



CONTACT:

Cassie Minder

Communications and Development Manager

Wheeling Heritage

304-232-3087

[cminder@wheelingheritage.org](mailto:cminder@wheelingheritage.org)

### Four Local Small Businesses Compete in the Next Show of Hands

WHEELING, W.Va. – March 22, 2023 – Wheeling Heritage announced today that four small Wheeling businesses will be competing for the next Show of Hands event on Monday, April 17. This Show of Hands will feature four local businesses to showcase the products, services and business ideas to the community in hopes of taking home the top prize.

At the event, owners of the following businesses will be making presentations:

**Opossum Pouch Soft Goods- Jay Hercules:** Opossum Pouch Soft Goods is primarily an outdoor sporting goods maker but is best described as an artisanal soft goods manufacturing business. Specializing in traditional style outdoor soft goods, the products are designed for real world in the field use off the beaten path and under the harshest conditions. Owner Jay Hercules has seen a increase in demand after the COVID-19 slow down. He plans to expand his business by purchasing machines to bring around 90% of production in house which will lower costs, allow him to hire help, and have direct control of quality control.

**WildHeart by Mindi Yarbrough:** To make, share and teach arts is Mindi's life's mission, calling and purpose. As an advocate for the healing, therapeutic, and transformational powers of art making, she is hoping to bring many creative options to the community through a gallery space, classes and public art. With funding from Show of Hands, Mindi will be working to open a physical gallery, art lounge/studio space to sell, show and teach art and invest in supplies needed to teach classes.

**Wheeling Coffee & Spice- Shelly Smedley:** Established in 1896, Wheeling Coffee & Spice has been a staple at their downtown Wheeling location with their Paramount Coffee roast. Paramount Coffee's Gourmet House Blend is a rich blend of choice Central and South American coffee beans slow roasted to perfection. The Burns Coffee Roasters were manufactured by the Blaw-Knox Company in 1884, are still operational and in use for single batch roasting. Winning Show of Hands, Shelly Smedley plans to invest in a new Espresso Machine, new tables and chairs and give the space a fresh coat of paint.

**The IDEA Center- Helen Bradley:** The IDEA Center is a tutoring and learning center located at 413 Warwood Avenue in Wheeling working to offer one-on-one, group and remote tutoring to students and grades levels in the valley. Partnering with local organizations such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Juvenile Mediation Program in Ohio, Brooke and Hancock Counties and HOPE Scholarship Program. The IDEA Center also offers summer STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) Programs to learn collaboration and thinking skills to solve problems. With the funding from Show of Hands, Helen Bradley plans to grow the



STEAM Program, along with purchasing a GlowForge 3-D printer to allow students to develop projects to market and sell.

Show of Hands has awarded more than \$111,000 to support small businesses and projects in Wheeling. In addition to program sponsors, attendees pay \$5 at the door to vote on the project they feel is the most worthwhile. The presenter who receives the most votes will be awarded more than \$4,000 from our Friends of Show of Hands, plus door donations, to put toward their project.

This program is generously funded by Orrick, our corporate sponsor, and our Friends of Show of Hands. Orrick donates \$1,000 to each Show of Hands while our Friends of Show of Hands contributes \$250 to each event. Friends of Show of Hands includes Brian Joseph- Touchstone Research Laboratory, Warwood Armature, Kennen & Kennen Realtors, H. Lawrence Jones and Sue Blevins, Rabbi Joshua Lief & Rebecca Lief, Sikora Montessori, Bridgeway Capital, Will and Tracey Turani, Dan and Debbie Joseph, Wheeling VW-Subaru, FXB and Barb & Fuzz LaRue.

If interested in becoming a Friend of Show of Hands, please contact Cassie Minder at [cminder@wheelingheritage.org](mailto:cminder@wheelingheritage.org).

The next Show of Hands event is scheduled for April 17 on the third floor of the Artisan Center, 1400 Main Street in Wheeling. Doors will open at 6 p.m. with presentations starting at 6:30 p.m. Attendees are asked to bring \$5 cash for their opportunity to vote. Online voting will be available closer to the event date.

**About Wheeling Heritage:**

[Wheeling Heritage](#) is a catalyst for the revitalization of Wheeling. Through historic preservation, community development, and the arts, we help to tell Wheeling's story and shape its future. We seek to improve the quality of life in Wheeling by preserving and investing in our city, collaborating with others, and engaging the citizens of Wheeling in our work.