

Calendar of Events

June 7, 2025

Going the Distance

350 N. Illinois Ave

Morton, IL 61550

07:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST

5K Run / Walk The Salvation Army

June 7, 2025 7:00am

350 N. Illinois Ave (Parking in MHS Main lot)

Morton

Shoe collection bins at start line!

More info and registration: <https://www.goingthedistance5k.com>

June 11, 2025

Starting Your Business in Illinois

Peoria NEXT Innovation Center, 801 W Main Street, Peoria IL 61606

Peoria NEXT Innovation Center, 801 W Main Street, Peoria IL 61606

Peoria, IL 61606

03:00 PM - 05:00 PM CST

Amy Lambert, 3096772992

illinoisbdc@bradley.edu

This workshop is for aspiring entrepreneurs who want to learn all the components of how to start a successful

business in Illinois. Get a realistic view of the requirements to start a business and the resources available to

support your new venture. While attending this no cost 2-hour workshop, you will learn how to get your

business name registered, where to obtain a tax ID number, which legal form to choose, business planning,

taxes, financing options and much more. After attending the workshop, our team of certified business advisors

are available to work with you, one-on-one, to navigate the process and help you succeed! This workshop is

sponsored by the Illinois Small Business Development Center at Bradley University and co-sponsored by

Morton Community Bank. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email.

June 18, 2025

Grow with Google Mastering Google Tools to Build Your Digital Presence 7-part webinar series

https://us06web.zoom.us/join/dh6JVil_SBSFAxPUPngF3w

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM CST

Jennie Hale, 309.677.2992

illinoisbdc@bradley.edu

The Illinois Small Business Development Center in the Turner Center for Entrepreneurship at Bradley University is offering a 7-part webinar series on "Mastering Google Tools to Build Your Digital Presence."

Running an e-commerce business from home offers incredible flexibility, but it also comes with unique challenges. To succeed, you need efficient systems, strong communication, and the right strategies to scale effectively. This webinar will provide practical tips and expert insights on how to build a streamlined, productive, and profitable remote e-commerce business. Whether you're just starting out or looking to optimize your operations before scaling, this session will equip you with the tools needed to reduce costs, increase efficiency, and drive growth.

The Thriving at Remote eCommerce training offers practical tips and strategies to create a successful eCommerce business from home. Our expert trainer will cover effective communication, time management, optimizing your workspace, streamlining operations, reducing costs, and increasing productivity.

By the end of this session, you will have a clear action plan to strengthen your remote e-commerce operations, setting you up for long-term success before scaling. Don't miss this opportunity to take control of your business and position it for sustainable growth!

June 19, 2025

**Using AI for Starting Your Business: Researching & Writing Your First Draft Business Plan (A
Business and Engineering Convergence Center (BECC), Bradley University, Room 1122
1500 W Main St
Peoria, IL 61625**

01:00 PM - 04:00 PM CST

Katie Whalen, (309) 677-1700

illinoisbdc@bradley.edu

Starting a business requires thorough research and strategic planning. AI can help entrepreneurs streamline their process, identify opportunities, and develop a business plan with greater efficiency. This interactive workshop will introduce attendees to AI-powered tools that simplify market research, business model development, and operational planning. Attendees must bring a laptop or tablet. Internet Access is Provided.

Join us to explore:

How AI can assist in refining and validating your business idea

AI-driven tools for product and service development

Understanding customers and markets using AI insights

AI-assisted business model creation and strategic planning

Practical applications: hands-on exercises and live demonstrations

Attendees must bring a laptop or tablet. Internet Access is Provided. Attendees will gain practical insights into how AI enhances entrepreneurship, leaving with a business plan outline and a roadmap for utilizing AI in their startup journey.

Presented by: Amy Lambert, Assistant Director, SBDC and Eric Sampson, Director, SBDC

June 26, 2025

**Your Brand. Your Voice. Your AI. A Two-Part Branding & AI Workshop Series for Small Business
Business and Engineering Convergence Center (BECC), Bradley University, Room 1122
1500 W Main St
Peoria, IL 61625**

03:30 PM - 05:00 PM CST

Katie Whalen, (309) 677-1700

illinoisbdc@bradley.edu

A strong brand identity is the foundation of successful marketing — and now, AI can help you express and scale that brand more efficiently than ever. This two-part interactive workshop series will guide attendees through building a clear brand identity and then show them how to train AI to use that identity to generate aligned, on-brand social media content and strategies.

Part 1: Build Your Brand Identity

? Define Your Brand: A Step-by-Step Identity Guide

Clarify your brand's mission, voice, tone, and values

Identify your target audience and brand personality

Receive a downloadable brand workbook you can use across all platforms

Presented by: Theresa Bloom, Director of AI U & Social Media Adviser, SBDC

July 2, 2025

Your Brand. Your Voice. Your AI. A Two-Part Branding & AI Workshop Series for Small Business
Business and Engineering Convergence Center (BECC), Bradley University, Room 1122
1500 W Main St
Peoria, IL 61625

03:30 PM - 05:00 PM CST

Katie Whalen, (309) 677-1700

illinoisbdc@bradley.edu

A strong brand identity is the foundation of successful marketing — and now, AI can help you express and scale that brand more efficiently than ever. This two-part interactive workshop series will guide attendees through building a clear brand identity and then show them how to train AI to use that identity to generate aligned, on-brand social media content and strategies.

Part 2: Teach AI to Speak Your Brand

? Brand + Bot: Using AI to Create On-Brand Content

Learn the proven AI prompt structure to reflect your brand

Create reusable "brand-trained" instructions for ChatGPT

Use AI to generate captions, content pillars, and a consistent posting strategy

Attendees will leave with a complete brand identity guide, a set of reusable AI prompts tailored to their business, and a roadmap for saving time while showing up consistently and authentically online.

Perfect for entrepreneurs, startups, and small business owners who want to stay visible, save time, and grow with confidence.

Presented by: Theresa Bloom, Director of AI U & Social Media Adviser, SBDC

July 23, 2025

Starting Your Business in Illinois

Peoria NEXT Innovation Center

801 W Main Street

Peoria, IL 61606

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CST

Katie Whalen, 309.677.2992

illinoisbdc@bradley.edu

This workshop is for aspiring entrepreneurs who want to learn all the components of how to start a successful business in Illinois. Get a realistic view of the requirements to start a business and the resources available to support your new venture. While attending this no cost 2-hour workshop, you will learn how to get your business name registered, where to obtain a tax ID number, which legal form to choose, business planning, taxes, financing options and much more. After attending the workshop, our team of certified business advisors are available to work with you, one-on-one, to navigate the process and help you succeed! This workshop is sponsored by the Illinois Small Business Development Center at Bradley University and co-sponsored by Morton Community Bank. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email.

August 13, 2025

Starting Your Business in Illinois

Peoria NEXT Innovation Center

801 W Main Street

Peoria, IL 61606

09:00 AM - 11:00 AM CST

Katie Whalen, 309.677.2992

illinoisbdc@bradley.edu

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September 10, 2025

- September 13, 2025

59th Morton Pumpkin Festival

Times Vary

We welcome you to the 59th Annual Morton Pumpkin Festival, September 10th - 13th, 2025.

We hope you and your family can join us to gather & give back to our community.

This year's theme is "Pumpkin Party of the Century"!

September 17, 2025

Starting Your Business in Illinois

Peoria NEXT Innovation Center

801 W Main Street

Peoria, IL 61606

01:00 PM - 03:00 PM CST

Katie Whalen, 309.677.2992

illinoisbdc@bradley.edu

This workshop is for aspiring entrepreneurs who want to learn all the components of how to start a successful business in Illinois. Get a realistic view of the requirements to start a business and the resources available to support your new venture. While attending this no cost 2-hour workshop, you will learn how to get your business name registered, where to obtain a tax ID number, which legal form to choose, business planning, taxes, financing options and much more. After attending the workshop, our team of certified business advisors are available to work with you, one-on-one, to navigate the process and help you succeed! This workshop is sponsored by the Illinois Small Business Development Center at Bradley University and co-sponsored by Morton Community Bank. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email.

October 15, 2025

Starting Your Business in Illinois

Peoria NEXT Innovation Center

801 W Main Street

Peoria, IL 61606

03:00 PM - 05:00 PM CST

Katie Whalen, 309.677.2992

illinoisbdc@bradley.edu

This workshop is for aspiring entrepreneurs who want to learn all the components of how to start a successful business in Illinois. Get a realistic view of the requirements to start a business and the resources available to support your new venture. While attending this no cost 2-hour workshop, you will learn how to get your business name registered, where to obtain a tax ID number, which legal form to choose, business planning, taxes, financing options and much more. After attending the workshop, our team of certified business advisors are available to work with you, one-on-one, to navigate the process and help you succeed! This workshop is sponsored by the Illinois Small Business Development Center at Bradley University and co-sponsored by Morton Community Bank. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email.

November 19, 2025

Starting Your Business in Illinois

Peoria NEXT Innovation Center

801 W Main Street

Peoria, IL 61606

01:00 PM - 03:00 PM CST

Katie Whalen, 309.677.2992

illinoisbdc@bradley.edu

This workshop is for aspiring entrepreneurs who want to learn all the components of how to start a successful business in Illinois. Get a realistic view of the requirements to start a business and the resources available to support your new venture. While attending this no cost 2-hour workshop, you will learn how to get your business name registered, where to obtain a tax ID number, which legal form to choose, business planning, taxes, financing options and much more. After attending the workshop, our team of certified business advisors are available to work with you, one-on-one, to navigate the process and help you succeed! This workshop is sponsored by the Illinois Small Business Development Center at Bradley University and co-sponsored by Morton Community Bank. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email.

December 10, 2025

Starting Your Business in Illinois

Peoria NEXT Innovation Center

801 W Main Street

Peoria, IL 61606

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CST

Katie Whalen, 309.677.2992

illinoisbdc@bradley.edu

This workshop is for aspiring entrepreneurs who want to learn all the components of how to start a successful business in Illinois. Get a realistic view of the requirements to start a business and the resources available to support your new venture. While attending this no cost 2-hour workshop, you will learn how to get your business name registered, where to obtain a tax ID number, which legal form to choose, business planning, taxes, financing options and much more. After attending the workshop, our team of certified business advisors are available to work with you, one-on-one, to navigate the process and help you succeed! This workshop is sponsored by the Illinois Small Business Development Center at Bradley University and co-sponsored by Morton Community Bank. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email.