



News Release  
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Contact: Barbara Peterson  
701-577-8110 or [barbp@ci.williston.nd.us](mailto:barbp@ci.williston.nd.us)

## **1 Million Cups Williston celebrates Third Anniversary**

1 Million Cups Williston (1MC) celebrated its third anniversary on Wednesday, March 4. The meeting was held at the Williston Community Library and featured presentations from Jeff Zarling, owner of Roughneck Coffee and Emily Schroeder, commercial loan officer for Dakota Business Lending.

The 1 Million Cups program was started in 2012 in Kansas City by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. Since then, it has grown to more than 160 communities, including Williston, Bismarck, Grand Forks and Fargo. It is a free program designed to educate, engage and inspire entrepreneurs around the country.

The office of Williston Economic Development (WED) played a key role in bringing 1MC to the community.

"I had heard a lot about the program through my development contacts in the state," said Shawn Wenko, WED executive director. "When I looked at the program, I felt it really meshed with our philosophy within WED: 'Foster the Entrepreneurial Spirit.' Million Cups does just that."

In Williston, the one-hour meetings are held during the first Wednesday of the month at the Williston Community Library. A sponsor provides free coffee for participants. Typically, there are two presenters. Each speaker has up to six minutes to share their startup story or cause followed by up to 20 minutes of Q and A.

The program is based on the notion that entrepreneurs discover solutions and engage with their communities over a million cups of coffee.

In Williston, more than sixty different speakers have presented including both business owners and nonprofit organizers.

“We like the program because it provides entrepreneurs with the tools and resources they need to start and grow their businesses,” said Wenko.

The next 1MC meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 1 from 8:30-9:30 a.m. at the Williston Community Library. The presenters will be from Cooks on Main and the US Census. Coffee will be provided by Cooks on Main.

The meeting is free and open to the public.