
- **Keynote Speaker:** *Kelsey Buell, Founder at You Flourish Company*

Networking Break | 9:30 - 9:45 a.m

Keynote #3.2 | 9:45 – 10:45 a.m.

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

- Building on the boundary-setting foundation from the first workshop, this session shifts from self-protection to sustainable growth. Participants examine why trying to “do it all alone” is a major contributor to burnout and stalled progress. Through guided exercises and small-group discussion, attendees identify support networks, clarify goals, and practice collaborative problem-solving using the “Growth Seat” method. The workshop reinforces that long-term success—and resilience—comes from shared accountability, intentional support, and realistic growth strategies.
- **Keynote Speaker:** *Kelsey Buell, Founder at You Flourish Company*

Networking Break | 10:45 – 11:00 a.m.

Workshops | 11:00 – 12:15 p.m.

Track 1 – LIVE

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

- Mentorship is one of the fastest ways to grow and one of the best ways to give back. This panel shares practical ways to find the right mentors, build trust quickly, and turn guidance into real momentum at work and in the community. Attendees will also learn how to mentor others through growth with simple habits, strong questions, and a “lead where you are” mindset.
 - **Speakers:** *Steve Gander, Minnesota State Representative at MN House of Representatives, BG Tucker, Executive Director at College Possible Minnesota*

Track 2 – GROW

- **Building Your Personal Brand: Communicating Your Value With Confidence**

- A strong personal brand shapes how employers, colleagues, and community leaders perceive your value. This workshop helps professionals define and communicate an authentic personal brand while strengthening the writing and messaging skills needed to reinforce that brand across emails, reports, and professional materials. Attendees will leave with practical tools to increase visibility, credibility, and alignment between their strengths and career goals.
- **Speakers:** *Chelsea Mellenthin, Director for Career Engagement at the University of North Dakota*

Track 3 – LEAD

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

- Real impact comes from generating ideas into action. This session explores practical tools for producing stronger ideas and moving them through decision-making, development, and execution. Attendees will learn how structure, creativity, and personal work styles intersect to help individuals and teams move from brainstorming to meaningful results.
- **Speakers:** *Tamara Bertram, Founder at Bertram Studio LLC, Amanda Voigt, Director of Student Academic Success at the University of North Dakota*

Thank You and Farewell | 12:15 – 12:30 p.m.

Summit After Party Social @ The Spud | 1:00 pm