
SENECA COUNTY OH



21
22 ANNUAL
REPORT



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Midland 
Institute for Entrepreneurship
AN ENTREPRENEURIAL
EDUCATION PARTNER

Dear Investors,

The first year of the Seneca County CEO Program has come to an end, and with that, we mark a milestone of entrepreneurial growth for the six students who were accepted into the program. Throughout this inaugural year, Aaron Gerlach, Class Facilitator, led the program through unknown territory and provided these student entrepreneurs with rewarding experiences that will propel them into the future.



The CEO Program allows participants to connect with the community and members through mentorship, business visits, and guest lecturers. I am proud to have witnessed these young entrepreneurs develop a richer skill set that includes communication, decision making, networking, and leadership. As you know, these skills cannot be refined in the classroom. Our program has shown them how to connect classwork to real-life applications - all through the eyes of our community leaders. It has challenged them to step out of their comfort zone to promote progress and development toward their dreams.

As investors in the Seneca County CEO Program, thank you for opening doors for each of these students. You are why we could provide them with this great opportunity, and I look forward to the program's continued success as we welcome our first group of Alumni and move into year two.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Suzie Reineke'.

Suzie Reineke
Seneca County CEO Chair

Dear CEO Investors,

I am deeply grateful for your commitment to entrepreneur education in Seneca County. It has been a source of pride for the 2022 class to know they are the first CEO students not only in Seneca County, but also in the state of Ohio. I am especially excited to tell you that we have at least two continuing businesses out of our first year. The first is the marketing and consulting firm started by Ashton Hemminger (ashtonjomarketing.com). The second beef business started by Shayden Heiser (heisercattleco.com) that sells direct to consumer.

What makes this program unique (and your investment invaluable) is that it immerses young adults in the business world. From the first to the last day of CEO, they never spend a day in a classroom. Instead, they visit businesses like yours and meet in your conference rooms. They hear the stories of successful business people in our community like you. They start up two class businesses and one individual business. These are businesses that they find capital to start, write business plans for, and any profit (or loss) is there's to own.

As we begin our second year, I want to let you know that the relationships you make with our students deepens their connection to Seneca County. I look to helping facilitate those relationships between you and the class of 2023.



MISSION

CEO nurtures entrepreneurial thinkers who possess awareness of themselves and their communities.

VISION

**To be learners,
owners, creators
communicators and
connectors**

The CEO class embodies everything that our country was built upon. The core principles of hard work, innovative thinking, and entrepreneurship are values that we experience every day through CEO.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aaron Gerlach+".

Aaron Gerlach
Seneca County CEO Facilitator

Our Program Investors provide support to our community driven program. An annual investment of \$1,000 provides the necessary resources for current-year facilitator salary and operating expenses, and ensures the sustainability of the Seneca County CEO class for future students. Investors also contribute their time to the program by Hosting business visits, provide as guest speakers and serve as mentors. All crucial to the success of Seneca County CEO.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Attica Lumber Company | Mennel Milling Company |
| Ballreichs | National Machinery |
| Bascom Communications | Nicole Miller State Farm Insurance |
| Baumann Auto Group | North Central Electric Cooperative |
| Buckeye IT Services | Palfinger |
| Clouse Construction Corporation | POET Biorefining Fostoria |
| Concordance Healthcare Solutions | PT Services Rehabilitation |
| Crohgan Colonial Bank | Reineke Family Dealerships |
| Cutting Edge Masonry | Republic Lumber/Cole Foundation |
| ECS South | Scherger Farms |
| Financial Design Agency of Ohio | Seneca Regional Chamber of
Commerce & Visitor Services |
| First National Bank of Sycamore | Sons of the American Legion Attica |
| Fostoria Economic Development Corp. | Sunrise Cooperative |
| Grammar-Toledo Mold & Die | Sutton Bank |
| Hempy Water | Sycamore Telephone Co. |
| James Kimmel | Tiell Financial |
| Journey Financial Group | Tony & Robin Gorrell |
| Kalmbach Feeds | Vaughn Industries |
| Kenneth Myers Construction | Webster |
| Laminate Technologies | |

MENTORS



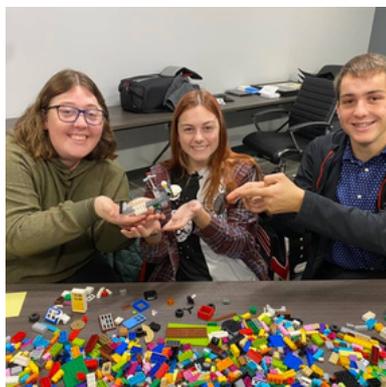
A Mentor is a business owner, entrepreneur, or intraprenuer from the Seneca County CEO business community. A mentor is someone willing to share their time and expertise with a CEO student. The following Mentors contributed their time and resources over this past year and we couldn't be more thankful for their support of our students.

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Andy Stephey | Jeff Knedler |
| Audrey Flood | Kathryn Grasz |
| Bryce Riggs | Lenny Clouse |
| Cjay Kisabeth | Nichole Miller |
| Dave Spridgeon | Scott Saracusa |

Business Visits

An important piece of the CEO experience is visiting local businesses in Seneca CEO. People drive by these locations daily without recognizing their contribution to economic development of the area.

The group walks away with a changed mindset, never viewing the business the same way again.



Speakers

CEO participants have a unique experience with guest speakers serving as instructors for the program. Community Leaders present their life stories, entrepreneurial journeys and share lessons on a Speakers variety of business topics.

Adam Gilmor, TSEP

Amy Reinhart, TSEP

Andy Stephy, UIS

Bill Fuller, Tiffin University

Bryce Riggs, Chamber of Commerce

Christ Engleston, Midland Institute

Dale Depew, Serial Entrepreneur

Dave Spridgeon, Serial Entrepreneur

Jacob Ward, Ward Law

Kristy Sayers, Midland Institute

Larry Schmidbauer, Professional

Hearing Care

Mike Pinkston

Nicole Miller, State Farm Insurance

Suzie Reineke, Reineke Ford

Zak Fowler, Supance & Howard

Fearless Founder Guest Speakers

Fearless Founders podcast is an audio adaptation of a live experience hosted for CEO (Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities) Participants across the nation each year.

Brandon Wynn, Decorated American Gymnast & Entrepreneur

Rory Vaden, New York Bestselling Author & Co-Founder of Brand Builders Group

Sarah Petty, Author, Photography & Owner of The Joy of Marketing

Cathryn Lavery, CEO and Founder of BestSelf Co.

Student Interviews

Around the Block, Bascom

Communications

FNBS Farmer Appreciation Breakfast

Mix 96.7 Classic Hits Radio

Nicole Walby, Advertiser-Tribune

CEO Sips

As a group, we did not fully understand what we were getting into. We simply started by using small sticky notes full of business ideas, then we led to the idea of a food truck serving specialty hot chocolates. With the generous help of Dave Spridgeon, we were able to use the Pink Lady food truck, however, we still had to figure it all out ourselves.

Once it came to our days we went out, we'd get there early, heat the milk, make the decorations, and get the truck all set up. Once we opened, we had to keep thinking ahead before more people came to the window. We had to keep everything clean, organized, and prepare the sandwiches beforehand. Little did we know, people would only come in waves. It was either busy all at once or nobody was coming. Once the shift was completed, we had to put all of our supplies away and clean the truck. Our light opening was not as challenging as our other days because we had Dave in the truck helping us. The second time was all on us to keep the truck operating and the food coming. Shayden actually drove the food truck back and that was nerve wracking. We had to find where all the ingredients went. Despite small difficulties, it went fairly well. Other than Shayden getting locked in the walk-in, running out of chips and not knowing where the other box was, the sign falling underneath the truck multiple times, and not being able to figure out the square app right away.



During Jams Market, we did not succeed the way we thought we were going to. Most of us have never heard of Jams. We had no clue what we were getting into. This time we were super prepared. We made changes to the menu, and added more of Dave's original menu. We thought it was going to be a breeze. It was not. The first day we got no business. One of us went into Jams, offered free samples, and gave around some menus. The rest of the days were wet and cold. No one wanted to stand and wait in the cold. To fix that conflict, we asked people to go into Jams and we would find them. Business improved after doing this. For the drinks, we ordered a drink heater and this worked out great the first day, but it broke the very next day! To overcome this we put the liquid in a pot and heated it on the stove. Overall, it wasn't what we expected, but that didn't make us any less successful.

Our Student Entrepreneurs had the opportunity to spend several months visiting and learning from local organizations and community and business leaders. The visits and guest speakers engaged students in business concepts such as marketing, budgeting, and networking, as well as leadership and design concepts and soft skill development.

As winter shifted into spring, these six students gathered the seeds of discovery collected over the first half of their CEO class and began planting them into what grew into an individual business. Their unique business were scrutinized by financial experts during "Banker Day". The scrutiny continued as these student entrepreneurs pitched their concepts to a panel of judges during a local pitch competition. From there each student showcased their business in a local trade show that acted as the culminating event to a year of experiential learning.



Madison Beard | Seneca East High School

BIO Hello everyone! My name is Madison Beard. I am a senior at Seneca East High School where I am proud to participate in our National Honors Society, SADD, marching band, and many other student organizations. I joined Seneca County CEO in hopes to engage myself in the business community and indulge in what might come of my future after the program. I am absolutely thrilled to work with my peers to make the first CEO Program in Ohio thrive like nothing you've seen before!

Class Business | Bars by Mads - Chocolate Bar Sales

Madison participated in the National Pitch Competition, out of over 250 participants, she finished in the Top 18.



Shayden Heiser | Seneca East High School

BIO Hello! My name is Shayden Heiser. I am a senior at Seneca East where I am involved in cross country, the National Honor Society, the FFA, along with serving as the student body president. My passions include farming and raising cattle. I intend to grow my cattle herd and business. Above all, my intentions are to pursue a passion that I love and focus on that all the way through.

Class Business | Heiser Cattle Company - Sale of Beef

Shayden recently participated in the local Farmers Market with great success.



Ashton Hemminger | Calvert High School

BIO I am a senior at Calvert High School. At Calvert, I am the Student Body President, National Honor Society President, Yearbook Editor, and Marketing Intern. In my past time at Calvert, I participate in volleyball, basketball, and tennis. CEO gives me the opportunity to express who I am and where I am going. I wish to obtain stronger entrepreneurship skills in this journey.

Class Business | AJ & Co. - Marketing Consultant

Ashton celebrated the Grand Opening of AJ & Co. on June 15, 2022.



Natalie Johnson | Mohawk High School

BIO Hello! I'm Natalie Johnson. I am a senior at Mohawk High School. I am the president of student council, a member of the marching band and I participate in the school musical. I'm so honored to be a part of the first CEO program in Ohio State. I joined this program because I have always wanted to be a part of the business world and I'm excited to learn a lot.

Class Business | All Shapes 'N Sizes - Women's Clothing Sales



Kaidan Mathias | Mohawk High School

BIO My name is Kaidan Mathias. I am 17 years old. I am a senior at mohawk high school. I spend my extra time golfing, working 2 jobs, and keeping up with my college classes. When I first introduced to this program, I knew it would be a great opportunity for my future. I cannot wait to make connections and learn as much as I can.

Class Business | Buddy Systems - Mental Health Non-Profit



Lauren Moyer | Mohawk High School

BIO My name is Lauren Moyer and I am a senior at Mohawk High School. At Mohawk, I am a varsity cheerleader for both football and basketball, the catcher for our softball team, and a part of the yearbook. When I'm not in school or participating in a sport, I am either working or traveling. Travel has been a huge part of my life since I could remember, learning about different cultures and religions is so interesting to me. I plan to build on the skills I learn in the program and develop a clear picture of where I see myself professionally over several years working with our community.

Class Business | Leashes by Lauren - Dog Walking

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

banker day

Our young entrepreneurs business plan had to pass the scrutiny of a financial expert, which for CEO students is known as "Banker Day."



pitch competition

Students presented their individual business concepts to a panel of local experts which acted as a sort of pressure test for the students' elevator pitch.



trade show

Students showcased their products and services setting up booths and hosting community members.





Nate Brickner

Bascom
Communications



Tony Gorrel

Sutton Bank



Kathy Gras

North Central Electric
Cooperative



Laura Kagy

Seneca East Schools



Suzie Reineke

Reineke Family
Dealerships



Ann Sergent

Terra State
Community College



Michelle Snay

Mohawk Local Schools



Sarah Stephens-Krupp

Fostoria Area
Chamber of
Commerce



Ted Willman

Terra State
Community College

SENECA COUNTY OH 



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"CEO has allowed me to become more organized and professional. A great experience to understand what you really want to pursue in life."

Shayden Heiser

"CEO has changed my life forever. Without the opportunities and new faces CEO has given me, I would not be operating my own business at the age of 18. I am grateful, to say the least, that I took this opportunity my senior year of high school."

Ashton Hemminger