

2019-2020 Annual Report



The mission of the CEO Class is to provide a comprehensive educational experience, equipping our students to become enterprising individuals and entrepreneurial thinkers who will contribute to the economic development and sustainability of our community.



Dear friends,

It has truly been an honor to serve as Facilitator of the Central Illinois CEO program in its inaugural year. Our communities, schools and students are so blessed to have this opportunity. This past year I have had the privilege to meet those who served on the strategic planning committee, our investors and work closely with the CICEO Board and I am amazed at their dedication and hard work. Without each and every one of them this program would not exist.

This year I had the joy of working with 10 students, 1 lady and 9 gentlemen. It was an interesting dynamic and I am so proud of how they navigated through this experience as the very first CEO class in their school districts. They gained so many skills throughout the year such as handshaking and introductions, public speaking, dinner etiquette, interview skills, writing a business plan, planning an event, keeping a budget, setting up and executing business meetings, and time management. As a first year program we were faced with many challenges and opportunities. I truly believe the challenges we faced will make each of us stronger and the opportunities the students were given were life changing.

Unfortunately our year did not end as we had hoped or planned due to COVID-19. The students missed out on a few key events such as the Banker Day, Shark Tank and the Trade Show. However, the goals of the CEO program is to teach our students about business and entrepreneurship, expose them to career opportunities in their communities and help them to have more clarity about their gifts, talents and interests. I can say with confidence we succeeded in all of these areas and I cannot wait to see what this amazing group of students do next!



Melanie Brown
Central Illinois CEO Facilitator



Brenden Flannell

Brenden Flannell is a Senior at Blue Ridge High School. He served as CEO Class President for the group business. Brenden has worked various jobs since he was 13 which led him to launch his own lawn care business over a year ago. In addition to his lawn care business, he started "Metal Krafting," in which he melts aluminum cans into jewelry or small trinkets. He plans to sell these items locally and he hopes to create local spirit items for local schools too. Next year Brenden will be playing soccer for Millikin University. He signed up for CEO in hopes of gaining a better understanding on how to operate a business and learn to be a better leader. As the year has come to an end, Brenden stated that he gained confidence in and appreciated the networking opportunities.

Cameron Reynolds

Cameron is a Senior at Maroa-Forsyth High School. He has been a volunteer firefighter for Hickory Point's Fire Department in Forsyth for over a year. He was also part of the golf team at MFHS. His plans after high school are to pursue a degree in business and fire science. Recently he launched a business called Task Geeks, a service offered to people in the Decatur area who need indoor or outdoor tasks done in their home. Cameron joined CEO hoping to network and make some key connections that will help him in his future business endeavors. This past year he enjoyed working with his mentor, Steve Reid of GSI Group and being able to work with other community business owners and leaders on his business design and plan.



Colton Hoback

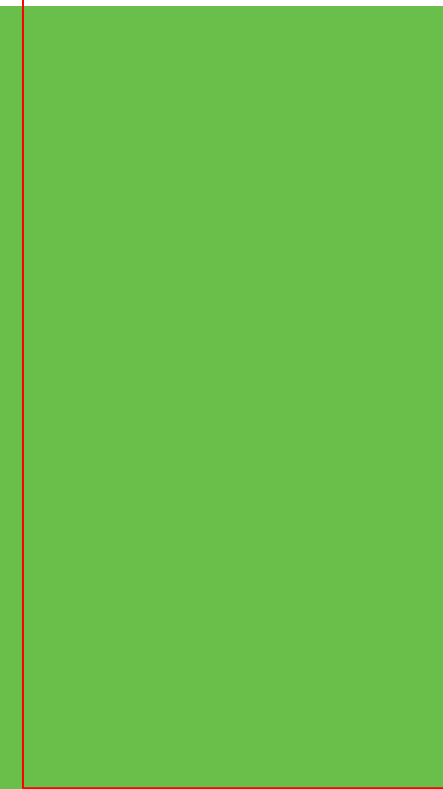
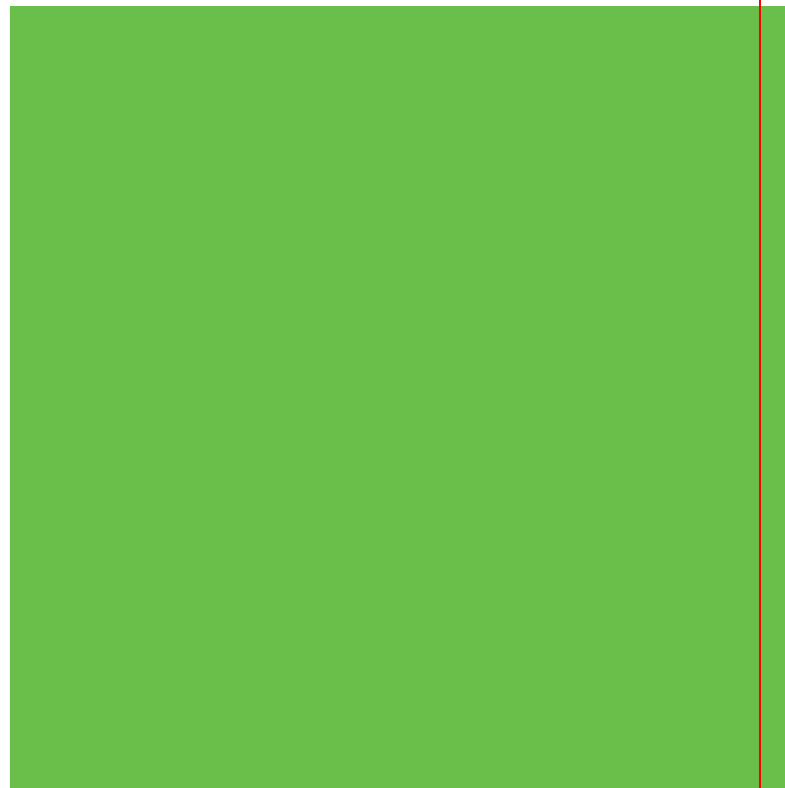
Colton is a Senior at Maroa-Forsyth High School. Throughout his high school career, he was in FFA and volunteered for the Hickory Point Fire Department. Colton has a passion for cars which motivated him to start Carbon Detail, a car detailing business. After high school he plans to work for Liaison Home Automation. Colton enjoyed the opportunity to connect with local business leaders in CEO.



Gabriel Jenkins

Gabriel Jenkins Senior at Blue Ridge High School. Throughout his high school career, he played on the football team and was involved with the schools drama department. After high school he plans to join the armed forces. He joined CEO to help him determine if business is the right career path for him. As he reflected on the past year, Gabe stated that he enjoyed learning many business skills, writing his business plan, and learning how to plan and organize an event. Gabe has taken his passion for theatre and the experience of event planning and created a murder mystery dinner, escape room and haunted house event business called "Jenkins Emporium, of Fantasies and Frights." Stay tuned for his first event, you won't want to miss it!





Madison Miller

Madison is a senior at Warrensburg-Latham High School and is the reigning Miss Illinois American Teen. Throughout high school, Maddie was on the WLHS dance team, competed at Art in Motion Dance Studio of Champaign, and was on student council. Maddie invented Apple Watch Scrunchie Bands, which is called Band It. She makes the watch bands and even has the ability to make custom orders. After high school she will attend the University of Mississippi and will major in radiologic technology and minor in business with hopes to become a radiologist. She joined the CEO program to learn more about businesses in her community as well as learn how to start her own business. Maddie said that CEO taught her to stay motivated no matter what happens and do not give up when it is hard. She also appreciates the networking opportunities CEO presented to her.



Max Stauffer

Max is a Senior at Clinton High school. He is involved with school programs such as cross country, track and is active with the Scouting Program. Max joined CEO to learn more about the world of business. He is the owner of a landscaping business, called L.L.G (Local Lawn Grooming). After High School Max plans to go into the Armed Services.

Ruslan Turner

Ruslan Turner is a Senior at Maroa-Forsyth High-School. He has enjoyed playing baseball and wrestling throughout his high school career, but is most passionate about working out. He works at Crawford's Pizza and Pub in Maroa and his outgoing nature makes him a great employee. After high school Ruslan will be joining the Navy Reserves. His love for wrestling sparked his interest in creating a product that would help wrestlers overcome the obstacle of keeping their shoes tied. Secure Lace was invented and Ruslan hopes to market this product in the future to local wrestling teams. He joined CEO to learn about the world of business and local opportunities. The biggest life lesson Ruslan felt was the most valuable takeaway from his CEO experience was learning that hard work and patience are the key to success.



Vince Baldassari

Vince is a Junior at Clinton High School. Throughout his high school career, he has participated in theater and boys track and field. He has a passion for buying and flipping items, which led to him launching the business Baldassari Luxury Goods. After high school he plans on going to North Central College for International Business and International Marketing management. He aspires to work for an international corporation and eventually run an International Stock Firm. Vince enjoyed the hands on learning experience of CEO. The most valuable takeaway he gained from CEO was the experience in public speaking and public relations.

Trenton Sanders

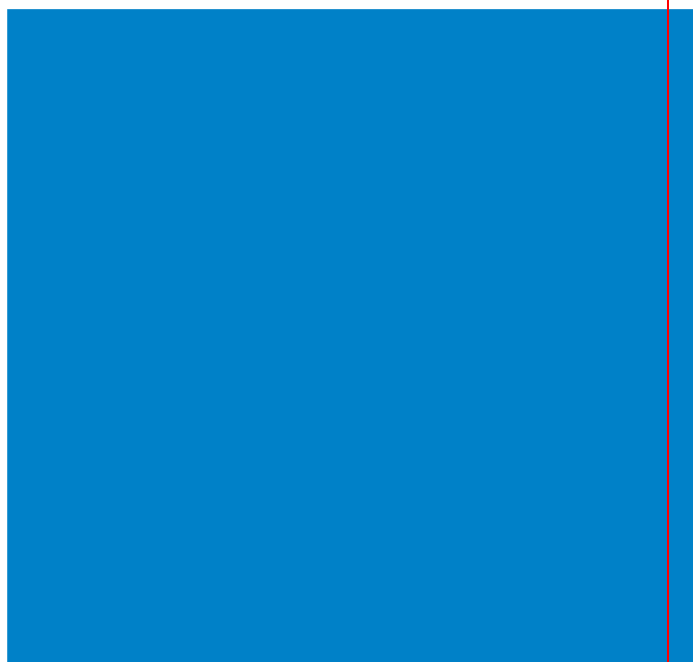
Trenton is a Junior at Clinton High School. He plays on the Clinton baseball team and the golf team. He joined CEO to learn more about marketing and investing. His interest in marketing and awareness of the need and lack of services in his community sparked the idea and prompted him to launch a social media marketing business called Social Shout. Trenton wants to help local business utilize social media to advertise and prompt their businesses. He enjoyed the networking opportunities the CEO presented to him and loved the hands on learning approach. After graduation, Trenton plans to attend a 4-year university for business.







Team Building Activities



Community Service



Class Business



Each year CEO students create a class business before they venture into their own personal businesses for the Trade Show in the spring. The students decided to host a 5K with a "run with your dog" theme. Their goal was to provide the community something to do in the winter months to get people to gather together and be active. They handled every aspect of the 5k from planning to marketing. Over 80 people showed up to race on that cold morning in January and more than 2 dozen dogs joined in on the race too. The students partnered with Second Chance for Pets Adoption Inc to raise awareness of the importance of adopting a pet from a shelter and they gave back a portion of the race profits to this local charity. It was a great event and the participants really enjoyed the event!



Class Business Sponsors

Second Chance for Pets Adoption Inc.
Covenant Animal Clinic
Aric Lee Show
Carpet Weavers
Hickory Point Fire Dept.
Adventure Crew 2142
Star Silkscreen Design



Yearly Overview

Mentor Matching

This year's mentor program included training for mentors and their protégés. The students have had wonderful support and guidance through this mentoring experience. A special thank you to all who participated in the mentoring program.

Business Plans

Over the course of the year, CEO students prepared two to three business plans and presented them to their mentors and investors. The feedback from these experienced professionals helped the students realize the cost of starting a business.

CEO Trade Show

Unfortunately the CEO class of 2019-2020 did not get the opportunity to host a Trade Show due to COVID-19. However, they are invited & encouraged to join in on the 2020-2021 National Trade Show! Stay tuned!

Business Visits & Guest Speakers

CEO students visited more than 50 area businesses, where they toured facilities and interviewed owners, managers, and employees. Business visits are an eye opening experience, as students are able to explore and learn about local companies they have passed by all their lives. Business visits build a deep understanding and strong connection between our present and future business leaders.

The CEO students had the opportunity to hear many community leaders speak on a variety of entrepreneurial and general business topics, including distribution, management strategies, finances, and marketing.



Guest Speakers & Site Visits

- Julie Scheuler Photography
- Economic Development Corp of Decatur-Macon County
- Santos McCleese LLC.
- City of Clinton City
- Little Galilee
- Coffee Corner
- BB Farms
- Regions Bank
- Perfect Pair
- Triple M's (Mariah's Mums)
- The Back Institute
- Connie's Yoga Barn
- BLDD
- Kirby Hospital
- Chastain & Associates LLC
- Lodgic
- TS Institute
- First National Bank of Clinton
- WHOW
- United Prairie
- Farmer City City Hall
- Performance Welding
- Peterson Insurance
- McDonalds
- Edward Jones
- Chick Fil A
- Marco NPK
- Tate & Lyle
- Maxwell Counters
- Carpet Weavers
- Boy Scouts of America
- ADM
- Herff Jones
- Farm Credit
- SolvR Group
- Hickory Point Bank
- Exelon
- Millikin
- Dynagraphics
- BKD
- WildWood Hills Ranch
- Wilson Chrysler of Clinton
- The Crossing HealthCare
- Dunn Company
- CSI Living
- The Vault
- Swigart Photography
- Barclay Library
- Horve Builders
- Just BEE Acai
- Clinton Police Chief



THANK YOU, to our CEO Investors!

- Anderson Ford of Clinton IL
- Baum Chevrolet
- BKD
- Clinton Community Education Foundation
- Clinton Kiwanis Club
- Corn Belt Energy
- Dan Caulkins - Outreach 101
- Dave and Susan Wilson
- Dewitt County Development Council
- Dewitt Savings Bank
- Exelon
- Farm Credit Illinois
- First National Bank of Clinton
- GSI Group, LLC
- Heartland Ag Group, Ltd.
- Hickory Point Bank
- Home Sweet Home Realty
- Horve Construction LLC
- J.L. Hubbard Insurance and Bonds
- Jacksons Supermarket dba Save A Lot
- Macon County Sheriff's Dept
- Marco NPK, Inc.
- Maroa-Forsyth Educational Foundation
- Monsanto
- Moore and Warner
- Northwestern Mutual
- Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.
- Rainstorm Carwash
- Regions Bank
- Risinger Bros. Transfer
- State Farm Philanthropy co Clinton CUSD 15
- Taylor and Lynch
- Van Horn Inc
- Warrensburg-Latham Educational Foundation
- WHOW
- Wilson Chrysler Jeep

CEO Advisory Board



Justin Fentress, Chair
Dewitt Savings Bank



Kraig Ritter, Vice-Chair
BKD



Shelli Billingsley, Secretary
Warrensburg-Latham CUSD #11



David Torbert
Clinton Community YMCA



Ryan Aupperle
Heartland Ag Group Ltd.



Curt Nettles
Clinton Unit School District #15



John Lawrence
Blue Ridge CUSD #18



Bart Rose
Regions Bank



Tim Followell
City of Clinton



Angi Carter
Farm Credit IL



Elizabeth Foulks
DeWitt County Development
Council



Katherine Brodbeck

If you want to be a part of...



A National Movement, there are currently 50+ programs across the United States and this program is still growing.



Prepare the next generation as CEO offers a transformational experience for our students that connects them to a high level of business people in their community.

Then I encourage you to get involved! This program is made possible by the dedication and commitment of local business owners and community leaders like you. There are many ways in which you can get involved. You can serve as a guest speakers, host the class for a for site visit, provide a location for the class to use for one of our “classroom” days, serve as a mentor, a committee members or be an investor. Please contact a board member or our facilitator to see how you can join this movement and help us to prepare the next generation of business leaders in the communities in which we serve.

