

Kenosha gBETA program cohort announced

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The first cohort in gener8tor's gBETA program in Kenosha includes startup companies focused on speech therapy technology, travel agency services, candle making and financial services.

City officials and startup accelerator gener8tor last month kicked off the inaugural cohort of the gBETA program in Kenosha.

This free seven-week program provides "intensive concierge coaching" and access to a national mentorship network. It's meant to help early-stage startup companies prepare for later-stage equity-based accelerator programs and connect with investors.

Tim Casey, Kenosha's director of city development, says local officials will be working alongside gener8tor experts to help participating companies "establish, grow and thrive" in the area.

"The City of Kenosha sees incredible value in building and supporting an ecosystem where innovators in these fast-moving and high-tech industries can thrive," he said in a release.

The four companies taking part are:

*TRT Speech Labs, led by founders Benjamin Taft and Joey Tenuta. This company uses a "bio-inspired" algorithm that was originally designed in research on how birds learn songs. It's now used to track progress in speech therapy, identifying "unique and unusual sounds that are key to" diagnosing speech deficits, according to the release.

*Travel Odyssey, founded by Quinn Murphy. The release describes this company as "the first and only" travel agent powered with artificial intelligence. It offers customizable itineraries to help users plan trips, and has at least 62 users on its waitlist as prototype development continues.

*Black Essence Candles, led by founder Shakee'us Graves. This startup produces handmade candles and waxes, and has shipped products to customers in 22 states, the release shows.

*Harper Tax & Financial Literacy Group, founded by Kenny Harper. This company launched in 2020, and has helped local entrepreneurs launch more than 40 new businesses in the Kenosha area, according to the release.

Kenosha's gBETA program is one of many across the country. While mostly clustered in the Midwest, U.S. programs have been launched as far away as California and Texas. According to gener8tor's website, gBETA program alumni have collectively raised more than \$536 million in capital and created more than 3,500 jobs.

See more on gBETA here: <https://www.gener8tor.com/gbeta>

-By Alex Moe