



# CONFLUENCE OF STATES EDUCATION SERIES SUMMARY

## EXPANDING INNOVATION AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN OUTDOOR RECREATION

FEBRUARY 6, 2023

Hosted by:



Michigan Outdoor Recreation Industry Office

### Overview

Jen Guarino from the Industrial Sewing and Innovation Center (ISAIC) and David Ollila from Shophouse Park joined Brad Garmon to discuss the outdoor entrepreneurial ecosystem in Michigan. Shophouse Park will be a mixed-use facility that will support outdoor innovation, outdoor recreation activities, and economic development. ISAIC is a national institute for the sewing trade. They have created a new model to bring innovative solutions to new and existing brands while developing a workforce for the future of the outdoor industry. Together, with Brad's support, they help expand innovation and new technologies in outdoor recreation for Michigan.

### Take-Home Advice

"It should be less of a concern with what products your entrepreneurs want to develop, and more about developing entrepreneurs who know that they will have many many products before they find something successful. There has to be programming to **develop entrepreneurship without tying their education to the success of the specific product**. It's a numbers game—low-cost onboarding to support entrepreneurship through the experimentation of products, then a "big brothers, big sisters" type mentality to leverage products to production." - David Ollila

"We've done some work to analyze the gaps for our state's residents—to knowledge about entrepreneurship, to access to capital, and to manufacturing processes—that's where a state office can really fill gaps." - Brad Garmon

"You need local, regional, and national support. **One of the ways to kickstart that is to get a significant brand (e.g. Carhartt) to support with production or funding, and that validates local and regional work**. That brings new investment of different sizes. If you can support an aligned partnership with a brand of recognition, all the other developments start to happen." - Jen Guarino

"There are big rocks in the river of bureaucracy and they will slow you down if you decide that your journey is to get out and move that rock. **It's your job to spin off that rock and get back into where the energy is**. The energy is Michigan is toward innovation, where bureaucracy is less of a hurdle—our administration believes in it, and **it changes mindsets regionally—suddenly regional economic developers start tearing down silos**." - Brad Garmon

### Panel Speakers



**Jen Guarino**  
President and CEO of ISAIC



**David Ollila**  
Founder of Shophouse Park



### Host State:



**Brad Garmon**  
Senior Strategic Advisor & Executive Director of the Michigan Outdoor Recreation Industry Office



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