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Colleges Need to Build the Future by Spotlighting the Present

*The theme of this issue* is looking ahead to what entrepreneurship education will be like in the coming decade. Ironically enough, one hallmark trait of virtually all prosperous entrepreneurs is their disregard for the rules of fate. They know intuitively that defining their individual futures is the linchpin of success.

When drawing up strategic plans for entrepreneurship programs and projects, community colleges should take that precept to heart. Ultimately, no e-ship educational offering will make the grade unless administrators and faculty are tuned to a strong entrepreneurial wavelength. Anyone acquainted with e-ship education knows by rote the critical qualities of entrepreneurs. We work to instill these qualities in our students. As leaders in the e-ship field, we must also make sure we develop the same attributes not only in ourselves, but throughout our institutions.

In a recent Forbes article, “5 Essential Qualities for Entrepreneurial Leadership,” contributor Todd Warren showcased an authoritative short list he compiled as a university educator and small-business investor. Warren noted that some capabilities arise naturally while others need to be learned. I’ve included all five below because they make sense for our two-year college community as a whole. Without them, we will have a much more difficult time defining the future of e-ship education.

1. Vision and dissatisfaction with the present
2. Knowing and taking advantage of your unfair advantages
3. The ability to get people on board and add to the vision
4. Flexibility to adapt, openness to feedback, and the ability to learn
5. Persistence and execution

Becoming proficient entrepreneurs is not enough to advance our mission, however. We must also promote our multifaceted work in e-ship education with the same skill and dedication we use to teach and mentor our students. In general, people understand that high-tech entrepreneurial endeavors supported by venture capital are the norm at the university level, but not nearly as many people know that two-year colleges have longstanding, flourishing e-ship programs with leading-edge coursework and expert instructors. We need to broadcast our far-reaching e-ship vision and publicize our student triumphs until community colleges and entrepreneurship are seen as two sides of the same coin.

*continued on next page*
LET’S SPREAD THE WORD

During an event in early October in Washington, D.C., hosted by the White House and the Department of Commerce, two-year college and university presidents met to provide details on current programs and efforts to drive innovation and teach entrepreneurship on their campuses. The president’s National Advisory Council on Innovation and Entrepreneurship, or NACIE, and the Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Commerce’s Economic Development Administration were and are deeply interested in student entrepreneurship, faculty entrepreneurship, technology transfer, industry collaboration and economic development.

Roy Church, president of Lorain County Community College in Ohio; Karen Stout, president of Montgomery County Community College in Pennsylvania; and Edwin Massey, president of Indian River State College in Florida, presented at the White House event.

One determination I made before making the trip to Washington was that even though two-year colleges are doing tremendous work delivering top-notch e-ship training to an exceptionally broad range of students, we aren’t doing nearly as good a job getting the word out to people across the nation. That has to change and change in a hurry.

We teach students right out of high school who no longer see corporate America as a lifetime ticket to prosperity. These young students seek independence through self-employment. They are resourceful, risk-tolerant and often visionary, but can also be impatient and averse to serious planning. Our e-ship programs make sure they find their footing before they start running.

We teach students who fear their middle-class lifestyles are losing traction. These middle-aged and older students see small business ventures, sometimes multiple ventures, as a smart way to beef up their incomes. They see patience as a virtue and solid planning as a necessity, but frequently need guidance to find their independent streaks. Our e-ship programs are launching pads to self-reliance.

We teach students who mastered the complexities and hazards of the workaday world, but now find their retirement earnings are not what their parents and grandparents once enjoyed. These seasoned students see entrepreneurship as a life line to a sustainable livelihood. Our e-ship programs are a bridge to a brighter, more welcoming tomorrow.

We teach students who roll out the high-concept solutions that attract venture capital and angel investors. These gifted students understand that two-year colleges are transcendent when it comes to building relationships with business and industry. Those relationships serve as perfect catalysts for getting these powerful startups off the ground. Our e-ship programs are natural springboards for big ideas.

I don’t need a crystal ball or Ouija board to know that the approaching decade will bring banner years to e-ship education at our colleges. I know this because we would not be in the e-ship training business if we weren’t die-hard entrepreneurs at heart—and entrepreneurs know better than anyone how to spot a good thing. What I know most of all is that the true beneficiaries of our entrepreneurial grit and wisdom will be our students, their families and our communities.

In the spirit of all entrepreneurs,

Ronald E. Thomas, Ph.D.
Board Chair, National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship
President, Dakota County Technical College

EDITOR’S NOTE

Fall/Winter 2012

In our last issue, we looked back at NACCE’s first ten years; in this issue we look to the future. Our lead article includes essays from presidents from three NACCE member colleges and two outside experts on where entrepreneurship at community colleges is headed. Our thanks to Presidents Zachary Hodges of Houston Community College Northwest, Susan May of Fox Valley Technical College, and Tony Zeiss of Central Piedmont Community College as well as Jeff Cornwall, Jack C. Massey, Chair and director of the Center for Entrepreneurship at Belmont University; and Thom Ruhe, vice president of Entrepreneurship at the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation for sharing their ideas.

What do you think the future of entrepreneurship is at your college? If you’ve spotted interesting trends, please share them with us in an article. Write to me and we can discuss your ideas.

-- Jeanne Yocum
editor@nacce.com

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For Information

Contents

6 Entrepreneurship at Community Colleges: The Decade Ahead

STORIES

12 Winning Student Essay
   Stay Encouraged
14 Supporting Existing Entrepreneurs
   CEO Roundtables
15 Taking Credit
   Women Value Flexible Entrepreneurship
   Education
18 Entrepreneurship in Action
   Becky’s Blissful Bakery Boasts Recipe for Success
26 Encouraging Students
   Classroom CEO: A Student Entrepreneur Showcase
28 Teaching E-Ship
   Why a Positive Attitude Matters

NACCE NEWS NOTE

23 Sam’s Club & NACCE Will Work
   Together to Support Entrepreneurship

COLUMNS

10 President’s Viewpoint - Part 3
   Becoming the ‘Front Door’ for Entrepreneurship
11 Entrepreneur’s Perspective
   My Advice to Entrepreneurs
21 Guest Columnist
   Our Future
24 PFED Commitment #3: Increasing
   Community Engagement
   Beyond the Classroom Walls...

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

30 Steven E. Bryant

Picture This:

Earlier this fall, NACCE’s Presidents for Entrepreneurship Forum members participated in a White House-led event in Washington, D.C., on higher education, innovation and entrepreneurship. For information on PFED, visit www.nacce.com/?page=Commitments.

EDITOR’S NOTE:

NACCE serves two audiences: college administrators and faculty members. In recognition of this, we feature icons for each audience that will help steer readers towards news articles that should be of special interest to them. Of course, some articles contain content that is of interest to both groups, so they will feature both icons.

To contact NACCE: e-mail info@nacce.com or call (413) 306-3131
The five thought-provoking essays presented here look at trends, opportunities and challenges that community colleges that embrace entrepreneurship will encounter in the decade ahead. As you read these essays, please consider what your institution needs to do to prepare itself for the future outlined here.

Entrepreneurship Education: Sixty Years and Still Evolving

By Dr. Jeff Cornwall, Jack C. Massey, Chair
& Director of the Center for Entrepreneurship
Belmont University, Nashville, TN

Some are suggesting that it may be time for entrepreneurship education to become more standardized. After all, we have been offering classes in entrepreneurship for over 60 years since the first class was offered at Harvard during the middle of the last century. Surely we are beginning to agree on the basic tenants of educating entrepreneurs.

However, there continue to be fundamental breakthroughs in what and in how we should be teaching aspiring entrepreneurs. Researchers and practitioners alike are gaining new insights on what makes entrepreneurs successful. We continue to see innovative approaches to educating entrepreneurs both inside the classroom and in the co-curricular environment.

So what are trends to pay attention to over the next 10 years in entrepreneurship education?

First, one of the cornerstones of entrepreneurship programs has begun to crumble. Teaching the business plan has been at the heart of most entrepreneurship programs. But, the wisdom of focusing so heavily on the business plan has come into question. The Business Model Canvas, a tool that facilitates white-boarding a visual representation of a business model, is replacing the traditional business plan outline as the primary organizing framework for the curricula at many leading entrepreneurship programs. While the business plan will never be completely abandoned, it seems to be finding its appropriate place simply as the tool used to communicate the business model when raising financing.

Second, the landscape for financing entrepreneurial ventures continues to evolve. Equity funding has been the domain of accredited investors – individuals with high net worth and/or income. With the passage of the 2012 JOBS Act, crowdfunding has moved from a way of gathering a large number of small donations for artists and musicians using sites like Kickstarter to a legitimate tool for raising equity from a large number of investors who no longer have to meet the criteria of accredited investors. It will take a few years for all of the rules and processes to be fully determined by the Securities and Exchange Commission, the IRS, and the courts, but this could become a significant new avenue for raising money.

Finally, we have a new generation entering college this year – Generation Z. While they share the entrepreneurial spirit of the Millenial Generation that preceded them, they are much more driven to success and achievement. They will challenge entrepreneurship educators like no generation before them!

Re-defining Job Creation

By Dr. Zachary R. Hodges, President
Houston Community College Northwest, Houston, TX

The American economy is driven by supporting and sustaining entrepreneurship and small business development. During challenging times, it’s entrepreneurs who revive and rebuild our country. So, how do we embrace and sustain a leadership role in growing and supporting small businesses in our community?

Thomas Friedman in his column on “Advice to China” speaks of the manifestation of Carlson’s Law, developed by Curtis Carlson, the CEO of SRI International, which states, “In a world where so many people now have access to education and cheap tools of innovation, innovation that happens from the bottom up tends to be chaotic but smart. Innovation that happens from the top down tends to be orderly but dumb.” Therefore, moving the focus down to the grassroots, closer to the people, may be chaotic and messy but “all the people together are smarter than anyone alone and all the people now have the tools to invent and collaborate.”

The Center for Entrepreneurship at Houston Community College found its success in an organic “bottom up” approach by focusing on local community partnerships, classroom instruction taught by local entrepreneurs and one-on-one mentorship by business volunteers. As we merge with local businesses, we are surely changing the way we view education. Houston Community College, thanks to a bottom up approach, is successfully making a difference and committed to entrepreneurial thinking across the institution.

A student recently told me, “Students today are inventing their own careers.” This statement makes all of us stop and think about the way we educate and how we can turn our educational program upside down to maximize the opportunity for all of our students. This is a daunting challenge but a real one. Twenty-first century education will go hand in hand with 21st century thinking about possibilities.

One of the seven tenets of our new Houston Community College strategic plan is to integrate entrepreneurship as a way of being. Another key word in our strategic plan is “resilience.” We believe entrepreneurship and resilience are essentials as HCC moves quickly to serve the economic and workforce needs of our community.

One citizen with a dream, a college with a smart support system for making it happen, and leaders in the community that support the idea is the formula for success in the 21st century. Expect big things for the future from the Houston Community College Center for Entrepreneurship. We are re-defining job creation from the bottom up, not the top down. And yes, it may be messy, but it is smart.

Transforming the American Dream

By Dr. Susan May, President
Fox Valley Technical College, Appleton, WI

Carol Brauer helps the elderly live more independently, and David Lindenstruth satisfies appetites with his sizzling entrees. These two entrepreneurs also employ more than 200 people collectively, and their success is largely due to having a strategic business plan, accessing community resources, and pursuing the education and training needed during every step of the business development process.

Both of these business owners at one time grappled with taking the proverbial “leap” into pursuing the American Dream of owning a business. For them and hundreds of others in northeast Wisconsin, they continue to thrive. Why? Because they’re never alone in growing their business.

Developing the next generation of entrepreneurs is a sector of our economy that we simply cannot ignore. More than 65 percent of jobs are created by entrepreneurs. This impressive realization is being challenged, however, by a lack of awareness and understanding about the intricacies behind small business ownership.

THE AMERICAN DREAM IN A DEEP SLEEP

In many ways, the current state of the American Dream appears to be just that—a dream. Fear is what keeps an aspiring entrepreneur dreaming, instead of launching. These fears mostly deal with accessing capital, debt management, revenue uncertainties, and liability issues, to name a few.

Traditional entrepreneur training models have focused significantly on a competitor-based analysis of idea concepts and busi-
ness plan development — both important points. We must amplify our training tactics, however, to add more “OPEN” signs on Main Street USA.

**WAKING UP THE AMERICAN DREAM**

To advance growth in the small business sector, community and technical colleges must focus on implementing several key strategies in the decade ahead:

- Place greater emphasis on networking as a tool for a continuum of ongoing resources
- Offer enhanced training opportunities for not only start-ups, but for established businesses
- Provide entrepreneurship education as electives to degree-seeking students in specific occupations
- Deliver a customized service and support model to prospective entrepreneurs
- Increase online tools for entrepreneurs at every stage
- Make entrepreneur education a mainstay deliverable

**INNOVATING THE AMERICAN DREAM**

Collaboration with other entities will be a key factor to entrepreneurship education’s sustainability and long-term success. Innovation is taking place in northeast Wisconsin through Fast Forward 1.0, a fast-growth program for entrepreneurs. Fast Forward 1.0 is designed to assist high-growth start-ups and existing firms with finding mentors, talent, and financing to accelerate the company’s ability to create jobs. Our region’s business, education, and economic development leaders, in particular New North, Inc., a nonprofit, regional marketing and economic development organization fostering collaboration among private and public sector leaders throughout the 18 counties of Northeast Wisconsin, are working hand-in-hand on this initiative.

The Venture Center at Fox Valley Technical College is one of those partners—equipped with experience, expertise, and measurable outcomes. More American dreamers like Carol Brauer and David Lindenstruth will hopefully help awaken the sleeping giant known as entrepreneurial success.

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**History Is Calling. Will You Answer?**

*By Thom Ruhe, Vice President of Entrepreneurship*

_Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, MO_

Last month at the 10th Annual NACCE Conference in Chicago, I challenged attendees to recognize the current historical pivot opportunity in academia. Some would say that I simply addressed problems in higher education. I, however, would characterize my comments as highlighting the incredible opportunities that currently exist for community colleges to slingshot from academic onramp to superhighway of student empowerment. I would admit, though, that my perspective is slanted by knowing what the unlimited potential of an entrepreneurial mindset can do for students and that such a mindset is not the exclusive spoils of a chosen few.

In the 1960s, community colleges nearly doubled in numbers, providing alternative academic options for a growing population that may not have been compatible to the traditional four-year trajectory many others pursued, and there were corresponding career paths for those choosing this path.

By comparison, the deficiencies in higher education today are amplified by a vastly underprepared (skills deficit) workforce, cost of education growing at an unsustainable pace, and overall lack of critical thinking and problem solving skills, which are the requisites of living a self-directed life. By the way, many employers likewise prefer employees who can be independent thinkers and problem solvers. Clearly there is a problem (opportunity) and schools of all types, new players in the field, and entrepreneurs in many cases, are searching for and offering solutions.

I am encouraged by the explosion in new programs (fueled by disruptive technology and commercial interest), some of which are coming from the biggest brands of academia to brash startups overtly intent on disintermediation of education as we know it. I am watching with great fascination as they offer some marquee classes to the masses...for free! Other third party entrants in the brain race include big names like conference giant TED and their new education offering TEDeD, Udacity, edX, Coursera, and ambitious democratizers of education, University of the People.

Where this will all shake out is anyone’s guess, but it is certain that the Internet has had a great leveling effect and any group seeking to educate and share knowledge can now vie for “students” - a term that has itself morphed to include a much broader swath of our society.

So to community college presidents I say, carpe diem! A future where employers prefer graduates from your school to other four-year graduates is within your reach. You can use the gravity and set orbits of these giants to actually accelerate your own trajectory past them towards a future where your school is better aligned to produce citizens prepared for an ever-changing world.
Entrepreneurial Trends & Opportunities for Community Colleges

By Dr. Tony Zeiss, President
Central Piedmont Community College, Charlotte, NC

The effects of the recent weak economy have presented community college leaders with the serious challenge of raising alternative revenue while maintaining their college’s fundamental mission. Community colleges are experiencing a transformation in their business models, whether it is intentional or forced upon them. Astute college leaders are taking positive and deliberate steps to become increasingly entrepreneurial and are devoting more time to raise alternative revenues.

There are at least five trends of which community college leaders must be aware in order to effectively navigate their colleges through these economically depressed times.

1. Colleges will be required to raise higher percentages of their budgets, learning to depend less on public funding.
2. Trustees and presidents will have to recognize that fundraising is the new norm for their colleges, and entrepreneurship must become a core value of their organizations.
3. Political pressure to slow down the rising costs of college tuition will increase, and non-traditional sources of revenue will have to be found.
4. Dislocated and underemployed workers will continue to be a significant part of the student body.
5. The emerging economic environment will present new opportunities for community colleges to serve their students and communities.

Becoming an entrepreneurial college is exciting to some, frightening to others, and rejected by many. Yet budget cuts—coupled with increased demands for college services—compel our colleges to become more self-reliant. Critics of college entrepreneurship contend that instructional quality will suffer and cause mission drift. In reality, colleges will not sacrifice quality nor alter their mission by becoming entrepreneurial; rather they will ensure instructional quality and more easily achieve their mission by raising the funds necessary to finance an effective teaching and learning environment.

Another argument against becoming entrepreneurial is if a college begins raising significant funds on its own, decreases in public funding will be accelerated. This reasoning raises the question of whether it is better to wait until the failing well runs completely dry before digging another. Is it better to become masters of a college’s destiny or sit complacently hoping for public budgets to be restored? As my younger son says, hope is not a strategy.

OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

The needs and numbers of emerging, incumbent, dislocated, unemployed, and underemployed workers have increased dramatically due to the economy and the uncertain business environment. This situation presents a plethora of opportunities for community colleges because they are primarily career colleges and are best suited to meet the needs of workers and aspiring workers. This present-day economic environment also presents opportunities to address the diversity of needs through more efficient and effective educational delivery formats, including online classes and other convenient course designs. Colleges are not only increasingly focused on student success, but they are also being required to become more accountable.

The Federal Office of Budget and Management estimates there are three million unfilled jobs in America because employers are unable to find skilled workers. Part of the problem is a challenged public school system and part of the problem is attributable to draconian cuts in public budgets. But there is a more fundamental issue. American business leaders, unlike those in other industrialized countries, fail to recognize that they must be directly involved with educators in creating a reliable pipeline of skilled employees. Community colleges have an imperative to engage businesses more closely in the process of educating and training their future employees.

Central Piedmont Community College is embracing the prospect of collaborating with businesses to develop both their current and future employees through customized training, apprenticeships, internships, and cooperative education. These partnerships provide skilled workers for businesses, positive monetary benefits for colleges, but most importantly, they revalidate the college’s value to the citizens and communities it serves.

The timing is perfect for community college leaders to become more adept at fundraising. These are not challenges, but rather must be viewed as opportunities. The future is indeed bright for colleges that choose to become educational enterprises.
Becoming the ‘Front Door’ for Entrepreneurship

By Roy Church, President
Lorain County Community College, Elyria, OH

As I said in a previous article, community colleges are ever-evolving institutions. A little more than a decade ago, Lorain County Community College was in a period of transition. We were in the process of refining our mission and our accompanying strategic priorities. Part of this process was a community-wide visioning process that asked our constituents what else we could do to serve our local residents. We met with community members, institutional partners, and industry leaders to discuss what we already were doing, what we could improve upon, and what we simply weren’t doing.

The college was an innovator in workforce development, with programs that churned out a talent base ready for the region’s industrial jobs, and in education, programs like our University Partnership were giving students on our campus the chance to earn a bachelor’s or master’s degree from some of Ohio’s four-year universities for one third of the tuition. We were growing the talent. But we heard from all ends of the community that we needed to take a leadership role in growing the jobs our talent base would need to find in order to stay within our community after earning a certificate or degree.

From this visioning process, Lorain County Community College placed the other side of economic development—growing high-paying jobs through the support of entrepreneurship—at the top of its priority list. Then, with what I truly believe was unprecedented support by our leadership across Lorain County, from every Commissioner to the Chamber, Lorain County Community College launched GLIDE, the Great Lakes Innovation and Development Enterprise. This physical and virtual incubator became one of the State of Ohio’s designated Edison Technology Incubators and nurtured entrepreneurs with companies at every stage of development and within every sector. It gave every entrepreneur in Lorain County an entry point for support—a front door to walk through.

Filling the Financing Gap

GLIDE has been a great success in Lorain County. To date, it has assisted more than 2,600 companies and taken on 1,056 clients who have created 700 jobs. But in GLIDE’s positive activity, a gap was revealed. GLIDE’s entrepreneurs-in-residence and advisors learned that regional access to funding at the earliest stage business—after entrepreneurs have maxed out their own personal financing options, but before any angel investor or venture capitalist would look twice—is a major barrier to growth. This phase is a common place that many startups stall, known as the “valley of death,” but in Northeast Ohio, that valley was especially treacherous, as the region lacked funding sources to pull companies through.

Lorain County Community College used this knowledge to take action once again. Raising funds from local philanthropy and partner colleges and universities, our Foundation launched the Innovation Fund. With this fund, which provides up to $100,000 awards to entrepreneurs leading technology-based startups, Lorain County Community College was able to financially support the entrepreneurs we had been guiding, giving them much-needed capital to prove out their technologies or businesses. And the entrepreneurs who receive funding are giving back as well. Each award recipient provides an educational experience, typically an internship, to a student at Lorain County Community College or an Innovation Fund partner college or university. So as they’re using the funding we provide to grow their business and create new jobs, they’re inspiring the next pool of potential entrepreneurs.

The success we’ve seen through the Innovation Fund—investing $6.1 million in 88 companies that have created 314 jobs, raised $61 million in follow-on funding, and provided more than 150 internships—has been noticed nationally. In May 2012, Lorain County Community College received a $1 million grant from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation to take the Innovation Fund model and pilot it at three community colleges across the nation. The initiative is called Innovation Fund America and once we prove this type of community college-based fund, when supported by the college itself and its surrounding regional entrepreneurial ecosystem, can work at these three schools, we will scale the model to more schools around the country and build a national network to support them.

It took Lorain County Community College more than a decade to build its entrepreneurial support system, but I know we can take what we’ve learned along the way and help make other community colleges a front door for local entrepreneurs. If you’re interested in learning more about Innovation Fund America, please let us know at innovationfundamerica@loraincc.edu.

Contact: rchurch@loraincc.edu.
My Advice to Entrepreneurs

By Cem Erdem
Founder, President and CEO of Augusoft, Inc., and
NACCE Board Member

Over the years I have often been asked for my advice on starting a business or being an entrepreneur. Here are my responses to some of the common questions I often get.

What makes an entrepreneur’s mindset different than most people? Do you remember the Apple commercial “Think Different?” (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j3V4RsquGkI) At the end it says, “The people who are crazy enough to think that they can change the world are the ones who do.” I have always thought Apple was able to capture the spirit of an entrepreneur in that commercial.

Another thing that stands out about entrepreneurs is they are driven people. Maybe they are trying to prove themselves to their parents or an ex-girlfriend or boyfriend, or sometimes it is just the depleting bank account. Whatever it is, they are driven by an unstoppable force.

When is a good time to step out and be an entrepreneur? I believe successful entrepreneurs share three things in common: passion, drive and persistence. If you are so passionate and driven to be an entrepreneur, this question of when becomes irrelevant. You are already thinking and breathing about being an entrepreneur. If you are not passionate and driven, then one can always think of a good reason as to why it is not a good time to start a new business. When I started my business I was newly married and in a new country where I didn’t know the culture or speak the language very well. Was it a good time? Probably not. However, the opportunity was there for me to do so and I decided it was now or never.

What role does failure play in the success of an entrepreneur? I have always learned more from my failures than my successes, because they are painful and scars remain with you longer than the pleasure of success. One of the best things that ever happened to me is when I got fired from a part-time job when I was trying to build my business on the side. At the time I looked upon this as a failure. However, when I look back I realize getting fired opened the door for me to work even harder on my business.

Why do immigrants tend to be such successful entrepreneurs? Immigrants in general are risk takers. They leave their home country and come here for a better life. They don’t have fall back plans like people born here often do with family and friends. If I would have stayed in my home country of Turkey, for instance, I would have probably had a good life without having to work quite as hard. However, I have no regrets about my decision to move to the United States and the struggles I went through to build my business from the ground up.

Have any educators helped mold my entrepreneurship mindset? I owe much of my success and where I am at today to a professor I met at the University of St. Thomas, where I was taking some courses. I asked him to be my coach, and he accepted. Having a coach really helped me to keep on track and to get to where I am today.

What will tomorrow’s community college graduates add to the business climate? Community colleges serve a great market in our society. They are much more agile and able to adapt to change. Plus, community college students are much more likely to become entrepreneurs. I think we will see more entrepreneurs coming out of community colleges in the future.

What solutions do you suggest for the education system to help entrepreneurs? The community college system is a great way to help immigrants who come here to assimilate more to the culture. I owe much of my success after I came here to the education system in this country, which helped me to assimilate to the culture.

What one piece of advice would you want to share with entrepreneurs of tomorrow? I recommend finding a coach, someone who has been there and done it. Once you find a good coach, set up regular meetings so your coach can keep you on track. If for nothing else, sometimes just trying to articulate what is in your mind to a coach will bring clarity to your thoughts.

Being an entrepreneur is not an easy task. There are lots of ups and downs. If you have an idea, where you can bring improvement, just do it.

If you have any other questions about entrepreneurship that I didn’t address here, please contact me at cemi@augusoft.net and I will be happy to answer as best I can.
WINNING STUDENT ESSAY

Stay Encouraged

By Danny Crittenden
Elizabethtown Community & Technical College, Elizabethtown, KY

I want to own my own business because I believe everyone who is involved and interested in business has something new and creative to bring to the table. What I mean by this is that no matter what business you start, you will have some sort of unique factor to your business. The ability to be unique and creative in your job is absolutely the most relieving feeling. When people tell you, “Do what you love and you will never work a day in your life,” that should encourage you – as it does me – to go out and be yourself as a person and as a business owner and create the next big thing, or the small town business everyone loves.

The freedom that entrepreneurship offers to all of us is endless. The reason I get so excited about this is because as an entrepreneur you have absolute freedom to create a huge corporation or just a small town shop. Entrepreneurship is not always about creating a huge company, but it can also be creating small businesses like bakeries or barbershops.

When you are an entrepreneur, dreams are endless, all goals are attainable, and no matter what you do, you can succeed and do what you love. Although being an entrepreneur requires risk, there is success. I will always believe that if you have a dream, and you believe in it all the way, you will succeed.

One of the most encouraging quotes that I have heard is “stay hungry, stay foolish” by Steve Jobs. That quote drives my passion for my goals in life. I believe Mr. Jobs was telling us to always stay passionate for what you believe in and never give up.

I believe that when he told us to stay foolish, it means that you shouldn’t conform to what everyone else is doing in business, but to do something that will make people love what you have created. Steve Jobs also said, “Don’t ask the customer what they want, give them something they can’t resist.” That quote inspired me and a group of fellow students to take Mr. Slone’s “Idea Project” to the next level. We created an invention called the Buckle Buzzer that now has the chance to make it to the market and our group as well as the school can benefit from it.

Mr. Slone has helped me understand what it requires to own your own business but has also shown me how to be the best and most successful manager that I can be. I want to open my own business because I have the passion and the belief to make a successful company, or product. Like Steve Jobs said, I will stay hungry for what I believe in and I will stay foolish in all that I do, and I will succeed!

EDITOR’S NOTE

Danny and the Buckle Buzzer Team

Danny and the Buckle Buzzer team placed second in the Student Entrepreneur Business Showcase competition at NACCE2012 and received a $300 cash prize to support their new business. The Buckle Buzzer alerts parents if a child is unbuckling their car seat. As winner of this year’s Student Essay Contest, Danny received a $500 travel stipend plus two nights hotel expenses to attend NACCE2012. Watch for next year’s announcement of the Student Essay Contest and encourage your students to enter.
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All Things Community College
SUPPORTING EXISTING ENTREPRENEURS

CEO Roundtables

By Steven E. Bryant, Executive Director
Gayle and Bill Cook Center for Entrepreneurship
Ivy Tech Community College-Bloomington, Bloomington, IN

Many entrepreneurial support programs across the United States are fairly new, especially at the community college level. Those dreaming about or creating new entrepreneur education programs often stick to the basics of curriculum for students (credit or non-credit), basic business planning assistance, counseling services from Small Business Development Centers, incubator programs and other services that foster new business creation.

But what about the existing businesses in your community? What can entrepreneur programs offer to them that encourages engagement and offers value-added services to those already making a buck in our communities? How much effort should we spend on making sure those in business, stay in business? We tend to forget how important it is to support the businesses we already have!

When we created the Gayle & Bill Cook Center for Entrepreneurship at Ivy Tech Community College – Bloomington, we had that same conversation two short years ago. Ivy Tech-Bloomington is based in Bloomington, Indiana, a small college town about an hour south of Indianapolis. Our campus includes 6,500 students and we started offering Entrepreneurship courses through our Center for the first time in the fall of 2011. We also offer small business counseling and entrepreneurship engagement programs in our community and have become a vocal evangelist for entrepreneurship.

After doing some research in mid-2011, we came across an interesting program offered through the Edward Lowe Foundation that focuses on the growth of existing businesses. The foundation was established in 1985 to foster and nurture the American entrepreneur by the man who literally invented kitty litter. The program is called the PeerSpectives Roundtable System (PRS), and is an innovative peer-to-peer learning tool using a proven facilitated format that focuses on sharing experiences instead of giving advice. Leaders of revenue-generating companies are the prime audience for the program, and we were looking to provide value to existing businesses that may face challenges at the “second stage” or “growth stage.”

LOW COST/HIGH IMPACT
In the course of running your own business, you often face tough decisions that may involve various stakeholders, including business associates, family members, and employees. Issues may revolve around topics such as company culture, personnel decisions, customers, direction of the organization, marketing, product development, succession planning and finances. As the leader of an organization, you may wonder where to turn for help. It is not always appropriate to take certain issues to family members, boards or even a business advisor. That’s where the PeerSpectives program comes in. It gets 8-10 CEOs or leaders of key departments of a growing business around a table and encourages experience sharing in an environment that is confidential, trusted, and open. It provides a level of accountability as well because the participants are expected to deal with problems each month and report on progress the next time.

The Cook Center licensed the program (we call it the Cook Center CEO Roundtable) in 2011 and we have found the program to be extremely valuable to the participants. A trained facilitator manages and facilitates the roundtables. All materials needed for the roundtables are provided for us, and we tweak them to suit our needs. We recruit local businesses, enroll them in the roundtables through our non-credit side of the college (Corporate College), charge a nominal fee and provide space for the monthly sessions.

We implemented our first program in late 2011 and now have two roundtables going and a third in development. This is a high-impact, low-cost program, and is relatively easy to manage. We are impressed with the format, short learning curve, ease of implementation, and impact of the program for our existing business owners living the “growth stage.” It engages entrepreneurs who are already competing successfully, and adds a tool to the toolbox of the existing business, and that’s an audience we don’t want to forget about! It’s one of our more measurable and impactful programs we have offered to date.

For more information, contact the Edward Lowe Foundation at www.edwardlowe.org or the Gayle & Bill Cook Center for Entrepreneurship at www.ivytech.edu/entrepreneurship.

Contact: sbryant32@ivytech.edu.
Job creation and economic growth topped the list for most Americans who were asked what was most important to them in the recent election season. Women are seeking alternative sources of income to help make ends meet and for some that means pursuing entrepreneurial endeavors.

A 2011 Kauffman Foundation study shows 46 percent of the workforce and more than 50 percent of college students are female and they represent only about 35 percent of startup business owners. Kansas City Kansas Community College reports 78 percent of entrepreneurship program students are women. “In our Kansas City community we have high unemployment and jobs are hard to find. Our Jumpstart 1st Step program sees a number of female heads of household starting their own business out of necessity,” said Jay Matlack, Workforce Development Coordinator for Kansas City Kansas Community College.

On September 11, 2012, Mountain View College’s Economic and Workforce Development Department launched its fourth Small Business Management and Entrepreneurship Certificate program, which has integrated the Kauffman Foundation’s FastTrac New Venture curriculum. For the first time since inception our entrepreneurial college program has experienced a significant increase in interest from women business owners.

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Sandra Louvier, Center for Entrepreneurship, Houston Community College

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Women Value

continued from page 15

certificate program’s tuition cost. “Small business owners who meet the state’s requirements for eligibility can take advantage of grant funds and remove the financial barrier that faces so many struggling business owners. I often share with our students that the program is a value-added bonus to new employers feeling their way through managing the pitfalls of running a new business. Our campus is the only one of seven that is taking advantage of the state funding available to help defray the cost for enhancing skills,” said Patricia Webb, Mountain View College’s Executive Dean of Economic and Workforce Development and Continuing Education. The college has taken full advantage of Texas’ premier job training program, known as The Skills Development Fund, which awards grant dollars for Texas-based small businesses and their employees. The fund is administered by the Texas Workforce Commission, which successfully collaborates with public community and technical colleges, local workforce development boards and economic development partners. Mountain View College’s internal grant coordinators help local businesses apply for the $2.2 million grant funds to cover tuition costs for the employees, which are payable to the community college. Start-ups and sole proprietors are eligible to apply for funds to cover the costs for newly hired and current employees.

Patricia Garcia-Smith, a Dallas real estate investor, was thrilled to hear about the certificate program from her local Small Business Development Counselor who told her the college’s program is the only one offered at a community college in the state. Garcia-Smith was elated to enroll in the college’s Social Media and Marketing 101 for Small Businesses course. Garcia-Smith said, “I learned so much about identifying my target market, conducting market research and applying a budget to my marketing strategy. These were things I never thought of when I bought my first three homes and started my real estate investment company with my husband.”

SUPPORTING FAMILY BUSINESSES

Valerie Johnson said, “I looked at business management credit courses at local universities because I thought I needed to earn a bachelor’s degree to learn how to manage our family’s business, but after I saw the courses in the college’s online catalog and met with the staff I knew this was the right place for me.”

More community colleges are seeing wives register for classes to learn how to manage the family business, the accounting, the legal matters and the operation. “Men seem to be more focused on licensing, minority certification requirements to be a subcontractor and less interested in sitting in a classroom for two hours,” stated Marisa Gray, Business Development Liaison for Kansas City Kansas Community College.

Mountain View College has worked to recruit qualified instructors, purchase the best resources and seek supplemental funding to ensure the program serves to benefit the local job market and community. Paula Sullivan is a former Citibank Community Relations Vice President and now operates her own consulting firm in Dallas, TX, while teaching “Exploring Entrepreneurship” for Mountain View College. She said, “Being an entrepreneur and teaching provides an ideal opportunity to share my personal experience first-hand with the students. The community college provides a platform for me to offer students knowledge on how to avoid mistakes and to think critically about what it takes to be a successful entrepreneur.”

Dean Webb understands education does not end on graduation day. In 2011, she forged a collaborative relationship with Dallas Baptist University, a prestigious private university eight miles south of Mountain View College’s campus in an effort to create shared knowledge and extended learning opportunities for the university’s MBA students and MVC’s entrepreneurial college students. She took it a step further and encouraged Economic and Workforce Development to work with students who wish to continue their education and obtain associate degrees in business administration after completing the certificate program. The new relationship between credit and continuing education will allow students to exchange their continuing education credits with credit hours within the college’s school of business.

Contact: cnevels@dcccd.edu
ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN ACTION

Becky’s Blissful Bakery Boasts Recipe for Success

You know your food business has arrived when high-end gourmet giant Williams-Sonoma agrees to feature your wares in its highly esteemed catalog and online offerings.

For Rebecca Scarberry, owner of Becky’s Blissful Bakery, the Williams-Sonoma deal couldn’t be sweeter. The once struggling entrepreneur has just landed a partnering agreement with the premier food purveyor while maintaining her commitment to the local community that helped get her business started.

Rebecca started Becky’s Blissful Bakery as a hobby, selling her organic, homemade caramels at a local market and chocolate shop in Waukesha, WI, in 2007. Her hobby took on greater proportions when Rebecca went through a divorce and simultaneously was suddenly laid off from her full-time position at a local architecture firm. She rented a kiosk at a nearby mall, selling her caramels during the weekend before Christmas. In 2009, she started selling caramels at a local farmers market. A feature article about the company sent sales soaring, and soon Rebecca was faced with a critical decision: take a full-time position offered to her after an exhaustive job search, or go full throttle on her business. After three months at the full-time job, she decided to quit and focus on the latter.

To facilitate her decision, Rebecca attended a FaSTart Business Workshop offered by the Small Business Center at Waukesha County Technical College. “I wasn’t from the area, had no network, and knew nothing about running a company,” says Rebecca. “I signed up for the workshop to learn the ins and outs of starting a business.”

With help from the center’s manager Russ Roberts, Rebecca obtained an Early
Planning Grant from the Wisconsin Entrepreneur’s Network (WEN). The grant enabled her to hire a local business consultant to assist her in developing a business plan. A WCTC graphic design student created the bakery’s logo and labels, and Rebecca ramped up the business, expanding her presence in area retail outlets and partnering with other local and regional high-end food businesses.

“The Small Business Center became my business’s lifeline for information, connections, and resources,” says Rebecca. “I can’t say enough about the people there who have become like family to me.”

The Small Business Center at WCTC is unique, says Russ Roberts. “We take a very a la carte approach to providing the courses and support services that entrepreneurs like Rebecca need,” he says. “Beyond the business courses and services we offer, we emphasize the real world side of entrepreneurship and try to expose students to the knowledge and experiences of practicing professionals in the community.”

The lessons learned at WCTC’s Small Business Center were critical to getting Rebecca’s business off the ground. In addition to business planning and management, she obtained advice and mentoring from a host of community business leaders who offer their services through the center.

In 2010, Rebecca purchased new equipment and moved into renovated space in Pewaukee. The move wasn’t without sacrifices. She had to sell her minivan to pay for the renovations and hire a consultant when her caramel started to crystallize unexpectedly, causing her to make changes to her recipe and cooking processes — changes that were critical to success. Since that move, Becky’s Blissful Bakery has continued to thrive. Most recently, Rebecca received a major order from a specialty promotions company in Beverly Hills.

Currently, Becky’s Blissful Bakery employs three full-time employees and several part-timers. Rebecca remains faithful to her original business model of using only high quality, organic products and incorporating offerings from local businesses. “People ask why I still sell product at the farmer’s market,” says Rebecca. “I get real time, true feedback, and I get to stay connected to the community, which is huge. For a small business, once you pull that plug, it changes everything.”

Rebecca now teaches a course at the Small Business Center on how to start a food business, sharing her own experiences with hopeful entrepreneurs. She attributes her success to the contributions of partners and individuals in the community, her hard work and timing, and the support of WCTC’s Small Business Center. “Everything happens for a reason,” she says. And, now that she’s had a taste of success, nothing could be sweeter — except for just maybe the mouth-watering, handmade caramels from Becky’s Blissful Bakery.

WCTC SMALL BUSINESS CENTER — MAKING IT REAL

Rebecca Scarberry is a shining star of the WCTC Small Business Center, but the center’s manager, Russ Roberts, isn’t taking any credit.

“The best we can do is to provide a foundation of knowledge and place a wide net of support services around our entrepreneur clients,” says Russ. “However, the difference between success and failure always hinges on the amount of hard work, passion and determination each entrepreneur brings to the table. Rebecca is a success because she recognized very early what sacrifices she had to make to succeed!”

Students at the center can take any number of courses, but there is a heavy emphasis on real world, non-credit offerings to choose from. Support services are comprehensive and include the “Take a Professional to Lunch Program,” “Success Mentoring,” and “Business Plan Express.” Our FaSTart Workshop is very specific,” says Russ. “Students gain useful business knowledge quickly, learning everything new business owners need to know.”

The center’s courses are short and topic specific and are tailored to meet the needs of busy people. Non-credit classes are available for entrepreneurs during semester breaks and at other non-traditional times so they can get help when they need it. A former Naval aviator and financial planning firm owner, Russ took the helm at the center 11 years ago when entrepreneurship was a very “part-time” focus at WCTC. Since that time he has shown his skill in charting new territory. During the first year of operation, the center served about 150 students; today it serves close to 1,500.

“We like to go beyond the coursework to help students solve a problem so they can move on to the next step,” he says. “We emphasize networking and mentoring because our students want knowledge from real-world professionals who practice what they preach.”
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Our Future

By André Taylor
Entrepreneur and Author

It’s culturally acceptable today, perhaps even chic, but back in the late 1970s when I entered college and announced that I’d soon become an entrepreneur, my words were greeted with suspicion and judgment: “Why doesn’t he want a real job?”

Entrepreneurs were then part of a secret society. What we do and how we do it was an enigma. My community college had no entrepreneurship class. In my second year, a class on retailing was offered, which I quickly enrolled in, but classmates were scarce. Once the course began, I quickly found that I knew more about starting and running a business than my professor did. The future of entrepreneurship education back then was clear. It was getting enough colleges to value it, offer it and find professors to teach it. It was a complete mystery to most people at that time, how to plan, register, fund, or market a business. It’s quite different now.

Today, decades later, everyone knows what entrepreneurship is and the rewards it offers. There are credit and non-credit courses, online classes, books, magazines, and a wide range of support for entrepreneurs everywhere. There are still questions and judgment when others learn you’re an entrepreneur in social settings, but these days it’s different. The silent reaction is more like: “What kind of success has he achieved? Is he one of those rich and successful entrepreneurs we read about or merely a pretender?”

While there are still miles to go in creating more start-ups, decades pounding the global entrepreneurship drumbeat has created a new set of questions for student entrepreneurs like: “How do I get beyond the basics? Yes, I know I need a plan and I need to understand sales and marketing, but what’s missing in what I’m doing? How do I thrive, grow, and become one of those really

continued on page 23
Join us where it all began! The League is proud to announce that Innovations 2013 is returning to the site of its first conference in 1998 – Dallas, Texas. Ultra modern and sophisticated, Dallas is the number 1 visitor and leisure destination in Texas, with a rich arts district, world class shopping and dining, and moderate year-round weather.

Innovations 2013 is the League’s premier event for professionals dedicated to improving teaching and learning. At this event, the League will unveil the John & Suanne Roueche Excellence Awards dedicated to recognizing outstanding community college faculty and staff, and the John Roueche and Terry O’Banion International Leadership Award promoting the community college experience. We hope to see you at this 15th anniversary event, where you will network and share with colleagues, learn from experts, and demonstrate your commitment to innovation in the community college.

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Our Future

continued from page 21

successful entrepreneurs?” This is where the big challenge will come for community college programs. It’s creating the next level of entrepreneurship education spreading not just the idea of going into business, but helping underperforming entrepreneurs more deeply.

Millions of entrepreneurs are doing what they’ve read and heard about. They’re pitching their products and services, paying attention to numbers, and working very hard. They believe they’re making logical and sound decisions, but often aren’t succeeding and can’t determine why.

This poses tough challenges for entrepreneurship educators. With waves of people starting businesses or at least exploring the entrepreneurial route, community colleges are going to encounter more sons and daughters of failed entrepreneurs, struggling founders of existing businesses and many discouraged even before they start because they know more than students did decades ago. Maybe they’ve personally encountered the biggest shaper of entrepreneurs, which is failure.

Community colleges will need an expanded vision of how to address both the ambitious and wounded. That means:

Experiential Dynamics: Elite military units trained for high-intensity combat talk about the importance of being able to move and return fire at the same time. It may be the best comparison of what it’s like to be an entrepreneur. It isn’t until you’ve engaged in business combat, and have taken a few “hits” that you understand what this feels like.

Educators will need to do a better job of providing students with realistic simulations of the battleground experience. How do you go full throttle in a direction in the dark? How do you keep marketing something when it doesn’t seem to be working? How do you move forward even when hurt emotionally and financially? Today, many college courses focus on planning, case studies, and best practices, but the future will require more focus on sharpening business agility.

Business Diagnostics and Analytics: Being able to look at a situation and figure out what it means is another example of what many entrepreneurs desperately need. Experienced entrepreneurs learn to read “between the lines,” and see and hear something different than what others might see. Can you figure out that as a business you’re following and not leading? Can you tell in a sea of metrics that you’re focused on measuring the wrong thing? Many college programs come up short here because they don’t always know how to bridge the gap between the way things happen in theory and the way things happen in real situations. The future will demand greater emphasis on teaching what’s relevant and when.

Global Readiness: The link between Main Street businesses, world markets and macroeconomics is a big shift today. Doing business internationally is more routine than ever. Understanding how business is done abroad, how to work with international suppliers, and how to meet global expectations and customs is no easy task. Add teaching entrepreneurs how to thrive on the international stage to your agenda.

Community college educators face a daunting, demanding, and complex future as a result of successfully promoting entrepreneurship. Are you ready?

André Taylor is the author of You Can Still Win! and a regular contributor to ABC News, “Money Matters.” He’s the founder of Taylor Insight Worldwide, a premier leadership development firm providing innovative, forward-moving advice, information, and resources for entrepreneurs, and entrepreneurial enterprises. He’s a community college graduate and can be reached at at@andretaylor.com.

NACCE NEWS NOTE

Sam’s Club & NACCE Will Work Together to Support Entrepreneurship

Sam’s Club®, one of the nation’s leading retailers, and NACCE have joined together to provide financial support for NACCE and for members of our Presidents for Entrepreneurship Forum. The Sam’s Club sponsorship is part of the retailer’s commitment to supporting community based programs that empower small businesses. The sponsorship will include a “Shared Vision for Small Business” competition that will result in $40,000 in grants to community colleges that show excellence in their entrepreneurship programs.

“Sam’s Club is committed to supporting small business owners and the next generation of entrepreneurs with tools for success that will empower them to build economic well-being for their families and communities, and to create new jobs,” said Catherine Corley, Vice President Member Services at Sam’s Club and Community Involvement Council Member. “Across the nation, many community colleges are taking a leadership role in fostering entrepreneurship and NACCE is supporting them in that role. We are pleased to join with NACCE in its commitment to increase the capacity of these institutions to deliver relevant and effective programming that leads to successful, sustainable business ventures.”
Beyond the Classroom Walls...

By Lisa Tschauner, Instructor of Entrepreneurship & Business Entrepreneurship Center Coordinator, Central Community College, Hastings, NE and Owner, Dynamic Concepts

One of the most valuable assets to entrepreneurship education is the surrounding business community. Often the entrepreneurs in a community were at one time students at the college. It may have been where they learned their technical trade, took an accounting class or a computer workshop. Students can benefit greatly by having the first-hand account and candid advice from experienced entrepreneurs as they contemplate their own ventures.

Although you might bring in seasoned business owners to be guest speakers or have your classes go on a field trip to a successful small business, sometimes the focus needs to narrow even more to pull out more significant information that will help a student. Here are three ways to make that happen.

Making the connection: There are many ways to connect students with experienced entrepreneurs. The biggest hurdle for the students seems to be the initial contact. Instructors and business coaches can assist with this first step. Keep in mind the personality of both the business owner and the student. They must be able to find value in each other.

Make suggestions to the student of possible businesses that are in alignment with the students’ interests, education and goals. It doesn’t have to be an exact match, but there should be some sort of common ground. The actual contact and interaction need to happen between the business owner and the student. This can be facilitated by an instructor or coach, but the real “time” needs to be between the two. This can be done via observation, interviewing, job shadowing, internships, or even a casual lunch. In any case, the students must be engaged and present for this experience or it will not make the impact that is possible.

Guide the student and help with planning: Students (especially traditional) in the early stages of their education and they have not had the experience of planning. They might need help as they plan to get the most out of the time they share with the business owner. Guide them as they create questions to ask and talking points. Give them examples of information that they might obtain and how they can apply that to their education and decision making process. Encourage the students to not only speak with the business owner, but to ask if they can also visit with the customers, employees and anyone else involved with the business.

Look beyond the shiny stuff: If the business owner your student is working with is game, urge the student to take a deep look at the business and how things work behind the scenes. Sometimes aspiring entrepreneurs are blinded by the idea of owning a business and don’t investigate the actual work required and the sacrifices that have to be made to become successful. Let the business owners know that it is okay to share the good, bad and ugly with the students in order to give them an accurate perspective. We tend to “soften” the view for students in an effort to not scare them away from wanting to eventually be a business owner, but we are not doing them any favors by candy coating the process.

In several of the entrepreneurship courses I teach, I require students to contact and spend ample time with entrepreneurs who are currently operating businesses and are willing to encourage other people to pursue their dreams of business ownership. This has been one of the most valuable exercises for the students and one that can continue for them if the business owner and student keep that connection. It is an asset for a new entrepreneur to have a mentor as they launch a start-up and many times this is the path to creating that business relationship for a student.

It has always amazed me how cooperative and willing business owners in my community are when I ask them if they would be willing to visit with students. I have never been turned down! Sometimes there are challenges with platform, schedules and the like, but they are always very accommodating and willing to share. There is certainly value in the classroom and the regular curriculum that we expand upon as instructors, but we must also recognize the resource of our local entrepreneurs. Take advantage of this and I hope you will start or continue involving your community’s small business owners with your students!

Contact: ltschauner@ccneb.edu
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" - Noelia Garcia Urzua
DCTC Alumna & Owner of La Loma Tamales

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ENCOURAGING STUDENTS

Classroom CEO: A Student Entrepreneur Showcase

By Katie Sowa, Director of Operations
Collegiate Entrepreneurs’ Organization, Chicago, IL

The Collegiate Entrepreneurs’ Organization™ (CEO) works with entrepreneurial-minded students on over 245 college campuses across North America. Many CEO student members are excited about an idea or working on an actual business. One such student entrepreneur is Michael Cauble, a student at Johnson County Community College in Overland Park, Kansas. Not only is Michael studying entrepreneurship and communications and is actively involved in his school’s CEO Chapter, but he is an entrepreneur. Michael owns and runs Cauble Cosmetology LLC, in addition to being a co-founder of Yoga at Circle S Ranch. Recently, Michael was asked to speak to 60 students at Bellus Academy—a cosmetology school—in Manhattan, KS, about entrepreneurship and innovation in the beauty industry.

Michael’s true entrepreneurial spirit was revealed after he won a contest at the 2011 National CEO Conference in Fort Worth, TX, in which he won the opportunity to shadow entrepreneur Jennifer Prosek at her global public relations company Prosek Partners in New York City this past spring. Here are Michael’s own words about his “Entrepreneur for a Day” experience:

After months of constantly thinking and talking about Prosek Partners and New York City, I was finally on the plane from Kansas City, Missouri, to New York, New York. (And of course I listened to Frank Sinatra’s “New York, New York” on my flight to La Guardia airport.) The firm was generous enough to let me stay at the Yale Club, an Ivy League Alumni hotel right across the street from Grand Central Station. I felt smarter just sleeping in the building! On the morning of June 6th...I left the hotel to walk down Fifth Avenue to the Empire State Building, where the firm is located...[and] rode the elevator up to the 39th floor and arrived at Prosek Partners, where I was kindly greeted by their receptionist.

My day at Prosek Partners went by extremely fast. I first started off meeting with Karen, the firm’s director of human capital. Karen and I had a great conversation on humanity and ethics within a company. I then got to have a VIP tour of the Empire State Building with Josette, a vice-president executive with the firm. When looking upon all of Manhattan on top the Empire State Building, it is a view that instills a vivacious vibe in a person. As cheesy as it sounds, it’s almost like the part in the movie “The Lion King,” when Mufasa over looks his kingdom (cue music now!).

When Josette and I returned to the firm, I then met with the queen bee herself, Jen Prosek. Jen and I went to lunch and had a really nice conversation on public relations, corporations, the process of writing her book and the positives of living in New York City. Considering the fact that she owns an international Fortune 500 company, she is super down-to-earth and extremely easy to talk to. It’s no wonder why their company is expanding globally. With a leader like Jen, how could they not be? The rest of my day at Prosek Partners consisted of having private meetings with basically every partner and executive within the firm. The topics of conversation I had with these super savvy people consisted of their experience of working in public relations, their backgrounds and how they apply public relations to investors, venture capital firms, hedge funds, insurance companies and other huge financial companies.

Since part of my major is in public relations, all of the information the firm shared with me was extremely valuable towards expanding my view on public relations. By the end of the day my brain and body were pretty much exhausted from talking non-stop with everyone within the firm. The day could not have gone any better and I will never forget it!

This experience in NYC has further increased Michael’s interest in attending New York University after finishing his associate’s degree at JCCC. He also hopes that there may be a future opportunity for an internship with Prosek Partners. CEO was proud to have Michael as the representative student for this inaugural contest, and we are excited to see that his entrepreneurial interests continue to grow in and out of the classroom!

Contact: ceo@c-e-o.org

CEO prize winner Michael Cauble and Jennifer Prosek of Prosek Partners
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Why a Positive Attitude Matters

By Clinton E. Day, Adjunct
State College of Florida, Sarasota, FL

What is it that separates the entrepreneur from other members of our human tribe? Why do some people want to solve a problem and make it work while others don’t see a need at all? The Small Business Administration tells us there are 15 million individuals who are self-employed. They are of all races, gender, education, and work experience. What makes them innovate and take risks while others would never take the first step? If there are characteristics or traits these innovators have in common, our ability to teach the subject of entrepreneurship and instill these traits would be greatly enhanced.

Individual entrepreneurs can be at once inquisitive, persistent, driven, goal-oriented, self-confident, creative, reliable, competitive, willing to assume responsibility, adaptable, self-motivated, focused, and visionary to one degree or another. Each possesses several of these traits, but they are by no means universal. While any given entrepreneur lacks many of these traits, they all seem to have one characteristic in common. It is how they think. Entrepreneurs share a mindset, a belief that they can improve the world and control their destiny. Through the power of awareness and desire for improvement, an entrepreneur sees a vision, formulates a better solution, creates a specific plan, and believes it can be done. This belief is a mindset, a way to think that then attracts an opportunity to be transformed into a new venture.

The wonderful news to educators is this mindset common to entrepreneurs can be taught, and students can learn to see the world differently. By developing

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the ability to observe, listen, and think in a creative way people can be taught an entrepreneurial mindset. Entrepreneurial thinking has been likened to leadership, a process by which individuals influence groups to achieve goals (Northouse, *Leadership Theory and Practice*). Louis Fry says leadership is spiritual in nature because it incorporates vision, hope, and faith. Such tenets are core to any entrepreneurial pursuit as well. Steven Covey discovered principle-centered leaders “unleash creativity, talent, and positive energy.” The line separating entrepreneurs from leaders can be a blurred one.

Dr. Dweck of Stanford University describes two kinds of mindset as fixed and as growth in her book (*Random House, Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*). She says these two kinds of mindset are bridged by what is called adaptability links, which are learning, relationships, other’s experiences, and one’s own experiences. Peter Drucker, one of the leading management thinkers of all time, said, “the entrepreneurial mystique is not magic, not mysterious, and has nothing to do with genes. It’s a discipline, and like any discipline, it can be learned.”

**A POSITIVE ATTITUDE**

What then are the skills of a successful entrepreneur? First and foremost it has to be attitude, a mindset that enables a small group of people to recognize an opportunity and start a business others have not noticed. Such a mindset includes an ability to assess one’s strengths and weaknesses so the entrepreneur can maximize their stronger points and strengthen their weaker ones. A positive attitude brings optimism, constructive ideas, motivation for accomplishment, reluctance to give up, an expectation of success, and builds a self-esteem necessary to seek opportunity and problem solution.

The research of psychologist Martin Seligman of the University of Pennsylvania shows optimistic people are happier, healthier, and more successful. When a person thinks positively about themselves they work harder at what they want to do, give up less easily, build stronger relationships, and make a better impression. The mindset of an entrepreneur not only can be learned, but it can be as simple as a choice of attitude. History shows thoughts have power, and the person who keeps a positive attitude and believes in themselves can attract the skills to realize a vision naturally.

Once students can be taught to focus on the bright side of things, they will find it easier to master the business concepts of management, communication, and organization needed to become a successful entrepreneur. In the final analysis, it is a way a person thinks that defines them as an entrepreneur and different from others. Look at some recent ventures whose origin began in the mind of the entrepreneur. Sara Blakely, who knew nothing about pantyhose, had a gut feeling women’s undergarments needed improvement and started Spanx; Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield saw the need for an ice cream shop in the college town of Burlington, Vermont, took a correspondence course about making ice cream, and then founded Ben & Jerry’s; Larry Page and Sergey Brin had the idea of a faster, easier to use search engine, and developed the page rank algorithm that became Google.

In his book *Who Owns the Ice House*, author Clifton Taulbert talks about the wisdom gained from working for his Uncle Cleve at his ice house in the Mississippi Delta during the days of Jim Crow. The paramount lesson he learned was the power to choose how to respond to circumstances and that choices, rather than circumstances, can shape a person’s destiny. “Entrepreneurs use their imagination and vision to access their greatest power which is the power to choose,” he writes. The Ice House course, sponsored by the Kauffman Foundation, builds on this thinking as a foundation to recognize opportunity, and then turn an idea into action, acquire knowledge, build wealth, create reputation, network a community, and preserve during adversity.

The right mindset builds desire and confidence both of which are the result of a positive attitude. Upbeat and optimistic entrepreneurs have a “can-do” attitude. They reframe problems into opportunities, are passionate about ideas, and inspire others with their enthusiasm. Somehow this positive orientation, a curious nature, and their desire to excel creates an energy that initiates a chain reaction of success. W. Clement Stone said, “all personal achievement starts in the mind of the individual.” Entrepreneurs are the tip of a creative iceberg, and it is their solutions to everyday problems seen first in their mind’s eye that move the world forward.

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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Steven E. Bryant

Residence: Bloomington, Indiana

Organization: Ivy Tech Community College-Bloomington

Occupation: Executive Director, Gayle & Bill Cook Center for Entrepreneurship where I oversee the implementation of the academic, individual and community engagement programs.

First job: Delivering newspapers with my brother, snow shoveling and yard work (essentially, whatever made me enough money to buy candy).

Philosophy: Live, love, laugh

Favorite Music: Rock and Roll

Favorite TV show or movie: Saturday Night Live

Favorite book: Lean Startup by Eric Ries is what I am reading now, and I highly recommend the Bill Cook Story by Bob Hammel, upon which we based our Cook Center for Entrepreneurship.

What got me interested in my work: I have been extremely fortunate to have had many jobs where people sought me out to develop a new program or venture. I enjoy throwing 100 darts at the dartboard and seeing which ones stick when tinkering with new ideas or programs. Getting things done is what I enjoy the most. That’s probably why I am not in politics. The opportunity to build an entrepreneurship center and program from scratch has been a tremendous experience, and I gained a great deal of insight by leaving a successful startup business where you wore many hats and shared in its ups and downs.

Greatest accomplishment: College graduation. A solid Arts and Sciences education at Indiana University enabled me to find my first real job and then be able to quickly move when opportunities presented themselves. I have worked in government, not-for-profits, industry and now education. Go Hoosiers!

Success is...enjoying what I do and making a difference for others.

Pet Peeve: Poor customer service

Favorite Quote: “Do unto others as you would have them do to you”

Current Project: Working to refine our curriculum package, focus our assistance to students and would-be entrepreneurs, engage the community and build a solid foundation for our Cook Center for Entrepreneurship.
Championing tomorrow’s entrepreneurs – today.

Success in business knows no bounds. That’s why we believe that the best way to cultivate future entrepreneurs is to educate them. By supporting organizations such as NACCE, we can equip tomorrow’s entrepreneurs with the tools and competitive edge needed for business leadership and limitless achievement.

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