

National Walleye Tour Champion Tom Huynh Brings a New Education Model to TEDxFargo

2X National Walleye Tour Champion will reveal how digital education is redefining how specialized knowledge is applied across unconventional industries.

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From Arkansas Cattle Farm and Nail Salons to National Champion: Tom Huynh Brings a New Model for Fishing Education to [TEDxFargo](#)

The back-to-back National Walleye Tour Champion will explore how structured digital education can transform the way specialized knowledge is captured, taught, and applied across industries that have not traditionally used formal learning methodologies, with a focused look at fishing education and [forward-facing sonar](#).

“

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Tom Huynh

Tom Huynh’s path to becoming a back-to-back National Walleye Tour Champion began far from the center of professional walleye fishing.

Raised on a cattle farm in rural Arkansas, Huynh grew up fishing from the bank of a small farm pond with his grandfather. He later moved to the Fargo–Moorhead area to study Computer Information Systems at Minnesota State University Moorhead. A job in a nail salon, originally

taken to help pay for college, became an unexpected career spanning more than two decades.

Huynh eventually owned and continues to operate nail salons in the Fargo area and had spent years almost entirely removed from fishing. When he returned seriously to the sport, he brought



Portrait of Tom Huynh, National Walleye Tour Champion and co-founder of Tom Huynh University™, Photo Credit: Robert Cardenas

an outsider's perspective, an artist's attention to detail and a willingness to question assumptions that experienced anglers often accepted as settled.

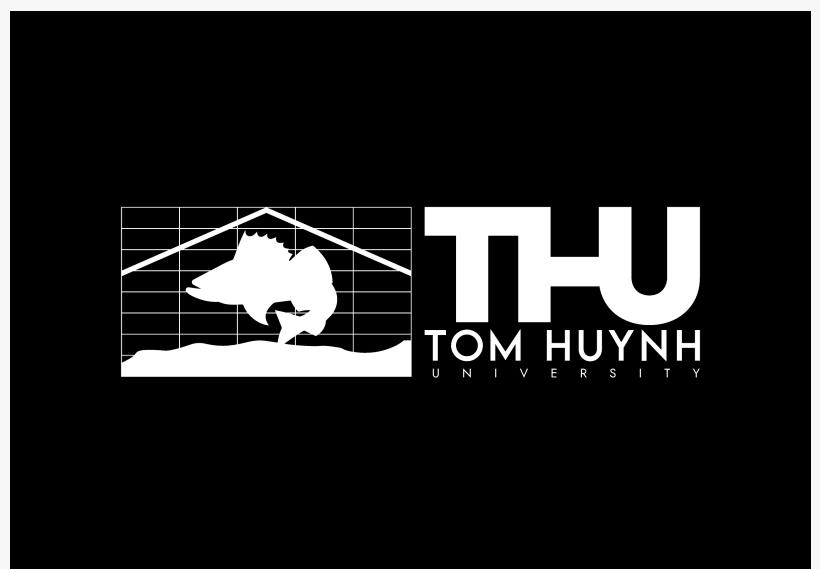
That unconventional approach eventually carried him to the top of professional walleye fishing, and now to the TEDxFargo stage.

Huynh will speak at TEDxFargo CHARGE on Wednesday, July 29, at Brewhalla in Fargo, North Dakota. His talk will explore how structured, curriculum-based digital education can transform unconventional industries by capturing specialized expertise and turning it into knowledge that can be taught, applied, and scaled.

The idea grew from Huynh's experience co-founding [Tom Huynh University™](#), organizing his championship-level knowledge into a progressive curriculum teaching anglers how to use forward-facing sonar technology, rather than presenting it as disconnected tips, equipment settings, or fishing locations.

"Fishing has never lacked information," Huynh said. "What it has lacked is a true educational structure that helps anglers understand why something works, how to recognize it and when to apply it. This is about teaching people how to think, not simply giving them another answer to copy."

The distinction has become increasingly important as forward-facing sonar technology and other sophisticated marine electronics transform recreational and competitive fishing. Anglers now have unprecedented access to real-time information beneath the water, but owning the technology does not automatically provide the knowledge required to interpret it effectively.



The official Tom Huynh University™ logo, representing Huynh's curriculum-based approach to modern fishing education.



Tom Huynh, back-to-back National Walleye Tour Champion, displays a four-fish catch that reflects the skill and observation behind his curriculum-based approach to modern fishing education. Photo Credit: Robert Cardenas

Huynh recognized that gap early.

Rather than treating forward-facing sonar as a tool for simply locating fish, he used it to study behavior, movement, and reactions. His approach combined sonar interpretation with precise boat control, environmental awareness, and disciplined decision-making.

Despite beginning his professional walleye career in his mid-40s, considerably later than many of his younger competitors, Huynh rose through the sport with remarkable speed. After winning the National Walleye Tour Championship in both 2024 and 2025, he will attempt to make history at Lake Sakakawea in just a few weeks by becoming the first angler ever to win three consecutive championships.

The same principles behind those victories were then organized into a structured digital curriculum. Instead of concentrating on isolated techniques, the educational model is built around transferable concepts such as fish behavior, sonar interpretation, boat control, and real-time decision-making.

The curriculum has reached students across more than 40 states and internationally, suggesting that anglers are looking for something beyond additional content. They want an organized way to understand and apply increasingly complex information.

“Standing on the TEDxFargo stage is surreal for me,” Huynh said. “My path has not been linear, but every part of it, from growing up in Arkansas to working in nail salons and competing professionally, taught me something about observation, learning and having the courage to reinvent yourself.”

At TEDxFargo, Huynh will explore an idea extending beyond fishing: expertise becomes more valuable when it can be captured, organized and taught in a way that helps other people think independently.

The concept has relevance for any industry confronting rapid technological change, a widening expertise gap, and the challenge of transferring specialized knowledge at scale.

TEDxFargo CHARGE takes place July 29–30, 2026, at Brewhalla, 1702 First Ave. N., Fargo. Huynh is scheduled among the Wednesday speakers. Event and ticket information are available at tedxfargo.com.

About Tom Huynh

Tom Huynh is a professional angler, nail salon entrepreneur and educator who won consecutive National Walleye Tour Championships in 2024 and 2025. After more than two decades in the Fargo–Moorhead nail-salon industry, he turned to fishing and quickly became known for his mastery of forward-facing sonar, disciplined observation and unconventional decision-making. He co-founded Tom Huynh University™ to turn those principles into a structured curriculum for anglers across the United States and internationally. Learn more at www.fishthu.com.

About TEDxFargo

TEDxFargo is a locally organized event operating under a license from TED. TEDxFargo CHARGE brings speakers, performers and community members together for two days of ideas and connection in Fargo. Learn more at tedxfargo.com.

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