http://newiprogressive.com/images/stories/S5/small-business-owners-mf-s5.jpg



The time is now to ensure we are putting our families, businesses, and our state in the best position to bounce back and better than before, says Governor.

MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers, with Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Secretary and CEO Missy Hughes, hosted a virtual roundtable Wednesday on economic recovery and opportunity with small business owners, restaurant owners, farmers, and agricultural producers to discuss the governor's 2021-23 Badger Bounceback agenda.



“With shots in arms across our state and better days on the horizon, the time is now to ensure we are putting our families, businesses, and our state in the best position to bounce back and better than before,” said Gov. Evers. “Our small business owners and farmers are leaders in their communities, and they have invaluable insights on how we can tackle the challenges we face head on to build the sort of future we want for our state. I was glad to have the opportunity to talk with and learn from them and look forward to working together to ensure our state will bounce back.”

“Our small businesses have had to stay flexible and agile over the past year to respond to every new challenge the pandemic threw them,” said WEDC Secretary and CEO Hughes. “Just as we have for the past year, we want to continue to be their number one supporters and this budget is an opportunity to do just that and ensure economic strength in our communities and state for years to come.”

Participants in the roundtable included:

- Marjorie Rucker, The Business Council, Milwaukee
- Rachel Bouressa, Bouressa Family Farm, New London
- David Trotter, The Winnebago Seed Fund, Neenah
- Jasmine Banks, Perfect Imperfections, Madison
- Kat Becker, Cattail Organics, Athens
- Priscilla Prado, Midwest Accounting Company, Milwaukee
- Curt Basina, Copper Crow Distillery, Bayfield
- Marieke Penterman, Marieke Gouda, Thorp
- Paul Christensen, 1901 Mechanical, Madison
- Michelle Tressler, Hinterland Brewery and Restaurant, Green Bay

From investments in innovation and start ups, to accessing broadband, to supporting environmental conservation, the participants discussed the many ways the Badger Bounceback agenda would help their businesses recover and thrive.

“Pivot has been used a lot and it's true. We're all pivoting. Even just down to the regular people who [say] 'okay, you know what, I was laid off. What do I do now? How do I get out of this?' and it's the startups.” said Priscilla Prado of Midwest Accounting Company. “So the funding for kickstarting innovation for startups is awesome because hopefully that would get them some motivation to pivot again and see that there is a way out of this. There is a way out of this pandemic for everybody and every community.”



“As someone who works with a lot of other farmers, the watershed grants and prioritization of farmer-led conservation groups. A lot of these farmer-led groups have been a huge bridge in building community. At one point farmers were often the villain when it came to water quality and now, farmers are leading the state as water quality advocates. So continuing to leverage that voice and making agriculture a huge part of the solution,” said Rachel Bouressa of Bouressa Family Farm. “Without clean water and a robust and diverse agricultural sector, Wisconsin loses so much of what really makes it wonderful.”

“I think my broadband situation is probably quite clear, but I'm just going to retouch on that. The fact that no matter how much money I spend, I cannot get something good. Unless I put up

a tower, I cannot buy anything good," said Kat Becker of Cattail Organics who participated from her car as she had to drive to find service. "So, really understand the targeting broadband for areas where it's a public safety issue is important."

The roundtable discussion is available to watch on the governor's YouTube channel here .

Tonight, Thurs., March 18, at 6 p.m., the governor will be hosting a virtual Badger Bounceback Live Session discussion on the governor's proposed investments in the biennial budget on economic recovery and opportunity. More on the governor's investments in economic recovery and opportunity is available here . Wisconsinites are invited to sign up to attend the governor's Badger Bounceback Live Session here .