



# MAKE IT IN MANSFIELD

**A bright future drives Mansfield.**

With every prospering person, there is a community of support behind it. The potential in Mansfield is limitless with the promise of first-place finishes. When you want to be a part of a community of people, see what Mansfield has to offer you.

[DESTINATIONMANSFIELD.COM](http://DESTINATIONMANSFIELD.COM)



## THE FABRIC OF OPPORTUNITY

**Urban farmer Walter Bonham is sowing the seeds for Mansfield's future.**

**WALTER BONHAM IS AT THE FOREFRONT**

of a booming movement — entrepreneurs moving home to Mansfield. He was born here, got his master's from Ohio Dominican University and after working in Columbus, came home in late 2018 while he contemplated his next steps in life. "I wanted to close the gap between what I was doing and what I wanted to do," says Bonham.

Bonham was restless. And when you're restless, you don't stay stuck in a place where you're just dreaming — you go to a place where you can achieve those dreams. Thankfully, the still had people rooting for him back home. Through a friend of a friend, he heard about a project starting small farms. "I made up my mind that I wanted my work to mean something," remembers Bonham, "so I moved back home."

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Bonham's work doesn't just mean something — it means a lot. His childhood passion for growing his own food has been

realized through his company, The Food Lab, as well as his work on his micro farm, part of the NECIC urban farm. In his limited free time (12-hour days are the norm), he has found the time to facilitate agriculture programs at a local high school and teach business classes to prisoners to reduce recidivism. Some students even get hands-on experience at the farm.

"I sleep about two hours a night. It's bad," laughs Bonham. "But this is bigger than me. That's worth the sacrifice." Bonham is growing food, but what he's also growing is opportunity for people like him — hungry entrepreneurs who have dreams and know Mansfield is the place to realize them.

"The fabric of opportunity is here, and that's something people miss in bigger cities," he says. "If you're trying to do the right thing and have something to offer, people will help you. I was received with open arms."

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Mansfield meets people with open arms, but Bonham proves you have to put in the work. Farming and entrepreneurship are sun-up to sun-down professions. Bonham does both, but he wouldn't have it any other way. He's no longer just dreaming about his future — he's growing it. "It's your ability to connect that gives you a ton of opportunity here," he says. "Come experience the value of Mansfield and I guarantee you can't doubt that."

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