

Project Overview

On December 5, 2024, San Juan County hosted its third annual Business Basecamp Conference & Expo at the USU Blanding Campus Arts & Events Center. The event brought together more than 120 attendees, including business owners, nonprofit leaders, tribal representatives, and partners from local, state, and federal agencies. It was a full day focused on sharing tools, building connections, and generating ideas to strengthen our local economy.



"Deb's message helped me believe we could actually do something, even if it's just small steps."

-Business Owner, Blanding

Use of EDCUtah Funds

The \$5,000 grant from EDCUtah was used to bring in Deb Brown, co-founder of SaveYour.Town, as our keynote speaker. Deb is well known for her work helping small towns take practical steps toward revitalization. Her keynote, "Unlocking Rural Potential with the Idea-Friendly Method," introduced a people-first approach to creating change—focused on gathering your crowd, building connections, and taking small steps.

Each attendee received a copy of her book, and Deb stayed after her talk for a book signing and deeper conversations with participants. Her talk was a highlight of the day and set the tone for collaborative, community-focused discussion.

What Happened as a Result

The real impact was in the shift in mindset. Many attendees left feeling empowered to act on ideas they've had for years. Conversations sparked around local placemaking, community-led projects, and how to move forward with limited resources.

As a direct result:

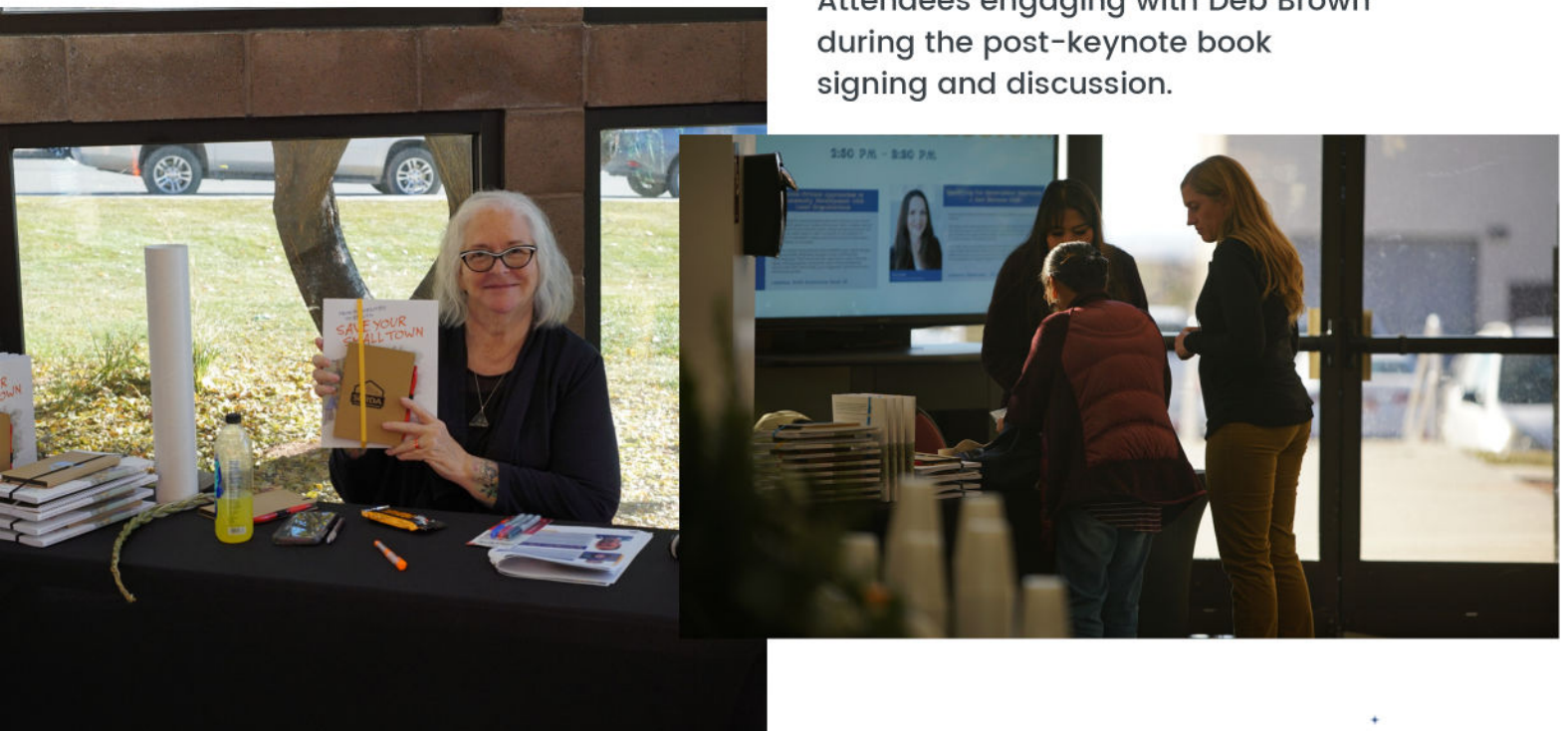
- Plans are now in motion for mural and art projects in Blanding and Monticello
- Revitalization efforts for the San Juan Chamber of Commerce gained new traction, and Deb has been invited back to support next steps
- Small group discussions helped attendees reconnect with why they do this work—and how they can contribute in tangible ways



Deb Brown delivering her keynote, "Unlocking Rural Potential with the Idea-Friendly Method," to a full house.



Attendees engaging with Deb Brown during the post-keynote book signing and discussion.



Keynote speaker Deb Brown with her book, *From Possibilities to Reality*, which was gifted to all attendees.

