

**who's who who's who who's who who's who who's who who's who**



GOOD NEIGHBOR HOWARD FRIEDMAN | PHOTO COURTESY OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS

The **National Association of Realtors (NAR)** has selected **Howard Friedman**, a realtor from Bend, among ten finalists for its 2024 Good Neighbor Awards program. This award honors NAR members who make extraordinary differences in their communities through volunteer work by giving time, money, energy and expertise to uplift people. Now in its 25th year, the Good Neighbor Awards have recognized 250 Realtors making an impact in 43 states, Puerto Rico and 17 countries worldwide.

Friedman, a former board president of the Bethlehem Inn homeless shelter, has leveraged his real estate expertise to help the nonprofit purchase and renovate properties, boosting resident capacity by 30%. A chef and former restaurant owner, Friedman has also dedicated nearly two decades to preparing meals for shelter residents.

Five winners will each receive a \$10,000 grant and national media exposure for their charity, including a feature in the fall issue of *REALTOR Magazine*. The winners will also be honored in November during NAR NXT, The REALTOR Experience in Boston. Five honorable mentions will receive \$2,500 grants.

Starting now, the public can vote for their favorite Good Neighbor finalists. The top three vote-getters will be recognized as Web Choice Favorites, with the winner taking home \$2,500, and the second- and third-place finishers each receiving \$1,250, funded by Realtor.com. People may cast their vote at [realtor.com/goodneighbor](http://realtor.com/goodneighbor) between September 4 and October 2. Both the winners, as determined by judges, and the Web Choice Favorites, determined by online voting, will be announced on October 7.

Nominees were judged on their personal contributions of time as well as financial and material resources to benefit their causes. NAR's Good Neighbor Awards are supported by primary sponsor Realtor.com.

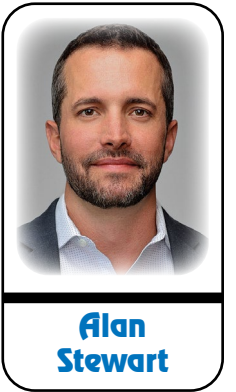
**Cayuse Holdings**, a tribally owned enterprise of the **Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR)**, announced that **Randall (Randy) Willis** has officially taken over as chief executive officer effective May 17, 2024. Willis brings more than 40 years of global business leadership and consulting experience, having driven transformational programs for clients across North America, South America, and Europe. His career is marked by significant contributions to business and technology solutions, particularly in large-scale professional services, consulting and systems integration projects for commercial and government clientele worldwide.

Prior to his new role, Willis served as the executive managing director of Cayuse Government Operations business unit for six years, where his leadership was instrumental in the unit's rapid growth, rising from less than \$1m per year in 2019 to over \$100m in 2024. Willis is also the founder of Cayuse Technologies, LLC, and Indigena Solutions, LLP, a First Nations technology delivery center in British Columbia, Canada. An innovator and member of the Oglala Lakota (Sioux) nation, Willis is credited with developing the concept of near-shore indigenous technology delivery centers. Throughout his career, he has demonstrated a deep commitment to diversity and inclusion, and economic development in tribal communities. Willis founded the Accenture American Indian Scholarship Program, served as executive sponsor for Accenture's American Indian diversity group for nearly two decades, and was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian for six years, including three years as Chairman.

In conjunction with Willis' appointment as CEO, Cayuse Holdings is proud to announce that **Jonas Moses-Conner** has been named the new executive managing director of Cayuse Government Operations. Moses-Conner, who also remains managing director of Cayuse Technologies, will be responsible for overseeing the strategic direction and operations of the government services business unit. His leadership and vision will be key as Cayuse continues to expand its footprint and deliver innovative solutions to government clients. Moses-Conner brings a wealth of experience in business development and operations management from Accenture, and having previously served in various leadership roles within Cayuse where he successfully drove growth and operational excellence. He holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Oregon and an MBA from Gonzaga University. Moses-Conner is a tribal member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

**Merrill O'Sullivan Stewart** (formerly Merrill O'Sullivan, LLP), has moved office locations, remaining in the heart of historic Bend.

The firm, established in 1974, enters its 50th year, and is now headquartered at 354 SW Upper Terrace Drive, Suite 101. The move marks an exciting update for Partner **Alan Stewart**, Associate **Kate Burns** and Of Counsel attorney, **Terrence O'Sullivan**, to continue serving and supporting their clients. Centrally located just above Old Mill, the new location brings a modern feel to such a long-standing and historic firm. The relocation underscores Merrill O'Sullivan Stewarts' commitment to growth and innovation, aligning with the firm's mission to deliver top-tier legal services throughout Oregon.



**Alan Stewart**

## High Desert Museum's High Desert Rendezvous Sets New Fundraising Record

by **HEIDI HAGEMEIER, Director of Communications & Visitor Experience — High Desert Museum**

The 35th annual High Desert Rendezvous — one of Central Oregon's longest-running charitable events — set a new fundraising record this year, grossing more than \$630,000 to support the programs and exhibitions of the High Desert Museum.

The record was set with help from the 2024 High Desert Rendezvous Honoree, The Bend Foundation. Founded in 1947 by Brooks Scanlon, Brooks Resources and its shareholders, The Bend Foundation has continuously invested in the health and vitality of Central Oregon. And The Bend Foundation has championed the Museum and the educational opportunities it brings to the region, from the initial idea for a museum to its grand opening in 1982 to today.

The Bend Foundation's community support focuses on adding to the legacy of providing public art in Bend, promoting cultural, educational and intellectual enrichment programs, and enhancing or preserving our physical environment.

"It is our pleasure to continue to support nonprofit and public organizations that work to enhance the cultural and intellectual experiences in our community," said Romy Mortensen, Bend Foundation Trustee. "The High Desert Museum is a shining example of one of these organizations that is consistently providing opportunities for growth, discovery and enlightenment and we are proud to support it."

"We are extraordinarily grateful to the generosity of Rendezvous attendees and this community in supporting the work of the Museum," said Museum Executive Director Dana Whitelaw, Ph.D. "The Bend Foundation in particular has provided continued leadership and commitment to the Museum throughout its 42 years, which is all the more vital as we consider what the next four decades will look like."

The High Desert Rendezvous took place on Saturday, August 24 at the Museum. Funds from Rendezvous support the Museum's exhibitions, wildlife encounters and educational programs that inspire wonder and learning about the High Desert region. The Museum every year opens up to nine new temporary exhibitions, cares for more than 120 animals and welcomes thousands of school children for field trips. In the 2023-24 fiscal year, nearly 225,000 people visited the Museum.

The 2024 High Desert Rendezvous was presented by Bonta Gelato and Ferguson Wellman Wealth Management with support from First Interstate Bank.

**About The Bend Foundation:**

Established and funded by Brooks Scanlon, Brooks Resources and its shareholders, The Bend Foundation was originally formed in 1947 as a resource for injured loggers



MICHAEL P. HOLLERN, A TRUSTEE OF THE BEND FOUNDATION, SPEAKS AT THE 2024 HIGH DESERT RENDEZVOUS WHILE HIGH DESERT MUSEUM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DANA WHITELAW LOOKS ON. THE BEND FOUNDATION IS A LONGTIME MUSEUM SUPPORTER AND SERVED AS THIS YEAR'S RENDEZVOUS HONOREE | PHOTO BY BILL JORGENSEN

and mill workers, and to provide scholarships for industry workers. With its mission having evolved to assist in enriching the lives of the residents of Bend, Oregon, its key focus is to contribute to nonprofit and public organizations that add to the legacy of providing public art in Bend, promote cultural, educational and intellectual enrichment programs that benefit the community, and enhance or preserve our physical environment.

**About The High Desert Museum:**

The High Desert Museum opened in Bend, Oregon in 1982. It brings together wildlife, cultures, art, history and the natural world to convey the wonder of North America's High Desert. The Museum is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, is a Smithsonian Affiliate, was the 2019 recipient of the Western Museums Association's Charles Redd Award for Exhibition Excellence and was a 2021 recipient of the National Medal for Museum and Library Service.

[highdesertmuseum.org](http://highdesertmuseum.org) • [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/highdesertmuseum) • [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/highdesertmuseum) • [bendfoundation.org](http://bendfoundation.org)

**who's who who's who who's who who's who who's who who's who**

# Meet the 2024 BVC Semifinalist Companies

provided by EDCO

Hundreds of entrepreneurs, investors, business leaders, and students will soon descend on Bend, Oregon for the largest angel investment conference in the Pacific Northwest. After hours of reviewing applications and meeting with companies, BVC investors and partners have identified the most well-positioned startups to compete in each of BVC's three competition tracks: Early Stage, Growth Stage and New Economy.

BVC has served as a catalyst to mobilize capital for participating companies, with investments and awards to finalists totaling more than \$14 million over the past 21 years. Tickets are on sale now and attendees who register before Monday, September 30 will receive ten percent off their order.

## EARLY STAGE SEMIFINALISTS

Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO) announced the ten semifinalist companies advancing in the Early Stage competition for the 21st Annual Bend Venture Conference (BVC), which will take place at the Tower Theatre in Bend on Thursday, October 17-Friday, October 18, 2024.

In the next round of competition, the following Early Stage semifinalists will pitch against each other at the September 26 Central Oregon PubTalk: Road to BVC. This high-energy entrepreneurial event showcases the semifinalists as they deliver fast-paced, three-minute pitches to a live crowd. The audience, along with an expert panel of judges, will vote to decide which companies advance to present at BVC next month. In addition to influencing which companies advance to the BVC stage, the audience vote will determine which Early Stage company receives a \$3,000 cash award, courtesy of Washington Trust Bank.

Speaking on behalf of EDCO, Venture Catalyst Brian Vierra said, "Congratulations to all of the semifinalists in this year's Early Stage track for the Bend Venture Conference. We were thrilled to see such an extremely talented group of entrepreneurs apply, each showcasing innovative ideas and tremendous potential. Central Oregon PubTalk and the Bend Venture Conference serve to highlight new, emerging startups and provide opportunities for local investors and business leaders to engage with and witness the latest industry innovations firsthand."

**In alphabetical order, the BVC Early Stage semifinalists that will compete at the September 26 Central Oregon PubTalk are:**

**Dayo** (Portland, Oregon) — A free and frictionless app that rewards users for curbing their social media use.

**Ecobadlandsz, Inc. dba Ranger EV** (Portland, Oregon) — A scalable software solution that allows vacation rental hosts to sell energy to guests with electric vehicles.

**Fordje** (Portland, Oregon) — An AI software platform to help construction developers and cities clarify city codes, allowing both markets to build faster the first time.

**Howl at the Spoon** (Beaverton, Oregon) — Portable, flavor-packed, single-serve artisan sauces for every meal.

**HumanKind Homes** (Portland, Oregon) — Develops, builds and sells healthy and sustainable homes priced to be affordable to those making 80-120% Area Median Income (AMI).

**Kickplan, Inc.** (Portland, Oregon) — A comprehensive SaaS solution that provides developer-friendly infrastructure for billing, pricing, feature access control, and metric instrumentation and an intuitive web console for management.

**Mesh** (Bend, Oregon) — An iOS fitness, health and wellness application that increases personal accountability, improves mental health and brings community together through activity.

**Offer Haus** (Eugene, Oregon) — A simplified online platform that allows buyers to purchase a home without a realtor.

**Prophetic** (Portland, Oregon) — A SaaS platform that finds and analyzes real estate development opportunities in seconds, not hours.

**Rose City Robotics** (Portland, Oregon) — Autonomous robotic disassembly that enables direct recycling of lithium-ion EV batteries.

Central Oregon PubTalk on September 26 will feature these Early Stage semifinalists pitching on the outdoor "Drink up Dream on" stage at Worthy Brewing in Bend.

### PubTalk Agenda

4:30-5pm: networking, drinks and appetizers, 5-7:30pm: Early Stage company pitches, audience vote and winner announcement.

### PubTalk Cost and Registration

Register through Eventbrite here.

Ticket price is \$32 for EDCO Members (become an EDCO member here); \$48 for Non-Members. Attendance includes appetizers and a beverage (beer, wine or non-alcoholic options available).

## GROWTH STAGE SEMIFINALISTS

As Central Oregon's flagship entrepreneurship event, BVC creates an opportunity to connect investors and industry leaders with startups looking to scale. Each year, a new BVC Growth Fund is raised to invest in the most promising growth stage companies that compete in the annual conference. Since applications closed on August 9, investors and partners have evaluated each company to identify the most well-positioned startups to compete in each of BVC's three tracks.

"The investors in the Bend Venture Conference Fund are passionate about supporting the growth of the Central Oregon startup ecosystem and bring a wealth of professional experience to evaluating the merits of new innovations," Vierra explained. "We're excited to see the growth potential represented in this year's semifinalist companies, and we look forward to the impact they will have."

**In alphabetical order, the semifinalists are:**

**Beginly Health** (Portland, Oregon) — An AI curated job matching platform for healthcare professionals.

**Canopii Inc.** (Silverton, Oregon) — A technology company building robotic greenhouse farms to make local food production more viable.

**Green Canopy NODE** (Seattle, Washington) — A company that addresses the complex challenges of affordable housing through configurable, prefabricated kits for residential housing.

**Health Elements AI** (Bend, Oregon) — A technology platform that leverages AI to streamline health data abstraction.

**ProMedix Inc.** (Portland, Oregon) — A revolutionary, noninvasive wearable sensor for accelerating sepsis detection at the patient bedside.

**Square Baby** (Bend, Oregon) — Dietician-designed, Organic baby and toddler meals customized to age, stage and dietary needs including allergen introduction, vegan and animal proteins.

**Stiira** (Portland, Oregon) — A specialized SaaS solution designed to help organizations effectively manage the complexities of government-regulated leaves of absence.

**Trace Biosciences** (Portland, Oregon) — A biotech startup creating agents for surgery that highlight nerves in real time to eliminate surgical nerve damage.

The Bend Venture Conference is the longest standing and largest angel investment conference in the Pacific Northwest. BVC has served as a catalyst to mobilize capital for participating companies and since its inception, investments and awards to participating startups have totaled over \$14 million.

Bend Venture Conference cannot guarantee that investments will be made in any specific amount because the final amounts to be awarded are dependent on investment commitments received from third-party investors and the ability of the winning companies and the investors to agree on the terms and conditions of the investment.

## NEW ECONOMY SEMIFINALISTS

This year's conference continues BVC's legacy as the largest and longest standing angel investment event in the Pacific Northwest, driving innovation and entrepreneurship in Central Oregon and beyond. Throughout the two-day event, startup companies from around the country will take the Tower Theatre stage to pitch their businesses to BVC's community of investors. Through a new partnership with The BFM Fund, the New Economy Track provides a platform for startups who provide significant economic and social returns aligned with the principles of the Solidarity Economy.

Himalaya Rao, managing director of The BFM Fund, said, "We are delighted for the partnership with BVC. This opportunity creates a new track of entrepreneurs and helps bring outside talent and funding resources into Oregon. We firmly believe that cross-regional and multi-state collaborations will help elevate Oregon's next ten-year innovation plan, particularly in the area of social enterprise investing. The semifinalists represent a diverse set of companies who all work in alignment with the Solidarity Economy framework, paving the way for the future of venture capital— where both investor returns, and inclusive innovation are inextricably linked."

The New Economy Track is dedicated to supporting startups that are creating impactful technologies with a specific focus on accelerating inclusive innovation that encourages participation for marginalized or socially and economically disadvantaged (SEDI) communities.

**In alphabetical order, the semifinalists are:**

**Asha AI** (Seattle, Washington) — Asha AI is a clinical trial management tool that empowers pharmaceutical companies to achieve better outcomes, decrease trial cost and timelines and increases access to actionable data through a conversational AI that is accessible to anyone—including the elderly and disabled.

**Eco-Shelter Inc.** (Tacoma, Washington) — Eco-Shelter delivers an affordable roofing and building product made from bamboo that can profitably shelter millions with nearly no carbon emissions.

**Fortuna Cools** (Dover, Delaware) — Fortuna Cools partners with coconut oil factories to process their waste and turn it into insulation for recreational coolers and business packaging.

**Hardcore Peanut Butter Spread** (Minneapolis, Minnesota) — Hardcore Peanut Butter Spread uses superfood ingredients, mixed into allergen-free peanut butter, to give all consumers a better-for-you, safe product.

**Home Lending Pal** (Orlando, Florida) — Home Lending Pal uses trusted digital financial and credit sources to simulate the home purchasing process to help educate first-time home buyers on their mortgage approval odds.

**Hamilton Perkins Collection** (Los Angeles, California) — Hamilton Perkins Collection creates award-winning products from recycled materials and develops regenerative materials for the circular economy.

**Samay** (Mountain View, California) — Samay is commercializing a wearable system, Sylvee, that non-invasively monitors lung function in patients with chronic respiratory disease in clinical and home environments.

**Wildfire Watchdog** (Bend, Oregon) — Wildfire Watchdog offers automated wildfire protection with real-time alerts, remote monitoring and automated responses.

Over the upcoming weeks, semifinalist companies will participate in a series of due diligence meetings to determine the list of finalists. Companies in the New Economy Track have an opportunity at investment of \$100,000, thanks to BVC's partnership with The BFM Fund. Attendees who register before Monday, September 30, will receive ten percent off their order.

Bend Venture Conference cannot guarantee that investments will be made in any specific amount because the final amounts to be awarded are dependent on investment commitments received from third-party investors and the ability of the winning companies and the investors to agree on the terms and conditions of the investment.

Tickets at [bendvc.com](https://bendvc.com)

[bendvc.com](https://bendvc.com)