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## Six Local Businesses to Compete for Cash at 2026 FoodBizCon

### Entrepreneurs Share their Delicious Business Ideas at Square One Pitch Competition on March 6

Kansas City, MO – Mid-Continent Public Library’s Square One Small Business Center will host its second-annual Pitch Competition for local businesses as part of this year’s [FoodBizCon](#), a free conference with educational workshops and networking opportunities for local food entrepreneurs. This year’s **FoodBizCon** will be held **March 4–6** at the K-State Olathe Campus (22201 W Innovation Dr, Olathe, KS) and is a bilingual event, with sessions in both English and Spanish.

FoodBizCon 2026 will feature keynote presentations by **Jackie Nguyen**, founder of [Cafe Cà Phê](#), **Chef Jasper Mirabile, Jr.**, owner of [Jasper's Restaurant](#), and **Jill Silva**, James Beard Award-winning food editor & writer and co-owner of [Silva + Stern PR](#), as well as breakout sessions on a variety of topics related to food businesses—from legal and financial considerations to staffing, sourcing, and manufacturing. Day Three, March 6, will be devoted solely to the Pitch Competition organized by MCPL’s Square One.

“FoodBizCon is the ultimate one-stop-shop for food entrepreneurs who want to take their ventures to the next level,” said Square One Director Ashley Muffitt. “We’re proud to be part of this dynamic event and can’t wait to host our Pitch Competition, which will reward three talented local entrepreneurs!”

Made possible by funding from the Kauffman Foundation, the Pitch Competition will give six local food entrepreneurs the opportunity to win cash prizes for their innovative business ideas. **The top three winners will be selected by the panel of judges and will receive \$5,000, \$3,000, and \$1,000, respectively.** The panel will be made up of bilingual business and entrepreneurial leaders. In order to participate in the Pitch Competition, contestants had to qualify (food-based business in the Kansas City metro area, earning between \$250 and \$100,000 in gross annual revenue) and apply. This year’s contestants include:

1. Jaresha Rhone with [Cake-A-Boo](#)
2. Zoe Mays with [Scream Queens LLC](#)
3. Rachel Larson with [Fika Coffee](#)
4. Becky Gripp with [The Tamale Kitchen](#)

5. Michelle Carroll with [Lovely Day Coffee](#)
6. Raul Holguin with [Papis Tacos KC](#)

This past September, MCPL's Square One held its first Pitch Competition, and Rasheedah Villarreal, founder of [Social Emotional Yoga with Mrs. V](#), came in first place. Her prize money was used to expand her program, which works to build resilience and emotional regulation, particularly among youth. In second place was Frankie Elder-Reedy, founder of [Wrax](#), a company that produces sports bras that seek to eliminate bounce during workouts.

**Learn more and register for the 2026 FoodBizCon at [foodbizcon.com](http://foodbizcon.com).**

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### **About Mid-Continent Public Library**

Founded in 1965, [Mid-Continent Public Library](#) is the largest library system in the Kansas City metropolitan area, operating 34 branches and two Library-To-Go locations and serving approximately 850,000 people in Jackson, Clay, and Platte Counties. MCPL is an award-winning library system that strives to enrich citizens and communities through expanding access to innovation, information, ideas, and inspiration. Connect with the Library on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).