
WEST CENTRAL MN



21
22 **ANNUAL**
REPORT

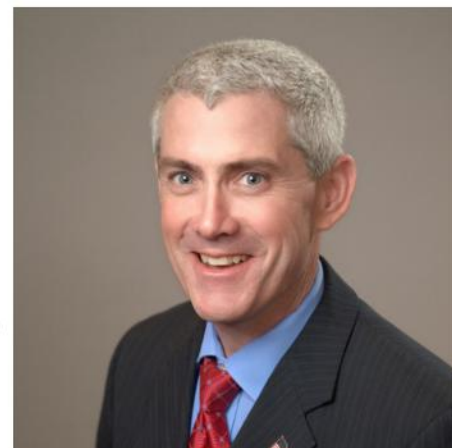
CEO 

WWW.WESTCENTRALMNCEO.COM

Midland 
Institute for Entrepreneurship
AN ENTREPRENEURIAL
EDUCATION PARTNER

Board Chair Letter

TOM WALSH



Year two is complete of West Central Minnesota Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (West Central MN CEO). While our inaugural year is complete, year two has brought about enough new opportunities to feel like another inaugural year. To bring established knowledge, structure and maintenance of the West Central MN CEO program, the Board of Directors sought partnership with the Midland Institute for Entrepreneurship. The Midland Institute for Entrepreneurship is a not-for-profit organization focused on promoting entrepreneurship among high school students throughout the nation, using high quality education programs, fostering local community engagement, and partnering with local chapters. Their mission is in alignment with the goals of our program. In August 2021, West Central Minnesota CEO Program became a chapter of Midland Institute. We are grateful for the additional Launch Your Future Today (LYFT) Career Pathways grant through the Southwest West Central Service Cooperative (SWWC) and the Foundation for Innovation in Education grant through Southwest Initiative Foundation to use towards our Midland Institute chapter fee.

In June 2021 West Central MN CEO welcomed a new facilitator - Ryan Luft from the KMS School District. And in late June, our CEO program had the opportunity to add another school district into our collaboration. Central Minnesota Christian School (CMCS) joined Renville County West (RCW), Maynard-Clara City-Raymond (MACCRAY), and Kerkhoven-Murdock-Sunburg (KMS) in its ability to offer this unique class to its students. Both Ryan and CMCS jumped right in to recruiting students for the 2021-2022 school year.

At the beginning of the school year, nine students from three of the four school districts, began their journey as members of the CEO class. Unfortunately, the school year is ending with only three CEO students. We extend our congratulations to these students for staying dedicated to overcoming the fear, adversity, and struggles of creating a business through the opportunity of the CEO class. The individual growth of each student will serve them well in the future.

The CEO class is one of the best investments we can make to offer area students an exceptional opportunity to practice and implement 21st-century learning skills and create their own personal business, before they graduate from high school! 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.

Thank you for your investment in our young people.



Facilitator Letter

RYAN LUFT

Wow, what a year! It was an outstanding second year of the West Central Minnesota CEO program. I would like to take this time to personally thank the students of the Class of 2022 for taking a chance on this new adventure with me. With every new program, there were its growing pains as a new facilitator, but with the support of our local communities and the West Central MN CEO board members, the future looks bright.

I am so incredibly proud of the CEO class of 2022. They worked hard, adapted to the situations at hand, and have grown so much as future entrepreneurs. Many times throughout our business year, we heard from the business owners and entrepreneurs that they wish they would have had this opportunity as a high school student. Many new partnerships were formed this year. We were able to team up with our colleagues of the Southwest Minnesota CEO program and Southwest Minnesota State University and the Center of Innovation and Entrepreneurship to offer a collaborative space for us to work together.

Thank you again for your continued support. I hope you enjoy the program.



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.

CEO PROGRAM

For Fiscal Year Ended: July 31, 2022

As of May 1, 2022

Class of 2022

08/01/21 - 07/31/22

INCOME

Investor Income	\$ 45,300.00
Grants	\$ 25,000.00

Total Income	\$70,300.00
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EXPENSES

Program

Midland Institute Chapter Fee	\$ 35,000.00
Fiscal Host	\$ 250.00
D & O Insurance & General Liability	\$ 450.00
Mentor Background Checks	\$ 120.00
Mentor Appreciation	\$60.00
Advertising Student Recruitment	\$ 307.86

Facilitator

Payroll/Contracted	\$ 25,000.00
Midland Institute Training	\$1,096.61
Travel	\$ 2,406.75

Student

Travel	\$458.68
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Class Expenses

Food/Facilities	\$ 10.47
Supplies/Materials	\$ 0.00

Annual Report	\$495.00
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Trade Show	\$100.00
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Total Expense	\$65,755.37
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Fund Balance	\$4,544.63
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INVESTORS



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 West Central MN CEO class for future students. Investors also contribute their time to the program - hosting business visits, provide guest speakers, and serving as mentors. All crucial to the success of West Central MN CEO.

Agre Insurance, Sacred Heart
Almich's Market, Clara City
Bonnema Excavating, Raymond
Bremer Bank/Insurance, Willmar
Citizens Alliance Bank, Clara City
Clara City EDA, Clara City
Dahmes Stainless, Inc., New London
Duinick Concrete, Willmar
Duinick, Inc., Prinsburg
Farmers Co-op Oil Co., Clara City
Farmward Cooperative, Morgan
Financial Security Bank, Kerkhoven
Glacial Plains Cooperative, Murdock
Hanson Communication, Willmar
Harvey Anderson Funeral Homes, Willmar
Heritage Bank, Willmar
Hultgren Farms, Raymond
Johnson Seed Farm, Sacred Heart
K & M Manufacturing, Renville
Kay's Naturals, Clara City
Kensington Bank, Willmar
Lakeland Broadcasting, Willmar
Nutrien Ag Solutions, Kerkhoven
Olivia Hospitals & Clinics, Olivia

Petersen Farms, Inc., Murdock
Power System Engineering, Prinsburg
PrinsBank, Prinsburg
Prinsburg-Raymond-Clara City Farmers Elevator
Renville County HRA/EDA, Olivia
Southern Minnesota Beet Sugar Cooperative, Renville
Southside Lumber, Clara City
Southwest Initiative Foundation
Swift County RDA, Benson
Taatges Financial Advisors, Willmar
West Central Initiative/Riverview LLP, Morris
West Central Sanitation, Willmar
West Central Steel, Inc., Willmar

Whether you're going into business for yourself or working with a growing company, your ability to be an entrepreneur and grow your position over time will be the lead indicator for success. West Central Minnesota CEO facilitates discovery of your entrepreneurial spirit and fosters your first step toward discovering whether you have what it takes to start your own business or help a local entrepreneur grow their business.

- Nate Hultgren, CEO of Hultgren Farms

FRIENDS OF CEO



The Friends of CEO supply much-needed space, contributions in-kind, or financial donations that are not at the investor level but also play an important part in the life of the program. After learning about the program and seeing the impact it has on high school students in our business communities, it is our hope that these contributions are the West Central MN CEO investors of tomorrow.

AgCountry Farm Credit Services, Willmar
Don's Building Center, Kerkhoven
Dooley's Natural Gas/Dooley's Petroleum, Clara City
Citizens Alliance Agency, Clara City
Community Electric, Renville
Conway, Deuth & Schmiesing, PLLP, Willmar

Freetly Electric, Kerkhoven
Hawk Creek Country Club, Raymond
Pam Mansfield, CPA, Kerkhoven
Renville Sibley Co-op - Round Up Program, Danube
Schwitters Brothers Partnership, Raymond

A Mentor is a business owner, entrepreneur, or intraprenuer from the West Central MN CEO business community. A mentor is someone willing to share their time and expertise with a CEO student.



Mentors

Jessica Carlson

Agriculture Loan Officer
Kensington Bank

Jessica Carlson grew up in Arlington, Minnesota on a crop and livestock farm. She attended South Dakota State University and graduated with an Animal Science Business Production degree. After college, she worked for Purina Animal Nutrition for five years before moving to the Benson area. Jessica is now at Kensington Bank and loving working for a community bank. She thoroughly enjoys working with our area farmers and helping them with their financial needs so they can thrive and meet their goals.

Jessica and her husband Tyler Carlson have one daughter and are expecting their second child in March.

Mentees

Ivan Barrera



Chad Groen

Regional Claims Manager
Farmers Mutual Hail Insurance Company of Iowa

Chad Groen has been at Farmers Mutual Hail Insurance Company of Iowa (FMH) since 2003 and served in multiple roles from sales to claims throughout Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. He is currently the Regional Claims Manager overseeing the crop insurance claims in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. FMH is based out of West Des Moines, Iowa, but Chad works from his home office.

Chad grew up in the Prinsburg/Renville area and graduated from CMCS. He earned a bachelor's degree in Plant Science from Dordt University in Sioux Center, Iowa. Chad and his wife Heather reside in Prinsburg with their three sons.

Zeke Burt



Lisa Herges

County Administrator
Renville County

Lisa Herges was born and raised in greater Minnesota. She acquired her Bachelor's Degree in Business Management and a Master's Degree in Public Administration. She is passionate about serving residents of rural counties, which she can achieve by working at the Renville County Administrator.

Lisa's family consists of three adult sons, their significant others, and three grandpups.

Ariana Greydanus



Ivan Barrera

Ivan Eduardo Barrera Ramirez is a junior at MACCRAY High School. He is involved in football, basketball, and track and field. He is currently trying to be involved in more activities, like BPA. During the weekends he is employed at the Louriston Dairy, Riverview. Ivan enjoys doing productive things that help his knowledge and physical state. He likes to think out of the box, and will quickly find a solution to a problem without complaining.

Ivan joined West Central MN CEO class because he really wanted to know life skills and witness how successful people think and view the world.

Ivan Barrera is the founder of **Barrera Leathers**. Barrera Leathers produces small, high-quality leather products, such as wallets, with options of personalization. All wallets are hand made. Customization on small leather products available. Barrera Leathers seeks to make people proud and confident with their rustic, high quality, durable, and customized leather products.

For more information, contact Ivan at ivanebarrera04@gmail.com. Follow Barrera Leathers on Facebook @barrera-leathers and Instagram @barrera_leathers.



Zeke Burt

Zeke Burt is a Junior at MACCRAY High School. He is the youngest of six siblings; with the smallest age gap of 14-years between him and his sister. Zeke works at Donner's Crossroads Truckstop - Holiday Store in Clara City. He is interested in graphic design, welding, and construction.

Zeke applied for the CEO program to learn the in's and out's of business and meet successful entrepreneurs around the area.

Zeke Burt is the founder of **Saibutreal**. Saibutreal offers custom-designed clothing. Watch for one-time clothing collections.

For more information, contact Zeke at saibutreal@gmail.com. Follow Saibutreal on Facebook @saibutreal and Instagram @saibutreal.



Ariana Greydanus

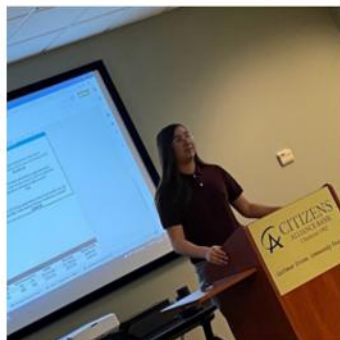
Ariana Greydanus is a junior at Central Minnesota Christian School. She is involved in various church events, volleyball, and track and field. Outside of school, she babysits for various families in her community. Ariana enjoys baking, reading, trips to the lake, and spending quality time with friends and family.

Ariana sought out the West Central Minnesota CEO program for the hands-on learning and business experiences to prepare her for the future.

Most of us don't enjoy cleaning up the house, so why not make it easier and faster? GG's Dishcloths provides handmade 100% cotton and special scrubby dishcloths. Available in an array of colors. Sold as a bundle of three or individually.

Ariana Greydanus is the founder of **GG's Dishcloths**. Check them out on Facebook @ggdishcloth and Instagram @gg_dishcloth.

For more information, contact Ariana at ggdishcloth@gmail.com.



Business Visits

An important piece of the CEO experience is visiting local businesses in West Central Minnesota. 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.

212 Hub Nutrition, Renville
Almich's Market, Clara City
Apol's Harley Davidson, Raymond
Citizens Alliance Agency, Clara City
Citizens Alliance Bank, Clara City
Clara City EDA, Clara City
Conway, Deuth & Schmiesing, PLLP
The Country Stop Inc., Spicer
Dahmes Stainless, Inc., New London
Don's Building Center, Kerkhoven
Dooley's Petroleum, Willmar
Duininck, Inc., Prinsburg
Farmers Co-op Oil Co., Clara City
Financial Security Bank, Kerkhoven
Glacial Plains Cooperative, Murdock
Hanson Communications, Willmar
Harvey Anderson Funeral Homes, Willmar
Hultgren Farms, Raymond
JT Controls Inc., Renville
Kensington Bank, Willmar
Kerkhoven Banner, Kerkhoven
Lakeland Broadcasting, Willmar
Olivia Hospital & Clinics, Olivia
Power System Engineering, Prinsburg
Rambow, Inc., New London
Southern MN Beet Sugar Cooperative, Renville
Riverview LLP, Murdock



Keynote Speaker

Midland Institute for Entrepreneurship (MIE) kicked off the 2021-2022 school year with a bang for the nationwide CEO programs.

Peter Taunton was the first guest speaker of the year. Peter grew up from humble beginnings in Willmar. In 1985 Peter bootstrapped his fitness career by turning around a failing health club on a \$16,000/year salary. He is the visionary and founder of Snap Fitness & Lift Brands which today has over 6,000 locations or licenses in 28 countries.

Taunton's business accomplishments have been well-recognized by the business community. In 2010, he was named Ernst and Young "Entrepreneur of the Year." His companies have been featured in many business and industry publications such as Forbes, Entrepreneur 500, Inc. 5000, Top Global and Franchise 500.

Most recently Peter was recruited by Forbes Knowledge Innovation Center to be one of their online instructors.

Peter wrote a #1 best selling book sold on Amazon called "Impossible Hill," which shares 30 years of real life stories laying out the mindset that helped Peter build his business empire.

This is the same mindset he uses today, which enables him to continue to build and expand his multi-million dollar portfolio of businesses and brands.

Peter is ever-committed to coaching and inspiring people in both their business and personal lives as they navigate through life striving to light the fire with-in and make their impossible dreams....possible!



Class 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 variety of business topics.

Achieve Consulting, Hutchinson
Agre Insurance, Sacred Heart
Fitzner Real Estate, Renville
Hawk Creek Country Club, Raymond
MN Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)
Rambow, Inc., New London
Renville County EDA, Olivia



SMSU Center for Innovation and Entrepreneur Student Entrepreneurship Field Day

Southwest Minnesota State University's Center for Innovation and Entrepreneur sponsored its first ever Student Entrepreneurship Field Day bringing together west-central Minnesota's Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) program. All around the university's conference center, dozens of students were taking turns pitching their own entrepreneurial projects, and answering questions from business mentors and other students.

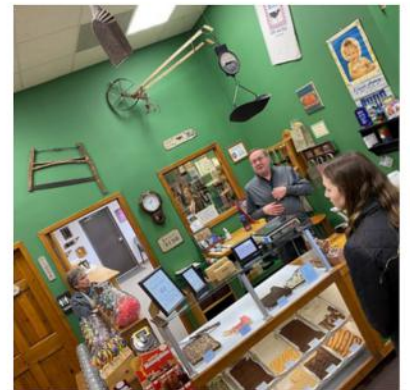
"We wanted to show the high school students a pathway from high school to a four-year university," when they study entrepreneurship," said Dr. George Taylor, director of the Center of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at SMSU."

- Marshall Independent



West Central Minnesota CEO program attended this event alongside our friends from Southwest Minnesota CEO program.

Following the event, both programs were able to visit two Marshall businesses - Action Manufacturing and Walnut Grove Mercantile. These visits were organized and funded by The Southwest West Central Service Cooperative (SWWC).



Southwest Minnesota Small Business Development Center

Southwest Minnesota State University also offered the students an outstanding presentation from Liz Struve, Regional Director and Christine Fischer, Associate Director of Southwest Minnesota Small Business Development Center (SBDC). The information shared was valuable to our young entrepreneurs as they were preparing for the May Trade Show.

SBDC is committed to the creation, growth and success of small businesses in southwest Minnesota. They provide expertise and guidance to new and existing businesses offering a range of business development services and resources.



Mid-Winter Madness

On Saturday, January 30, the West Central MN CEO students hosted Mid-Winter Madness, which was a 3 on 3 basketball tournament aimed at boys and girls in grades 3-8.

Twenty (20) teams and their fans headed to the RCW High School to enjoy an afternoon of basketball and fellowship. The CEO students facilitated the entire tournament - bracket management and provided concessions for over 300 attendees.

To help offset the cost of hosting the tournament, sponsors were solicited. The students successfully gained commitment from ten sponsors with donations of \$100 each.

Thank you to the following sponsors!

Rick Broderius Family
Jason Duininck Family
Tom Walsh Family



BOARD MEMBERS



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CEO Chairman

President,
Riverview LLP



Nate Hultgren,
CEO Vice Chairman

CEO, Hultgren Farms



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Beth Elliott
Vice President,
Financial Security Bank



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Renville Co. Economic
Development



Sherri Broderius
Superintendent,
MACCRAY Public
Schools



Ted Brown
Jr./Sr. High School
Principal, KMS Public
Schools



Jon De Groot
Superintendent,
Central Minnesota
Christian School



Gina Hagen
K-12 Principal,
RCW Public Schools

This program gives students the opportunity to connect with professional adults across a variety of working disciplines. They will learn lifelong skills about how teams work (or don't) and discover surprising things about themselves and face real challenges as they prepare for the future. The program is hard and requires a gritty commitment. I believe that seeing it through will produce sound character and marketable business qualities.

- Jon De Groot, Superintendent of CMCS

WEST CENTRAL MN



www.westcentralmnceo.com
Social Media @westcentralmnceo
Email facilitator@westcentralmnceo.com
for more information



Invest in Area Students

Investors make the program happen through annual contributions to fund the cost of operating the West Central MN 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 Jason Duinink.

jasond@duinink.com

Would you like to be a Mentor?

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. Successful mentoring partnerships are advantageous for everyone - the student, the mentor and the CEO program. If you have a passion for sharing your knowledge with students, this opportunity is for you! To learn more, contact Janelle Hansen.

jhansen@financialsecuritybank.com



Offer a Class Tour/Presentation

The class meets in local businesses and hosts more than 20 guests 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 West Central MN CEO students. To discuss the next school year, contact Ryan Luft.

facilitator@westcentralmnceo.com

Recruit Students

If you know of a local 11th and 12th grade student from CMCS, KMS, MACCRAY, or RCW who would be a great fit for the West Central MN CEO program, encourage them to apply. Contact us for more information or have the student talk to their High School Counselor or Principal.

facilitator@westcentralmnceo.com

When I learned that this class takes place anywhere but school and the area businesses are the teachers, I knew I had to be apart of it. This is something I wish were available during my high school years. This program gives students an opportunity to grow not only in confidence but in communicating and entrepreneuralship. My hope is that each student will see the nuts and bolts of area businesses and understand the heart and mind behind the business.

- Beth Elliott, Vice President of Financial Security Bank

Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities is a course designed to utilize partnerships that provide an overview of business development and processes. Our local business community partners with area schools to create project-based experience for providing funding, expertise, meeting space, business tours, and one-on-one mentoring. Business concepts learned through the experiential CEO class are critical; the 21st century skills of problem-solving, teamwork, self-motivation, responsibility, higher-order thinking, communication, and inquiry are at the heart of a student's development throughout the course.

CEO Students will:

- Attend class every day dressed in appropriate professional attire
- Write weekly journals
- Interact each week with local business and community leaders
- Schedule, plan, and work together at various local events
- Communicate and interact with their business mentor
- Formulate, research, write, and present two business plans
- Actively participate in a class business
- Start their own small business and present it to the community at the CEO trade show

2022-2023 Class:

- **When?** Class is Tuesday-Friday
7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.
- **Where?** At host businesses in the school districts of CMCS, KMS, MACCRAY, and RCW.
- **Transportation?** Students are responsible for their own transportation. Designated funds are available for students that need assistance for gas.
- **Virtual class?** At times. However, a program essential is that the CEO students are never in a classroom, but always in one of the different community businesses that are the lifeblood of our communities. This is the experiential, hands-on environment that is foundation to CEO.

At the end of CEO, students are expected to be able to:

- Create and present an effective business plan
- Demonstrate effective communication and collaboration skills
- Demonstrate their understanding of appropriate professional attire
- Compare and contrast a wide variety of businesses
- Interact with business owners, community leaders, and class guests
- Execute the creation of a small business

What makes a CEO student?

Great CEO students are trustworthy, hardworking, and motivated. If students have those characteristics, they have everything necessary to have a successful and transformational experience in CEO. CEO isn't like most school activities. The application process doesn't take into account things like grade point average and extra-curricular activities. The best candidates may include: the student who is very intelligent but is not interested in school, the student that is a bit disruptive because school just isn't their thing, the straight A student who is good at 'school', or the student who is good at learning by doing and appreciates the opportunity to discover, explore, and build.

CEO classes benefit from a wide variety of students. Seeking involvement from people different from oneself is a cornerstone of CEO, and students will quickly appreciate the diversity.



WEST CENTRAL MN 

CREATING ENTREPRENEURIAL
OPPORTUNITIES

WEST CENTRAL MN **CEO** 



www.westcentralmnceo.com
Social Media [@westcentralmnceo](https://www.instagram.com/westcentralmnceo)
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CMCS | KMS | MACCRAY | RCW