



2022 Business of the Year Nomination

Business Name

Fargo Skateboarding

Briefly describe the history of growth and/or job creation by the business.

Fargo Skateboarding will be celebrating 16 years in DeKalb! In 2007, Smalltown Skateshop opened in the space that is now There's Fun In Store. In order to have skateboarding available all year long, the skateshop decided to expand to include an indoor skatepark. The Fargo Theatre space which had been used for storage for over 30 years was acquired by the owner of the skateshop, where it was then cleaned out, rezoned, and fully renovated to be an indoor skatepark that opened to the public in 2016. Smalltown Skateshop rebranded to pay homage to the Fargo Theatre and moved to 629 E. Lincoln Hwy. After Dimensions Dance Academy moved to their new location, Fargo Skateboarding renovated the theatre entrance (641 E. Lincoln Hwy) to be the skateshop that is connected to the skatepark (the theatre), and a community space called The Fargo Venue. There were only 3 employees at the start, now Fargo has 6 employees and continues to grow!

Please list awards, achievements or special recognition received by the business.

In 2022 Fargo Skateboarding recreated and installed a marquee style sign that the City of DeKalb awarded TIFF funding for improving the storefront. Also in 2022, Fargo Skateboarding released a full-length skate video called "The Country Video" which showcases DeKalb as a skateboarding mecca. The video was shared on Thrasher Magazine, an international publication. In the past, the owner, Ariel Ries, received the Hometown Hero award from WDKB.

Briefly describe how this business has gained the respect of customers and employees.

Built for skateboarding by skateboarders, Fargo is deeply involved in the Midwest skateboard community. From providing new skaters a safe space and skate classes, to making sure the skatepark is a facility that advanced skateboarders can train and progress at, Fargo Skateboarding is a destination for skateboarders from all over.

Describe how this business has been involved in the community.

There have been several ways that Fargo has been involved in the community from teaching skate classes through DeKalb and surrounding park districts, to organizing pop-up skate events in downtown DeKalb called "Skate Street DeKalb". Fargo was hired to renovate the Genoa Skatepark in 2018. In the last few years Fargo has worked in partnership with a local nonprofit called Pushing Together NFP to help provide hundreds of underserved youths in DeKalb County with skateboards.