

News to Educate, Engage, and Empower Entrepreneurs

NEBRASKA 4-H RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP CURRICULUM EFFORTS

Nebraska 4-H recently received a national award recognizing its leadership and advocacy for entrepreneurship education, and specifically its entrepreneurship curriculum, EntrepreneurShip Investigation (ESI), that is being used nationally and translated for use in other countries.

Nebraska 4-H received the Cathy Ashmore Leadership and Advocacy Award at the 27th Annual Entrepreneurship Education Forum.

Nebraska 4-H's ESI entrepreneurship curriculum is not only used nationally and in a variety of settings beyond 4-H clubs or traditional classrooms but also in home schools, clubs, camps and community-based organizations, according to

Gregg Christensen, a Nebraska Department of Education Career Education Specialist.

"The 4-H curriculum materials," he said, "also are currently being translated into Spanish for use in Costa Rica, and Portuguese officials are discussing the possibility translating it for use with at-risk youth in their country."

In addition to ESI, 4-H has developed a LEAP into Careers activity guide for use with upper elementary age youth that includes entrepreneurship as a career focus and the Community Connections web-based resource that helps Nebraska communities engage their youth in the creation of entrepreneurship-friendly communities.



Dennis Kahl and Nancy Eberle accept the Leadership and Advocacy Award on behalf of Nebraska 4-H.

This national award recognizes an individual or organization each year for demonstrating sustained and outstanding national and international leadership and advocacy for entrepreneurship education. The award is named for the founder and executive director of the Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education.

"Nebraska 4-H has engaged state and local leaders to develop a strategic plan that combines strong curriculum content with youth-oriented, fun activities,"

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www.nde.state.ne.us/entreped/



YOUTH ENTREPRENEURS LAUNCH STORE

(Continued from page 1)

Christensen said. Christensen submitted 4-H's application for the award.

"We will continue to put our efforts into making the entrepreneurship curriculum developed through the University of Nebraska 4-H the best that it can be," said Nancy Eberle, a consultant for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension 4-H. Eberle said it was an honor to accept the award on behalf of their Entrepreneurship Team and on behalf of its partners that include the Nebraska Department of Education, HomeTown Competitiveness, the Nebraska Entrepreneurship Task Force, the Krieger Foundation, the Gallup Organization and Nebraska Farm Bureau.



Consortium for
**Entrepreneurship
Education**

"The rewards for youth who have participated in this 4-H curriculum will be seen in years ahead as these youth start new businesses and put their entrepreneurial skills to work on behalf of our state," said Elizabeth Birnstihl, Associate Dean-Cooperative Extension Division at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

"Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education are critical to growing our economy, retaining and attracting back our young people, as well as creating a

'line of succession' for current businesses," Christensen said.

"The Nebraska Department of Education began partnering with other state agencies, public and private

NET FORCE

Nebraska Entrepreneurship Task Force

postsecondary institutions and the business community to focus on entrepreneurship in 2005 with the Nebraska Entrepreneurship Task Force (NET-Force). Since then, Nebraska 4-H has been an important partner in the statewide effort to enhance and expand entrepreneurship education," Christensen said, describing their efforts as groundbreaking, cutting-edge and with a focus on quality curriculum that is used by local leaders and schools.

The award recognizes:

- ☒ Passion for entrepreneurship education
- ☒ Outstanding leadership and guidance in entrepreneurship education
- ☒ Advocacy for entrepreneurship education
- ☒ Contributions to entrepreneurship education over a sustained period of time
- ☒ Making a very real difference for students and entrepreneurship programs
- ☒ Perseverance in overcoming obstacles and challenges to offering quality entrepreneurship education opportunities for youth and adults

ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOCUS PROGRAM (EFP) STUDENTS WIN 200 TEAM, 12 STATE COMPETITION



Students at the Lincoln Public Schools Entrepreneurship Focus Program (EFP) have successfully competed in H&R Block's Dollars & Sense national personal

financial challenge through DECA. The top team at EFP finished first in the 200-team DECA Central Region which is composed of 12 states in the upper Midwest (ND, MN, WI, MI, NE, IA, IL, IN, KS, MO, KY, OH).

The team of Rachel Beranek and Michael Gude are now one of only eight teams nationwide to have qualified for the finals of the personal finance challenge to be held at the DECA International Career Development Conference in Louisville, KY on April 24-27.

Two other teams from EFP were in the top 10 of the 200-team DECA Central Region as well. The team of Parker Spracklen and Alex O'Toole finished 7th and the team of Raina Shoemaker and Artie Kolpakov finished 10th.

NXBIZSUCCESS.COM LEADS WAY TO DYNAMIC INTERACTIVE EDUCATION



You have a personal invitation to access a brand-new online resource at nxbizsuccess.com. This website started as a shared vision between Community Developments Resources, Inc. (CDR) and the NebraskaEDGE program, located at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. After 15 years of providing loans and business plan training, CDR and EDGE saw the need to move beyond the classroom to the dynamic world of interactive education.

NxBizSuccess is a place to:

- Share expertise and ideas with other business owners
- Find interactive tools and resources to help businesses
- Discover resources and events available across the state

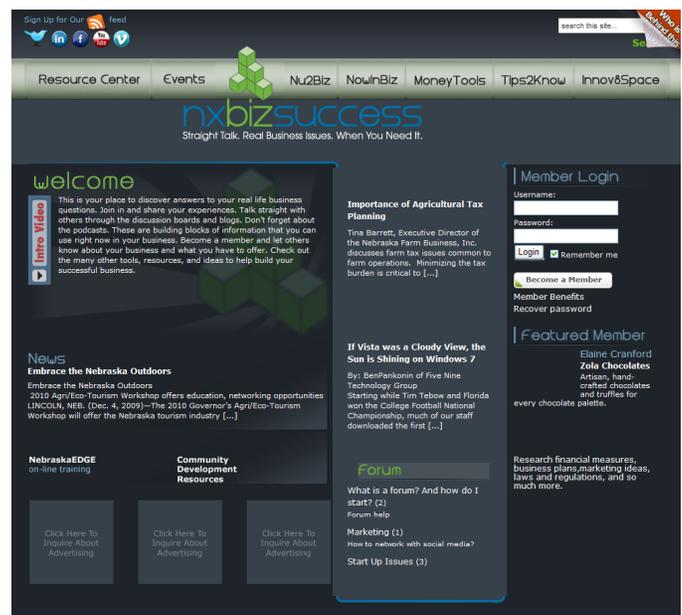
In other words, it's a conversation and a friend. It takes the planning from the kitchen table and moves it online where hundreds of friends can provide suggestions to help a business grow, whether it's located in Paxton, or Omaha, Nebraska.

On nxbizsuccess.com you will find areas that are specifically designed to help bring the ideas and resources to the business owner. Areas include:

- ❖ **Podcasts** or videostreaming of more than 590 videos (with more on the way)
- ❖ **Membership list** that members can access and share comments with other members
- ❖ **Events** across Nebraska featured on the events calendar

- ❖ **Statewide resource listing** with information on resources available to help businesses
- ❖ **Discussion blogs and forums** where entrepreneurs can discuss issues or request information
- ❖ **Research, articles, and tools** for helpful business information. Check out Nu2Biz, NowInBiz, and MoneyTools for helpful information

The credit for this transformational resource goes to Rick Wallace, Executive Director of CDR, Inc., Marilyn Schlake, Associate Director of NebraskaEDGE, Tonia Franklin, NxBizSuccess Web Project Manager, and Lynn Hinderaker, NxBizSuccess Video Series guest host.



Want to learn more? You can log directly into the website at www.nxbizsuccess.com and, in keeping with new generation media, you can find it on Facebook, LinkedIn, iTunes U, Twitter, Vimeo, and YouTube.

Small businesses create most of the nation's new jobs, employ about half of the nation's private sector work force, and provide half of the nation's nonfarm, private real gross domestic product (GDP), as well as a significant share of innovations.
 —The Small Business Economy, A Report to the President, 2009.

CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE OFFERS SPRING 2010 *BECOME AN ENTREPRENEUR WORKSHOPS*

Become an Entrepreneur is the theme of the Spring 2010 series of session offered by Entrepreneurship Center at Central Community College-Hastings.

What is the Entrepreneurship Center?

The Entrepreneurship Center at Central Community College offers entrepreneurs training opportunities to meet their business needs. Education is offered through workshops, seminars, special events, youth programs, credit and non-credit courses, business coaching and incubator services.

What Does the *Become an Entrepreneur Series Offer?*



The Entrepreneurship Center at Central Community College-Hastings is excited to announce the multiple-session workshop: *Become an Entrepreneur, Starting and Developing Your Small Business*. This is a practical business

development education program designed to help entrepreneurs identify and acquire business skills needed to create, manage and grow a successful business. Established business owners wanting to take their business to the next level will learn critical new skills in a supportive environment.

What Will Participants Learn?

- ◇ Explore the process of developing your idea into a feasible business
- ◇ Gain insight into insuring and protecting your business and property
- ◇ Know how to manage, market and finance your own small business
- ◇ Understand taxes, legal structure and employment law
- ◇ Develop the skills and mindset of an entrepreneur
- ◇ Create a successful business plan applicable to your venture

What Is Provided?

- ◇ Class instruction
- ◇ Books and materials
- ◇ Expert guest speakers
- ◇ Hands-on activities

Workshop Series—*Starting and Developing Your Own Business*

- **Develop an Idea into a Feasible Business**
Thursday, January 21, 5:30-9:30 p.m., \$25
- **Laying the Foundation to Your Small Business**
Thursday, January 28, 5:30-9:30 p.m., \$25
- **Funding a Business Venture and the Financials**
Thursday, February 4, 5:30-9:30 p.m., \$25
- **Marketing Strategies for a Small Business**
Thursday, February 11, 5:30-9:30 p.m., \$25
- **Tax and Legal Structures for Business**
Thursday, February 18, 5:30-9:30 p.m., \$25
- **Good Customer Service and Business Relationships**
Thursday, February 25, 5:30-9:30 p.m., \$25
- **Creating and Presenting Your Business Plan**
Thursday, March 4 & 11, 5:30-9:30 p.m., \$60
- **Quick Book Pro™ - Level 1**
Monday, February 1 & 8, 6:00-10:00 p.m., \$99
- **Quick Book Pro™ - Level 2**
Monday, February 22 & March 1,
6:00-10:00 p.m., \$99

Workshop Options—You Have Choices

- ◇ Entire 3-credit course cost with QuickBooks™ - \$245 or
- ◇ Two-credit course without QuickBooks™ -\$175 or
- ◇ Select Individual Sessions - \$25.00 each

All classes will be at CCC-Hastings, Platte Building, Room 121. The registration deadline is January 14, don't procrastinate. For questions or additional information contact: Lisa Tschauner at 402.460.2142 or email ltschauner@ccneb.edu.

FEMALE ENTREPRENEUR CITES INTEREST, BALANCE AS PLUSSES

"To say working women have faced challenges is an understatement," she said.



Kacey Koch, director of recruiting for the Northwestern Mutual Financial Network Tri-City Group, speaks to University of Nebraska at Kearney students November 3 about women entrepreneurs.

each year and employ 18.2 million workers.

Women are opening their own businesses to gain control of their schedules and because of frustration with the glass ceiling.

"Owning your own business will eliminate the struggle for advancement," Koch said during her presentation to about 30 students at the University of Nebraska at Kearney's West Center.

"Women make about 74 cents to every dollar a man makes. In a lifetime, a woman will lose \$250,000 because of the wage gap," Koch said.

"More and more women are not willing to sacrifice family life for careers, and for some this means becoming an entrepreneur," she said.

The majority of female-owned companies are in consulting, financial planning, life coaching and personal training.

Koch spoke about women in entrepreneurship as part of SmartMoney Week, which aims to help increase community awareness of personal finance management, small business ownership and entrepreneurship.

Koch said 10.1 million women own their own businesses, and those businesses generate \$2.3 trillion in sales

"Many women succeed in running their own business because most women are not afraid to ask for feedback and advice," Koch said. "Women also gauge success by the relationships they've built and whether they are doing something worthwhile."

Koch said 45 percent of female entrepreneurs say they do a great job of balancing family and work. "The key to opening a business is to find something you're interested in and something there is a strong demand for," Koch said.

Be prepared to struggle, though, she said. "During the first three years, you'll be overworked and underpaid."

She also said an entrepreneur should choose a business she loves "so all those long hours you put in don't seem like work."

Koch also said those who are thinking of starting a new business shouldn't be afraid to fail. "Advising students on entrepreneurship is important because of the tough job market," Koch said.

"Right now, with the job market, owning your own business can get you where you want to be on your own time," she said in an interview.

"People today want happiness in their jobs. They want a career they're passionate about. If they work for themselves, they can create their own happiness," she said.

Article written by Sara Giboney, Kearney Daily Hub staff writer, sara.giboney@kearneyhub.com

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SmartMoney Week was conducted Monday-Friday, November 7-11 and was sponsored by the Center for Economic Education at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Presentations took place at numerous locations around Kearney as well as on the UNK campus.

'THE KLOSET' HORMEL COMPETITION WINNER OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Only five months after winning the Hormel Business Plan Competition, clothing retailer "The Kloset" opened the doors of its much-anticipated boutique at 217 Norris Ave. in McCook this morning.



"Our motto is trendy yet affordable," said co-owner and McCook native Stephanie Dusatko, who founded the Kloset together with her husband, Jeffrey Dusatko, and her sister, Ashley Hagan.

"In this economy, more and more fashion lovers are becoming "recessionistas," that is, fashion-lovers who reject ridiculous price tags and scour the sales, vintage, and gently used clothing racks for amazing style bargains," Stephanie explained.

The Kloset carries both men's and women's clothing and accessories, and offers new boutique styles as well as gently used name brand and designer items. Shoppers will be able to trade in their own gently used brand and designer clothing purchased within the past year, in return for cash or store credit.

"The trading system is a great way to expand your clothing budget, and by shopping with us, McCook fashionistas will get the big-city shopping experience without having to waste money on gas," Stephanie said.

Examples of brands that will be offered by The Kloset are Abercrombie and Fitch, American Apparel, Banana Republic, J. Crew, BCBG, Polo/Ralph Lauren, Seven for all Mankind, Urban Outfitters and Citizens of Humanity.

The Kloset will observe holiday opening hours from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday; 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturdays; and 1 to 5 p.m. on Sundays. For more information about the store, visit www.the-kloset.com or call 308.345.4489.

Entrepreneurship is nothing new to the Hagan sisters. Ashley, who currently lives in Omaha, and Stephanie,

who lives in Denver, grew up in a family where the sacrifices and rewards of owning a business were evident daily. One of the biggest challenges they faced was selecting the perfect inventory to carry in the store. "We really wanted to make sure we got the best value for our customers and provide a good product at an affordable price, so we were very picky when we went to market," said Stephanie.

They have had "unbelievable support" from family and friends to help them put together the sophisticated storefront on Norris Avenue. A family friend, Shawn Smith, helped them with the interior decorating, choosing a charcoal gray color for the walls with a pop of funky green that nicely compliments the cherry wood flooring and fixtures.

Managing the store will be Chantelle Ele, assisted by Audrey Hagan. Ashley and Stephanie will be managing inventory, which includes men's and women's clothing, jewelry, belts, purses, and other accessories.



The Kloset represents the new generation of exciting business ventures to emerge from the annual

Hormel Business Plan Competition, which has previously produced such success stories as Game On Games, the popular gaming store at Westview Plaza in McCook. To learn more about the Hormel Business Plan Competition, visit www.investmccook.com.

The annual Hormel Business Plan Competition is hosted by McCook's Hormel Family Foundation in partnership with Invest Nebraska Corporation (INC), a venture development organization dedicated to supporting Nebraska's entrepreneurs. To learn about INC's statewide business plan competitions, including the upcoming "East 2 West" New Venture Competition in Lincoln on December 11, go to www.investnebraska.com or www.nebusinessplancompetition.com

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FROM VINE TO VINEGAR

Entrepreneur taps into the Sandhills' growing wine industry to become the state's first commercial vinegar maker.

With the wine industry growing in Nebraska, it only makes sense someone would start making vinegar.

George Paul Vinegar

"I was kind of surprised that nobody thought about that earlier," said Ed Swanson, owner of Cuthills Vineyards near Pierce in northeast Nebraska.

On Saturday (October 24th), what is believed to be the state's first commercial vinegar maker – a "vinegary," as it's known – had an open house in the Sandhills. George and Karen Johnson started George Paul Vinegar with their three children near Cody.

George Johnson, 57, is a retired rancher who started growing grapes on his ranch in 1999 to use in making wine. About four years ago, the Johnsons decided to try to start making vinegar.

They applied for and won an \$18,500 matching grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to pay for a feasibility study.

With the help of Kimmel Orchard & Vineyard in Nebraska City and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Food Processing Center, the Johnsons learned about making vinegar and the demand for vinegar.

With many specialty and local-products-only shops in Nebraska, the Johnsons learned there was a high demand for locally owned vinegar.

The Johnsons then applied for and won a \$75,000 matching grant from the USDA, as well as \$70,000 and \$47,500 matching grants from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, to get the business up and running.

The Johnsons invested much of their life savings into matching the federal and state grants they received.

"The business wouldn't have gotten off the ground without those programs," George Johnson said.

"We're essentially starting a new industry."



The money also helped the Johnsons build a place for the business. The family broke ground on the

straw bale building in May 2007 and finished work on it largely using their own labor later that winter.

The building's passive solar design and thick bale walls keep it cool in the summer and warm in the winter, George Johnson said.

He said it took more than a year to be able to process in large quantities the variety of fruits the family uses to make its vinegar.

"The vinegar-making itself took longer than we anticipated," he said, "It is gratifying to finally have some product to release."

All of the family's vinegars are made from Nebraska-grown fruits, including grapes, wild plums, chokecherries, sandcherries and raspberries.



What fruits they don't grow they buy from local growers. Their apple cider vinegar is made from apples grown at Kimmel Orchards. Their classic red and white wine vinegars are made from cold-hardy varieties of grapes grown in the Sandhills.

The Johnsons describe their process of making vinegar as "Old World." The process works like this:

- The fruits are harvested, crushed and pressed
- The juice is then fermented to produce wine
- Finally, acetobacter cultures are introduced, which gradually convert the wine into vinegar

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FROM VINE TO VINEGAR

(Continued from page 7)

“There are only a handful of other companies in the United States making vinegar in this Old World style,” George Johnson said.



He said the business really is a family-operated affair, with his children helping out daily.

His 28 year-old daughter – Emily Johnson, a printer and graphic designer – helps process the vinegar and also designs their product labels and website.

She said she hopes the business will help sustain their community and add jobs.

“It’s nice to have a family business and work with my parents and my brothers,” she said.

Ed Swanson of Cuthills Vineyards has helped the Johnsons learn how to grow grapes that can survive Nebraska’s harsh winters. He said he knew right away George Johnson had the passion necessary to produce quality wine and vinegar.

“George has that zeal and you can kind of tell that from the word go,” he said. “I think it will be a great success for him and we’re happy for him.”

IDENTIFYING HIDDEN ASSETS IN YOUR COMMUNITY WEBINAR IS NOW AVAILABLE FOR VIEWING

Bill Pinkovitz, Community and Business Development Specialist, Center for Community and Economic Development, University of Wisconsin-Extension, lead the December 2009 webinar offered by Cooperative Extension.

This session provides insights on how communities can better position themselves to take advantage of opportunities.

“Nothing ever changes around here.” That is a common refrain in rural America. However, a quick look at some of the dynamics often reveals significant changes in even seemingly stagnant communities.

2008 vintage vinegars



Apple Cider – made from Kimmel Orchard apple juice

Valiant – a red grape variety

Prairie Red – a blend of St. Croix, Frontenac and GR7 red grape varieties

Prairie White – a blend of Lacrosse, Brianna and Prairie Star white grape varieties

Raspberry – made from raspberries grown in Pierce County

Ed’s Hybrids – made from a blend of hybrid grapes including Temparia, developed and grown by Ed Swanson owner of Cuthills Vineyard and Winery in Pierce

To learn more about George Paul Vinegar near Cody, visit the company’s web site: www.georgepaulvinegar.com.

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Often, the changes are substantial, but can be subtle and go unnoticed. Other times, we have just been too busy to notice. In too many cases, real opportunities go untapped.

This session identifies and analyzes many of these often unnoticed trends and the opportunities they create for communities, organizations and businesses. Data sources and successful methods for using the data to identify and analyze opportunities for local businesses and organizations are discussed.

You can access this and other archived sessions at http://www.extension.org/pages/ETC_Webinar_Archive.

GET YOUR 2010 BUSINESS SUCCESS PLAN NOW FREE!

If you need high quality industry research and market data, Nebraska Business Development Center in the College of Business and Technology will provide it to you at no cost.

Their typical report provided to business clients would cost almost \$1,000 if bought separately from a provider. This is the same information provided to all other NBDC centers across the state including UNO, UNL, Chadron State College and Wayne State College, as well as chambers of commerce and economic developers across Nebraska.

These licensed resources can provide you with timely financial data by sales or organizational structure within an industry sector, detailed GIS demographic and economic data for a geographical region, company market penetration by industry and geographical area, and detailed national industry reports with trends and projections. Compare your business performance to

the industry. Get a better look at the market and coming trends. See how demographic and economic characteristics are forecast to change. Reports are provided electronically, and confidentially. All you need to do is contact them.

The best way to get your business ready to grow in the coming year is to know what kind of shape your business and your market is in; get detailed, timely industry and market information provided to you free of charge.

Get Your 2010 Business
Success Plan Now! Free.
Contact:



Nebraska Business Development Center
College of Business & Technology
ingersollo@unk.edu
ph: 308.865.8429

YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR AWARDS APPLICATION PROCESS OPEN UNTIL DECEMBER 31



The online application process is still open for the NFIB Young Entrepreneur Foundation Young Entrepreneur Awards but time is running out fast!

Any high school senior graduating in 2010 may apply online for a Young Entrepreneur Award valued from \$1,000-\$10,000.

NFIB Young Entrepreneur Awards are open to any graduating high school senior entering their freshman year fall 2010 at an accredited (not for profit) two- or four-year university, college or vocational/technical institute.

Awards are renewable and non-renewable scholarships created to recognize young people who have demonstrated entrepreneurial spirit/initiative valued between \$1,000-\$10,000. Semi-finalists will be notified of their selection February 1, 2010, and must obtain a nomination from a dues-paying NFIB member.

The NFIB Young Entrepreneur program was established to raise awareness among the nation's youth of the critical role that private enterprise and entrepreneurship play in the building of America. Since 2003, the NFIB Young Entrepreneur Foundation has awarded 1,954 scholarships to graduating high school seniors totaling \$2,122,000.

The NFIB Young Entrepreneur Award program is administered by International Scholarship and Tuition Services Inc. This assures complete impartiality in the selection of recipients and maintains a high level of professionalism.

To receive more information or to join the mailing list, contact the NFIB Young Entrepreneur Foundation at yef@nfib.org.

For more information about these awards and other YEF programs, go to <http://www.nfib.com/young-entrepreneur-foundation/>.

VENTURE PLAN CHAMPIONSHIP A WINNER

**UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska**

The 11th annual University of Nebraska Venture Plan Championship, sponsored by Alice Dittman and Cornhusker Bank, announced the winners at a ceremony, December 4th.

Inaugurated in 1999, this program is designed to identify, support, and promote students who write business plans that serve as the basis for attracting people and money to their proposed new ventures. The competition is contested in separate graduate and undergraduate levels and affords students from across the University of Nebraska–Lincoln campus an opportunity to "pitch" their plans to potential investors and win up to \$1,000. Members of the business community judged the business plans.

Business plans must be for a seed, start-up or early stage venture and must address the entire business concept (including implementation). Proposals for the buy-out or expansion of an existing company, tax-shelter opportunities, real estate syndications, and other consulting franchises projects or analyses are not eligible.

Alice Dittman, founder of the competition and Chairman of the Board Emeritus of the Cornhusker Bank, has served the bank for more than 50 years and is well known around the country for both her knowledge of the community banking and her participation in community affairs.

Alice had a business-oriented education, first with a BS at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln and subsequently with an MA in Finance and Management from the same school. In between, she attended a

graduate business program at Radcliffe, in the days before women were admitted to Harvard University. She returned to the Lincoln area in 1953 to work in her father's bank - then situated in Davey, Nebraska, and known as the Farmer's State Bank - taking the post of cashier.

She became president and CEO of the family bank in 1975. The bank averaged a steady 10% asset growth for 22 years. Alice believes that this is best for the bank and its customers. Steadiness, for the customer, means the ongoing opportunity to maintain contact with management.



1st Place Graduate Venture Plan Winner, Jessica Quick (left) and Undergraduate Winner, Doug Fernaays (right) each will receive an award of \$1,000 for their championship business plans.

Graduate Category Winners

- 1st-Jessica Quick, Top to Bottom
- 2nd-Tamara Kaup, Technical Writing Services
- 3rd-Sandy Starkey, Wearable Art Galleria

Undergraduate Category Winners

- 1st-Doug Fernaays, IT Access
- 2nd-Cassandra Person, UNL SIFE Sales
- 3rd-Deb Hegemann, Healing Gardens

SCC ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTER TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK IN STYLE



Southeast Community College's Entrepreneurship Center will be hosting an array of special events to celebrate the 4th Annual

National Entrepreneurship Week (Feb. 20-27, 2010).

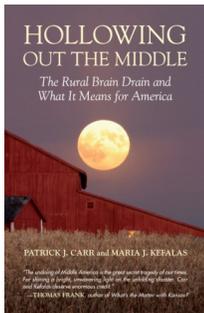
Monday, February 22nd kicks off their celebrations with a Business Expo at the SCC-Milford Campus Student Center at 10:00 a.m. and *Meet the Experts* at the Entrepreneurship Center in Lincoln from 4:00-7:00.

The Beatrice Campus will be hosting a Business Expo in Kennedy Hall at noon on Tuesday, February 23rd followed by another Expo on Wednesday the 24th in the Lincoln Campus Gym from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Students and faculty will also be participating in MarketPlace Nebraska on the 24th. Friday, February 26th, students and faculty will be attending the annual Summit on Entrepreneurship at the Holiday Inn in Lincoln.

HOLLOWING OUT THE MIDDLE A PROVOCATIVE AND ENGAGING READ

The issue of “brain drain” is never far from the forefront of conversation whenever economic development and rural Nebraska occurs. A highly engaging book was just published that addresses the dilemma that Midwestern communities in the supposed “rust belt” face in retaining youth.



For any Nebraska community seeking to stem the tide of out-migration of talented young people, *Hollowing Out the Middle* is worth reading. Agree or disagree with the authors, the issues considered are crucial to turning our economy around, rejuvenating communities, and allowing young people to create their futures in the very

communities that provided them a quality education and warm, loving, and secure upbringing.

The following information will help you explore what *Hollowing Out the Middle* is all about and learn more about the authors. After reading it, you may have a whole new appreciation for the challenges Nebraska and its sister states in the Midwest face and some key steps that can be taken to overcome those challenges.

The Roots of *Hollowing Out the Middle*

When the MacArthur Foundation’s Network on Transitions to Adulthood dispatched sociologists Patrick Carr and Marie Kefalas to Ellis, Iowa, their interest was in examining the experiences of young adults from rural communities as compared to that of their peers in the cities and suburbs of the coasts and the Midwest. Ultimately, though, Carr and Kefalas’s research took them beyond an analysis of young people’s experiences and into the heart of how small town America is sowing the seeds of its own decline.

In *Hollowing Out the Middle*, Carr and Kefalas link the troubling exodus from America’s small towns to the ways young people’s paths are shaped by the adults who surround them as they grow up. They describe a selecting and sorting process in which some of a town’s young are positioned to leave for higher education and lives beyond their rural roots, while others are sidelined, destined to become hourly wage

earners in their hometown’s struggling economy. They underscore how this process, long practiced and rarely questioned, is contributing to an out-migration epidemic that is slowly destroying America’s heartland.

“Teachers, parents, and other influential adults cherry-pick the young people destined to leave and ignore the ones most likely to stay or return,” they argue. “Civic leaders may lament the rural youth exodus and the accompanying brain drain, but they fail to see how their own actions have helped create the problem. No one can deny that rural areas have less and less to offer their young people economically.”



Patrick J. Carr

Drawing on over a hundred interviews with young Iowans spread over fifteen states, Carr and Kefalas follow the trajectories of college-bound “Achievers”; working-class “Stayers,” trapped in a dying agro-industrial economy; “Seekers,” who join the military as a way out; and “Returners,” who eventually circle back to their hometowns.

They talk to graduates from the University of Iowa who head for cities and high paying jobs; to those who made it through high school, but are stuck making \$15 dollars an hour building ambulances and assembling microprocessors; to high school dropouts who put eggs in cartons or slaughter hogs at the meat processing plant, and to enlisted soldiers who joined the military for a number of reasons, from the signing bonus and medical coverage to the promise of a college education.

The authors find that a young person’s decision whether to stay or leave, or eventually return, is shaped by both personal issues (including academic and athletic achievements, their position in the town’s hierarchy, and their relationships with influential adults) and social and economic forces. Through individual portraits, readers get a sobering look at the challenges facing rural areas; from the rise of agribusiness and the attendant decline of the family

(Continued on page 13)

THAYER COUNTY STUDENTS EXPLORE ENTREPRENEURSHIP USING ESI CURRICULUM

A recent Nebraska survey finds that 65% of high school students would like to return to their home region after graduating from high school. However, to do so, students may need to learn how to create a successful business to be able to return to Thayer County after higher education.

Using ESI (EntrepreneurShip Investigation), 21 middle school and high school students from Bruning-Davenport, Deshler, Meridian and Thayer Central schools are researching careers and what it takes to create a successful business.



Once-a-month day-long workshop sessions will be held and students will travel to a central location to participate. Students will visit local businesses, participate in meetings with

local organizations and hear motivational speakers to help them learn about business.

The first class was held on Friday, September 18th in Secrest Library in Hebron. The students learned about what it takes to start a business. Students walked to Amanda's Cottage, True Value Hardware and MVC Automotive to learn about the risks that those business owners took to start their business. They also learned how the businesses survive in the current economic circumstances.

Local teachers for the morning workshop were Arlis Hohl, Thayer County Economic Development Alliance Director; Deb Craig, Training Coordinator for Metal Quest Unlimited; and Phyllis Schoenholz, UN-L Extension Educator.

In addition to the ESI training, University of Nebraska -Lincoln Extension Specialist Diane Vigna and Special Projects Coordinator Nancy Eberle met with the students to begin the first-ever "Community Connections" pilot to see who and what can help youth become successful while living in rural Nebraska. These UNL faculty will be training with the students at workshops or will be training students through computer and phone conferences. Adult mentors will be joining these workshops in October.

The ESI (EntrepreneurShip Investigation) project is funded in part by a grant from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development and administered by the Nebraska Rural Development Commission.

In October, the students took the second step in learning how to build entrepreneurial successes.



To help prepare for future business possibilities, students learned about their personal values and how they relate to business practices. The importance of setting S.M.A.R.T. goals and creating a timeline to accomplish goals was reviewed. Students practiced handshaking and making introductions as part of the "First Impressions" portion of the workshop session.

Students and eight adult mentors learned about their personal strengths according to the Gallup Strengths assessment. Combining those personal strengths, the group created a community "strengths" list.

Students listed personal interest in creating potential businesses as related to the "community gaps" identified during the first session.

Communication with school faculty is accomplished through email. During the second workshop and under the guidance of adults, the students created a "closed" Thayer ESI Facebook page, as a preferred communication tool for youth. This web tool will also serve as an archive for photos and resources for class participants.

Promotion of this youth project has been shared with chambers of commerce, Rotary and other community organizations.

On October 25th students traveled to York for a Community Connections retreat where Thayer County youth and adults met others from Butler and Seward counties who are also part of this BECA pilot effort. Motivational speaker Sue Schlictemier-Nutzman facilitated the Sunday event and helped participants understand Intergenerational Differences.

Targeted Teaching Topic



PROTECTING INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

When students begin writing research papers and reports for school, teachers often talk about the ethical problem of plagiarism. Plagiarism of content for student research papers and reports is a major issue in middle schools, high schools, and postsecondary institutions everywhere.

For an entrepreneur, theft of intellectual property means the loss of **real** dollars and can mean the difference between success and failure. The problem of counterfeiting and piracy, once seen by some as relatively harmless crimes, has grown in both magnitude and complexity. Industry and trade associations estimate that counterfeiting and piracy cost the U.S. economy between \$200 billion and \$250 billion per year and a total of 750,000 American jobs. Some estimates indicate that 5 percent to 8 percent of all the goods and merchandise sold worldwide are counterfeit.¹ So, what is intellectual property and how do you go about protecting yours?

The symbols for copyright (©) and trademark (™) can be found everywhere, but really knowing what those symbols mean, how they are obtained, and what protection they provide is important knowledge for entrepreneurs. It's also of critical importance for the prospective entrepreneur who has an innovative idea for a product or service.

Intellectual property is commonly divided into (1) industrial property which, broadly speaking, covers inventions and (2) copyright which protects literary and artistic works. Industrial property includes trademarks, service marks, circuit designs, commercial names and designations, and protection against unfair competition. Copyright, which protects artistic creations such as books, music, paintings, sculptures, films and technology-based works such as computer programs and electronic databases.²

The entrepreneur needs be aware and take advantage of ways to safeguard their ideas, products, and services from being ripped off by competitors or counterfeiters. Patents, trademarks, and copyrights allow a person or company to seek damages if it can be proven that a competitor or counterfeiter stole their intellectual property.

So, for the entrepreneur and entrepreneurial student, here are some definitions to start the learning process:

- **Patents:** Issued by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) and is the most expensive, but also most valuable protection for an entrepreneur. It gives what could be termed a “mini-monopoly” for twenty years. Costs run from \$2,000 to \$10,000 depending on the complexity of the product or idea.
- **Trademark:** A word, symbol, logo or image identifying a product or service can be trademarked. Scents, sounds or colors can be trademarked also. Trademarks are available in forty classes of goods and services and can be registered in more than one category. It costs \$375 to file by paper and \$275-\$325 electronically.
- **Copyright:** Copyrights protect original works like poetry, novels, movies, songs, software, and architectural design. Copyright law does **NOT** protect domain names. The fee for a basic copyright is \$45 by paper or \$35 electronically.



¹ U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, July 1, 2008, <http://www.ice.gov/pi/news/factsheets/ipoverview.htm>

² World Intellectual Property Organization, Understanding Copyright and Related Rights, http://www.wipo.int/freepublications/en/intproperty/909/wipo_pub_909.html

HOW WILL YOU BE CELEBRATING THE 4TH ANNUAL NATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK?



The 4th Annual National Entrepreneurship Week, February 20 - 27, 2010, is approaching rapidly!

How will you and your organization/school be celebrating the week?

The Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education is challenging their 100+ member organizations and their extensive networks of entrepreneurship educators nationwide to join with entrepreneurs and economic developers to sponsor events at the local, state, and national levels during this special week. The week is a wonderful way to reaching out to educational leadership nationwide and encourage them to support entrepreneurship education programs and activities that prepare our youth and adults for careers in the 21st Century.

State Leadership Teams across the country are planning events to recognize the vital role that entrepreneurship plays in our nation's economic vitality and critical role it will have in recovering from the current deep recession. The Nebraska Entrepreneurship Task Force (NET-Force) is providing key leadership for Nebraska's celebrations of the week. Ideas for activities to celebrate the week, as well as other resources, are available at www.nationaleweek.org.

Anyone planning an event or activity to celebrate E-Week in our state is encouraged to send details and press releases to Gregg Christensen at gregg.christensen@nebraska.gov. Information will be posted on the National Entrepreneurship Week website Calendar of Events, included in listserv postings, and publicized through this newsletter and other statewide communications.

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For timely information on topics related to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education (K-20) at the local, state, regional, national and international levels and to share information with others, sign up for the Nebraska Entrepreneurship Education Listserv log on to:

<http://lists.k12.ne.us/mailman/listinfo/entre-ed>



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