

# WC-CEO

Annual Report  
Inaugural Year  
2020-2021



L to R: Back row: Dustin Gary, Brogan Harguth, Michael Gunnink, Matthew Kallstrom, Tyler Froland, Jacob Gareis. Middle Row: Leylia Moua, Emmy Arndt, Gracie Mecker, Hallye Foster. Front Row: Adriana Molenaar, Elizabeth Thompson, Elizabeth Koenen.



**West Central MN Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities**

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## 2020-2021 HIGHLIGHTS

- Inaugural Year – 14 Students from KMS (3); MACCRAY (8); and RCW (3)
- Students gained valuable business acumen & innovation skills
- Students completed two large class projects: badge and class businesses, raising nearly \$4,000 to support their individual businesses
- 13 students received startup funds for their businesses and showcased them at the WC-CEO Student Business Expo
- 34 businesses financially invested in these students and their futures
- Over 34 businesses provided business tours and presentations for students
- 13 mentors supported students in their business startup process
- Ten board members guided the inaugural year of the program



## WC-CEO FACILITATORS



**Denise Smith**  
Teacher &  
Community Education Coordinator  
MACCRAY School District



**Cheryl K. Glaeser**  
President/Owner  
Achieve Consulting

WC-CEO provides a unique opportunity for students to learn what it takes to start and run a business through real-world experiences. It can't get much more real-world than starting a new program during a pandemic. In the beginning it seemed that with every plan and decision, the students (and their facilitators) found they needed to adjust their plans due to COVID. The students certainly learned to problem-solve, adapt, and keep pushing forward! We were pleased to serve as co-facilitators to get WC-CEO up and running. We hope that the students have enjoyed learning from us and business leaders in their community. Most of all, we hope their experiences showed them that with hard work and determination, you can reach your goals!

*Denise & Cheryl*



WC-CEO was partially funded by a **Southwest West Central Service Cooperative (SWWC) LYFT Career Pathways** Grant. LYFT is funded through a \$3 million Rural Career and Technical Education Consortium Grant, which was passed by the Minnesota Legislature in 2017. Also special thanks to our fiscal host, **SWWC Foundation for Innovation in Education.**



## WC-CEO INAUGURAL CLASS of 2020-2021



**ADRIANA MOLENAAR**  
RCW - GRADE 11

**Why WC-CEO?** I liked the idea of having a class that was hands on and was interested in marketing and business.

### **ADRI'S EMBROIDERY**

Have you ever wanted a vintage looking shirt but struggled to find one? Do you want something personalized but can't find someone to help you? At Adri's Embroidery, we customize items and offer products you can't find anywhere else.



**BROGAN HARGUTH**  
MACCRAV - GRADE 11

**Why WC-CEO?** I liked the idea of an untraditional classroom setting and learning about businesses in our area.

### **HARGUTH'S GOURMET POPCORN**

Need something to eat while watching your new favorite Netflix show? I have the popcorn for you! As the creator of Harguth's Gourmet Popcorn, I am here to satisfy your cravings!



**DUSTIN GARY**  
KMS - GRADE 12

**Why WC-CEO?** I am interested in learning about entrepreneurial habits of business owners and the fundamental concepts of owning and running a business.

### **D.O.C. DUSTIN'S OIL CHANGES**

Make your oil changes and supporting vehicle services more convenient by letting me come to you. Whether at your home or workplace, D.O.C. can help you service your vehicle.



**ELIZABETH THOMPSON**  
KMS - GRADE 11

**Why WC-CEO?** I like trying new things and putting myself out of my comfort zone.

Elizabeth was unable to finish the program. She tested her business skills by donating her unique handmade wood products to the WC-CEO Auction.



**ELIZABETH (LIZZIE) KOENEN**  
MACCRAV - GRADE 11

**Why WC-CEO?** I was interested in spending time out of a normal classroom setting and listening to business owners.

### **LIZZIE'S BABYSITTING SERVICE**

Looking for more than your average babysitter? I use fun activities and games to help kids learn new things. I can even watch your pets, also!



**EMMY ARNDT**  
MACCRAV - GRADE 11

**Why WC-CEO?** We have more freedom to make mistakes and figure the answers out on our own.

### **PET'S FIRST CHOICE**

Are you struggling to find time to care for your pet? At Pet's First Choice we have your solution for pet sitting, walking and grooming. Our time with every pet is personalized, making sure they are happy and loved!



**GRACIE MECKER**  
MACCRAY - GRADE 11

**Why WC-CEO?** I like to get out of my comfort zone and explore new things. I was interested in a business creating unique clothing.

**ECO-FRIENDLY THRIFTS**

Eco-Friendly Thrifts makes up-scale clothes from second-hand fabrics. My pieces are fashionable, trendy and unique. Buy my clothes and protect the environment too!



**HALLIE FOSTER**  
MACCRAY - GRADE 11

**Why WC-CEO?** I was excited to be out of the classroom and visit businesses to learn about them.

**HALLIE'S STARLIGHT CANDLES**

Hallye's Starlight Candles is an eco-friendly candle business using recyclable materials. No harsh chemicals mean less soot and a clean scent. With a variety of scents, you're sure to find your STARLIGHT!



**JACOB GAREIS**  
KMS - Grade 11

**Why WC-CEO?** I was interested in the independent setting where I would gain hands-on experience and build a network of business people.

**GAREIS VENDING**

Gareis Vending can help you with your sweet-tooth fix or keep your children happy while shopping. Put our vending machines at your place of business or enjoy a sweet treat right now at Almich's Market in Clara City.



**LEYLIA MOUA**  
RCW - Grade 11

**Why WC-CEO?** I saw the class as an opportunity to improve myself, get out of my comfort zone, and boost my self-esteem.

**LAM'S JULRY**

Are you getting tired of store jewelry? Want something more unique? I have the solution for you! I craft handmade jewelry, each different in its own way, ranging from simple to fancy! Check out my pieces of set up an order. Let me make you feel special!



**MATTHEW KALLSTROM**  
KMS - Grade 11

**Why WC-CEO?** I was interested in how different it was and getting to start up a business, build new relationships, and explore businesses in our area.

**DEVICE CARE & REPAIR**

Are your electronic devices cracked or malfunctioning? At Device Care & Repair I can fix your broken devices so you can use them more efficiently to play, work, and keep in touch with friends and family!



**MICHAEL GUNNINK**  
MACCRAY - Grade 11

**Why WC-CEO?** I was interested because the class is different and would be a good opportunity to learn how to start and run a business.

**MICHAEL'S TIE DYE**

Michael's Tie Dye offers random gorgeous designs for face masks and shirts in a variety of colors. Each product is unique. My goal is to make each customer truly satisfied with their purchase.



**TAYLOR AMSDEN**  
RCW - Grade 12



**TYLER FROLAND**  
RCW - Grade 11



**Why WC-CEO?** I liked that I would get to actually start a business and make my own money.

**Why WC-CEO?** I was interested in learning more about small businesses from business owners.

**TAYLOR'S GOODS & BERRIES**

Taylor's Goods and Berries makes home-made baked goods and chocolate-covered strawberries. My cookies, cupcakes, breads, and berries are made with love for your special occasions or every day.

**TYLER'S RECYCLING SERVICE**

Don't have access to curbside recycling? Taking the time to bring your recycling into town can be a pain. Let me pick up your recycling and take care of it for you!



## SPECIAL THANKS to BUSINESS INVESTORS

We are very thankful for these businesses who have invested in our WC-CEO students. Without them WC-CEO would not be possible.

Almich's Market ☺	K & M Manufacturing	
Citizens Alliance Bank ★	Kay's Naturals ★	
Clara City EDA	Lakeland Broadcasting ★	★ Provided tour or presentation
Donner's Crossroads Truckstop ☺	Nutrien Ag Solutions	
Donner's Service Inc	Olivia Hospital & Clinics ★	
Don's Building Center ★	Pam Mansfield CPA ☺	
Dooley's Petroleum	Peterson Farms, Inc.	☺ Served as mentor
Dooley's Petroleum & Natural Gas	Renville County HRA/EDA	
Farmward Cooperative	Renville-Sibley Coop Power (Operation Roundup)	
Financial Security Bank ★	Riverview LLP ★	☺ Served as mentor AND offered tour or presentation
Freetly Electric	Schwitters Brothers Partnership	
Glacial Plains Coop	Southern MN Beet Sugar Cooperative ★	
Goeman Agency LLC	Southside Lumber	
Heritage Bank	Southwest Initiative Foundation	
Hultgren Farms ★	Swift County RDA	
Hanson Communications ★	West Central Sanitation	
Harvey Anderson Funeral Homes		
Haug Implement		

## MENTORS 2020-2021

Each WC-CEO student is matched with a mentor from the business community to support them in starting their individual businesses. **THANK YOU to this year's mentors:**

MENTOR	BUSINESS	MENTEE
Brett Almich	Almich's Market	Brogan Harguth
Bri Morales	212 Hub Nutrition	Taylor Amsden
Carly Wrede & Becky Haas	Jo-Lynn Creations	Adriana Molenaar
Cody Nelson	Iverson Tree Farm	Jacob Gareis
Damon & Margaret DiSanto	DiSanto Cleaning	Hallye Foster
Jasmine Goblish	IG Design Group	Gracie Mecker
Lindsey and Jay Donner	Donner's Crossroads	Emmy Arndt
Mariah Rudningen	Windy's Wellness	Elizabeth Koenen
Pam Mansfield	Pam Mansfield, CPA	Matthew Kallstrom
Peter Bonnema	Jeff Johnson Excavating	Dustin Gary
Rachel Aeikens	December Day Creative	Tyler Froland
Samantha Nelson	Samanta Designs	Leylia Moua
Steve Agre	Agre Insurance	Michael Gunnink

## BUSINESS EXPERTS 2020-2021

Businesses who offer the opportunity for students to tour their businesses and/or share their expertise with students through virtual or in-person presentations, also play a critical role.

**Thank you to these businesses!**

Thank you to the **MANY**  
businesses who donated  
money/items  
for the **WC-CEO Online**  
Auction as well!

212 Hub Nutrition  
Achieve Consulting  
Almich's Market  
Citizens Alliance Bank  
Community Electric  
Conway, Deuth & Schmiesing,  
Custom Interiors  
December Day Creative  
Donners Crossroads  
Don's Building Center  
Financial Security Bank  
Fitzer Real Estate  
Hanson Communications  
Hawk Creek Country Club  
Hultgren Farms  
Jeff Johnson Excavating  
Kay's Naturals  
Kerkhoven Banner  
Kim Miller Photography  
Kluver Law Firm

L & E Greenhouse  
Lakeland Radio  
Lamecker's General Store  
Linder Radio Network/KWLM &  
Mid-Minnesota Development  
MN DEED  
Olivia Hospital and Clinic  
Pam Mansfield Accounting  
Pioneer Heritage Insurance  
Prairie Woods ELC  
Probst Jewelry  
Rambow, Inc.  
Raymond Lions  
Renville County EDA  
Riverview LLP/Louriston Dairy  
Samanta Designs  
Sherrie's Cafe  
Southern MN Sugar Beet  
Tensen Marine

## WC-CEO BOARD

Co-Chairs: **Tom Walsh**, Riverview Dairy, LLP. and **Liza Fagen**, Southern MN Beet Sugar Cooperative

Treasurer: **Janelle Hansen**, Financial Security Bank

Board Members: **Ann Jones Kazemzadeh**, Kay's Naturals; **Ben Peterson**, Citizen's Alliance Bank; **Beth Elliott**, Financial Security Bank; **Gina Hagen**, RCW Principal; **Melissa Sparks**, MACCRAY Principal; **Nate Hultgren**, Hultgren Farms; **Ted Brown**, KMS Principal.

### Co-Chairs: First Year Reflections

The journey to the inaugural WC-CEO class began in the fall of 2019 when KMS, MACCRAY, and RCW School Districts pitched a new opportunity for area students – a class that is based in real world experiences to develop responsible, enterprising individuals who become entrepreneurs with the entrepreneurial spirit needed in our communities. In 2020, the three school districts were awarded a Launch Your Future Today (LYFT) Career Pathways grant through the Southwest West Central Service Cooperative in effort to jump start WC-CEO. In the spring/summer of 2020, two facilitators were hired, fourteen students were accepted into the program, dollars were raised, and the Steering Committee transitioned into an 11-person Board of Directors - all during a pandemic!

On behalf of the Board members, our facilitators, and our students, thank you for your support of the first ever WC-CEO class. Thank you for your partnership by hosting a class, being a guest speaker, mentoring a student, and financially supporting the class. We appreciate the exemplary leadership you provided to the students highlighting the necessity to adapt to the ever-changing world. We look forward to partnership with you in year two. Please consider hosting a class or tour, serving as a mentor, becoming an Investor, or serve on the Board of Directors or a sub-committee. The seed you will help plant in these young adults will greatly impact their future.

*Tom & Liza*

# GET INVOLVED!

## INVEST IN AREA STUDENTS

Investors make the program happen through annual contributions to fund the cost of operating the WC-CEO program which includes facilitator salary and miscellaneous expenses. We encourage investors to make a 3-year commitment of \$1,000 each year. We also accept contributions in any amount on an annual basis. All contributions are tax-deductible through our fiscal host, SWWC Foundation for Innovation in Education. Interested in contributing? Contact: Janelle Hansen, [jhansen@financialsecuritybank.com](mailto:jhansen@financialsecuritybank.com).



## MENTOR A STUDENT

CEO mentors help students immerse themselves in real life learning experiences with the opportunity to take risks, manage the results, and learn from the outcomes. If you have a passion for sharing your knowledge with students, this opportunity is for you!



## OFFER A CLASS TOUR/PRESENTATION

The class meets in local businesses and hosts more than 20 guest speakers from over 30 businesses each year. This helps the students from multiple school districts gain appreciation for area businesses/careers and build a common identity as WC-CEO students.

## RECRUIT STUDENTS

If you know of a local 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade student from **KMS, MACCRAY, or RCW** who would be a great fit for the WC-CEO program, encourage them to apply. Contact us for more information or have the student talk to their High School Counselor or Principal.

## CONTACT WC-CEO

Learn more about your opportunities to be involved! Contact us at [wccceo20@gmail.com](mailto:wccceo20@gmail.com)