



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**DRY CREEK BEEKEEPING AWARDED GENZ FUND AWARD**

HANOVER, ILLINOIS - Northwest Illinois Economic Development (NWILED) has announced the presentation of the organization's sixth Genz Fund Award to DRY CREEK BEEKEEPING in Elizabeth, Illinois. The check for \$7,500 from the Genz Small Business Development Fund was issued to Head Beekeeper and Owner, Chase Dittmar of Galena, Illinois the afternoon of June 26, 2024.

According to Dittmar, the money will be used for funding to help buy necessary equipment to get the business started, which includes more bee suits, hoods, gloves, and boots, along with a screen observation house, new honey harvesting equipment, bee hives, and 10 bee packages of live bees.

“This agritourism business is based on bees, beekeeping and honey,” said Dittmar in his initial application. “It offers beekeeping experience tours to visitors, beekeeping classes for those with an interest in learning beekeeping, honey tasting events and raw local honey for sale.” “Agritourism” combines the essential elements of the tourism and agriculture industries; attracts members of the public to visit agricultural operations; is designed to increase farm income; and, provides recreation, entertainment, and/or educational experiences to visitors.

An even more interesting caveat to Dittmar being awarded a Genz Fund Award is that he was the 2023 top winner of the NWILED John D. Cook III Memorial Entrepreneurial Scholarship. At that time Dittmar, a soon to be Galena High School graduate, was awarded \$2,000, which kick-started his beekeeping business. This scholarship has been awarded every year since 2018 to three graduating high school seniors from Carroll or Jo Daviess counties who are entrepreneurial and want to start a business or pursue a career in business. Scholarships can be used for start-up costs related to launching a business and or advancing a career in business through education and or training, which Dittmar pursued.

“You will never know how much it means to us to receive this award.” said Chase Dittmar following NWILED’s BIG check presentation, “Starting a business has many challenges and it can be

discouraging at times, yet this award demonstrates your belief in our future and that means the world to us.”

Dry Creek Beekeeping was founded in 2023 with a mission to spread the joy and knowledge of beekeeping through agritourism. Their aim is to offer visitors an immersive experience in the world of bees and to educate them on their importance. The business offers seasonal tours May 17 to Nov. 1, Friday through Sunday from 4-8 p.m. Honey tastings are offered year-round. To make reservations for these activities, interested people can email [drycreektoursandtastings@gmail.com](mailto:drycreektoursandtastings@gmail.com). Dry Creek Beekeeping is located at 489 South Clark Lane, Elizabeth, Illinois. Their website is [www.drycreekbeekeeping.com](http://www.drycreekbeekeeping.com) and their phone number is 815-297-3366. They also have an active Facebook page.

#### ABOUT THE GENZ FUND AWARD

Established in 2020, the Genz Small Business Development Fund was formed by the late John "Jack" Genz of Galena to help retailers, small manufacturers, wholesalers and hospitality industry genres, along with farmers and food processors and can be used to help fund capital projects, to purchase an existing business or for startup and pilot projects. The fund is administered by Illinois Bank & Trust.

#### ABOUT NWILED:

Northwest Illinois Economic Development was formed in 2008 by the Jo-Carroll Energy Board of Directors whose main goals were to spearhead economic development structures, funding and progress in Jo Daviess, Carroll, and Whiteside counties in Northwest Illinois. The Board's focus was to form a regional development entity concentrating on growing the economy and public/private partnerships.

NWILED promotes economic development by fostering business growth and assisting expanding and relocating businesses in determining their needs for growth with cooperation of government and business partners. NWILED encourages entrepreneurs by assisting with access to resources to begin and grow their businesses and employ all available resources to create a welcoming business environment, aligning the skills of the available workforce with the needs of businesses, and building political and economic capital.