



GRANITE CITY

CREATING ENTREPRENEURIAL
OPPORTUNITIES

2020 ANNUAL REPORT





Craig Lindvahl passed on January 2, 2020. Craig will always be remembered as a very special person who was the first facilitator for Effingham County CEO, the architect of CEO and the Executive Director for the Midland Institute for Entrepreneurship. He was at the forefront with our CEO Board with a kick off event in March of 2014. His compelling personality and zest for life was contagious to those around him. His courageous battle with pancreatic cancer made him a pillar of determination. Craig was all about people; motivating and transforming people to the very best they can be. He challenged people to think outside the box and never think twice about their personal comfort zone. Craig "dreamed BIG" every day of his life and made the world a better place. All who knew Craig, are better because of him. Craig was a true inspiration and will be greatly missed. His charismatic spirit will live forever!

Dear Granite City CEO Community,

As our sixth year of Granite City CEO ends, I have been blessed, honored and privileged to have been the Granite City CEO facilitator for this unique and outstanding educational experience for seniors at Granite City High School. Along with my students, we have learned so many life lessons and have studied business expertise from the countless number of business professionals that have opened their doors for CEO or presented in our CEO classrooms. CEO students graduate with real-world business and life experiences and an entrepreneurial mindset different than most high school students.

This year students were constantly being tested from the beginning of the school year to the end. Due to flooding and air quality issues from construction at the high school, the beginning of the school year was delayed by sixteen days and our last day in our typical CEO classroom was March 16, 2020. Students quickly learned how to pivot their learning styles from our typical CEO experience because of the Governor's stay at home orders from our world wide coronavirus pandemic. We were all challenged to communicate and learn in different ways, become more self-motivated and disciplined to continue to be successful.

Despite these challenges, the CEO Class of 2020 raised over \$9,600 from our class business event, A Taste of 62040 plus More. This was the most profit raised in six years with the lowest number of CEO students. This fundraiser provided seed funding for their start up businesses. CEO student Andrea Gibson's profit from her hair scrunchie business, Gibb-ies, was over \$3,000. I am so proud of our young entrepreneurs of the Class of 2020 and can't wait to follow their paths.

I am also excited to assist and watch the transition of Mr. Chris Harrison as the new Granite City CEO facilitator. I wish him the very best and I know he will be connecting with our community and continue this amazing CEO journey with Granite City High School seniors.

It has been my utmost pleasure teaming with my CEO board members, mentors, investors, students, parents and the administration of our Granite City Community Unit School District #9. I have personally grown throughout my CEO experience and have gained a new appreciation and respect for Granite City, my hometown. I will truly miss the day to day CEO experience and all of you.

Thank you for your investment in our future and the young adults of Granite City. Congratulations Granite City CEO Class of 2020!

Forever grateful,
Karen Greenwald
Retired Granite City CEO Facilitator



Our Mission

To provide a comprehensive educational experience for Granite City High School students, equipping them to become enterprising individuals and entrepreneurial thinkers who contribute to the economic development and sustainability of our Granite City community.

Our Vision

CEO graduates demonstrate entrepreneurial thinking and a thirst for life-long learning. They are ready to compete in the global economy and are inspired to contribute to the economic development of our community.

Granite City CEO Class of 2020



Andrea Gibson, Ellie Wiehardt, Kirstyn Martin, Cristian Romero, Michael Stockton, Tyler Strack, Andrew Schmidt, Nathan Merz

Our Program Information

Granite City CEO is a business elective at Granite City High School for seniors and is one of 49 programs in five states. Seniors have the opportunity to earn honors credit. Along with their facilitator, students meet for first and second hours off-campus every day from 8:00 to 9:30 a.m. Students then travel to the high school to attend their 3rd through 7th hour classes. This program allows students to participate in all school activities. Students complete an application for the CEO program at the beginning of the second semester of their junior year. CEO is hosted by a different business every nine weeks and the students meet at the host business when the class is not on a business visit. Students earn 4 hours of college credit through Southwestern Illinois College.

Highlights of the Granite City CEO Program:

- Funded by local business investors
- Open to Granite City High School seniors
- Selects students through an on-line application process
- Meets off-campus for 90 minutes each day
- Provides 2 high school credits for two semesters
- Provides honors credit for secondary honors students
- Provides 4 hours of Southwestern Illinois College Dual Credit
- Utilizes area businesses as classrooms
- Visits 25 - 40 businesses each year
- Hosts 50 - 60 guest speakers each year
- Emphasizes 21st century learning skills
- Provides the opportunity for each student to start their own business
- Provides a mentor from the business community for each CEO student
- Hosts an annual trade show to showcase student businesses



Throughout her four years at Granite City High School, **Andrea Gibson** has been involved in many activities, including playing quads and marching with the Granite City Marching Warriors, and playing percussion in the Granite City Wind Ensemble, Concert Band, and Pep Band. Andrea was the CFO for the CEO class business, A Taste of 62040 Plus More. Outside of school, Andrea is very dedicated to Calvary Life Church. Andrea sings and plays the drum set with the worship team, sings with the youth worship team, and takes a student leader role in her youth group. She also volunteers whenever she can. One of Andrea's hobbies is thrifting, and that gave her the inspiration to start her business **GIBB-IES** in October of 2019. GIBB-IES makes and sells homemade scrunchies out of 100% recycled materials that are donated or bought from a second hand store. Andrea will attend Lee University to pursue her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. She hopes to one day run her own business and pursue her calling as an evangelist.



Kirstyn Martin joined CEO because of the positive things she heard about the program. CEO taught her so much about managing and owning a business. Kirstyn was a member of the Granite City High School Marching Warriors Junior Varsity Band, and was active in helping the Varsity Marching Band with band competitions. She attends Calvary Life Church and is a student leader in the youth group. Kirstyn enjoys spending time with her family and friends. She is so happy to have participated in this amazing program and looks forward to seeing how CEO transforms future students! She plans to pursue her cosmetology license and open her own studio in the future. Inspired by a candle from her grandfather's funeral, Kirstyn created **K's Kandles**, a 100% soy based candle company. Visit K's Kandles on Facebook, and Instagram to purchase her candles.



Nathan Merz played on the golf, baseball, and hockey teams at Granite City High School. He participated in Warrior Flock, Varsity Club, FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes), Band, Hockey Club, Powder Puff, Mr. Warrior, May Carousel Senior Dance, and - his favorite - the CEO Program. During Nathan's senior year, the Granite City Warriors Hockey team won the MVCHA 2A Championship. He also advanced to the IHSA 3A Sectionals in golf. Nathan plans to attend Lewis and Clark Community College to play golf and begin a dual degree in computer science and marketing. He then plans to transfer to Southern Illinois University Edwardsville to finish his degree. Nathan is the proud owner of **Liquid Dips**, which makes custom cups, bottles, shoes, game controllers, phone cases, and more. He raised funds by designing cups and bottles with a special design for his good friend, GCHS senior David Groetcke, who was involved in a serious auto accident. The CEO program taught Nathan more about future success than any other high school class. He met several entrepreneurs who had dreams of success and followed their dreams to wealth. These entrepreneurs taught him many lessons, like never saying "can't" and always trying. Nathan said, "I never regretted for one day joining the CEO program." Nathan was the second child in the Merz family to complete the CEO program; his sister, Ashlynn, was the CFO two years ago. This year, Nathan was the CEO of his class. Nathan felt Mrs. Greenwald was the BEST facilitator. Nathan hopes his friends who are underclassmen will follow in his footsteps and enroll in CEO.



Cristian Romero has been involved in a variety of extracurricular activities including wrestling, theatre performance, the robotics team and the varsity track team. He was awarded a personal choice award his junior year from Principal Daren DePew. Cristian's wide range of activities inspired him to launch his business, **Young Buckz Customs**, specializing in custom shoes and clothing. The CEO program introduced Cristian to many interests and unique opportunities. Cristian plans to attend St. Louis Community College, then transfer to a university to study cyber security and business administration. Cristian Romero is currently in the Army reserves and aspires to become an Army officer.

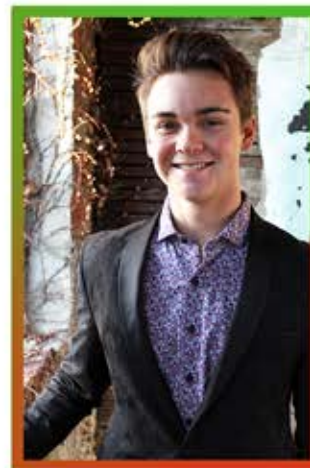
Andrew Schmidt played the sousaphone for the Granite City High School Marching Warriors Band. A multi-instrumentalist, he also plays the trumpet, baritone, piano, and guitar. Andrew enrolled in the CEO program because it offered hands on learning, his favorite learning style. He wanted to learn about the business world and how to operate his own business. His business, **Specter Customs**, was created to customize weaponry and produce ghillie suits for his paintball passion. Andrew was employed as a referee at Bingfield Paintball and Airsoft Park in Alton, Illinois, until his recent diagnosis of Type 1 diabetes. Since then, he has devoted his time to working on his ministry and certification as a minister. Andrew plans to attend Florissant Valley Community College to become an aviation mechanic.



Michael Stockton was the first senior at Granite City High School to complete both the CEO program and the vocational welding program. CEO and welding consumed four of his seven hours of his school day. His favorite part of CEO was touring the industrial business sites and learning how to manage a business. Michael partnered with his father, Chad, and restarted their HVAC business, **Stockton Heating & Cooling**. Michael enlisted in the United States Army and looks forward to serving our country.



Tyler Strack became interested in the CEO class early in high school after hearing friends talk about the program. As a sophomore, Tyler and a friend created a website selling sunglasses, further sparking his interest in CEO. Tyler placed second in the Granite City CEO pitch competition with his start up business **T Prints**. Tyler played soccer his first two years of high school, and volleyball his last two years, developing a deep passion for the sport. Tyler has worked summers at his father's lawn care business since seventh grade, and previously worked as a lifeguard. He enjoyed working with his father because he was his own boss and he set his own schedule. Tyler's plans include continuing working and studying business. Tyler wants to remain an entrepreneur and expand into real estate. He plans to continue his CEO business and grow it into a well known clothing brand.



A two sport athlete in soccer and basketball all four years, **Ellie Wiehardt** captained the Warrior Basketball team her senior year. Ellie was also honored to be selected by her teachers to participate in the annual May Carousel May pole ceremony. She enjoys working with children as a summer camp counselor. **Ellie's Wood Designs** was created to offer unique wood décor for the home or office. Ellie will continue her soccer career at Culver-Stockton College in the fall and pursue a nursing degree.



A TASTE OF 62040 PLUS MORE

20's are wild y'know so come explore with

GRANITE CITY CEO®



Students raised \$9, 506 from our January 22, 2020 event, A Taste of 62040 plus MORE. This was the most profit generated by a Granite City CEO class and was a well attended community event. The profit provided seed funding for students' start up businesses. We sincerely thank our two event sponsors: Port Harbor Railroad, Inc. and GCS Credit Union. Current student Andrea Gibson sold over \$200 from her hair scrunchies business, Gibb-ies. Two CEO alumni set up table displays for their businesses: Billy Trindle, CEO alum, Class of 2015, Trindle's Tree Service, and Jacob Roderick, Class of 2018, Jake's Trimming and Lawn Services.

Thank you to our local restaurants and businesses for their support and participation. Our event showcased the variety of dining opportunities and businesses in our Granite City area.

RESTAURANTS

Bindy's
Dairy Queen
Don Chencho Mexiac Restaurant
Duke Bakery
Jerry's Cafeteria
Pizza World
Ravanelli's
Taste of Country
Teri's Route 66 Diner
Uncle Linny's

BUSINESSES

GCS Credit Union
Port Harbor Railroad, Inc.
1st MidAmerica Credit Union
Six Mile Regional Library
Nicol Financial Services
The Nicol Foundation
First Bank
Weber Chevrolet
icon Mechanical
Transamerica Financial

Illinois Electric works
American Legion Post 307
St. John's Community Care
Granite City Park District
Shirts Galore & More
Gibb-ies
Jake's Trimming and Lawn Services
Trindle's Tree Service
Restoration Church
R&B Woodart



19 CEO Guest Speakers 10 Virtual Speakers via Zoom

Duke Niedringhaus, JW Terrill
Kent Probst, Midland Institute for Entrepreneurship
Juliette Douglas, Six Mile Regional Library
Tom Cholevik, Transamerica Financial
Laura Wyatt Dumonceaux, LJW Tax Service
Dawn Mushill, Speaker, Author, Chamber Executive Director
Marc Voegelé, Express Employment Professionals
Jo Ann DiMaggio May, Small Business Development Center
Melissa Erker, Phillips 66
Gail Mueller & Dr. Almeda Lahr-Well
Ashley Swip, 3 Little Birds 4 Life
Nicole Woolard, Push Media Solutions
Michael Halbrook, Adobe Consulting
Karen Millsap, Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals, Social Media
Donnie Wilson, Midland Institute for Entrepreneurship
Karen Millsap, Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals, Email Etiquette
Marcus Taylor, Autumn Reynolds, Film Everything
Ronda Sauget, Southwestern Illinois Leadership Council

Midland Institute for Entrepreneurship Zoom Weekly Series

Austin Brooks, Intro to Weekly Series
Abby Lashmett, Morgan Scott CEO Alumna
Tyler Bryant, Bond County CEO Alum
Bob Schultz, How to Supercharge Your Future
Dan Chancellor, So iLL
Kristen Hadeed, Author, Founder and CEO Student Maid
Doug Villhard, Washington University
Alexis Teichmiller/Taylor Fatheree, CEO Alumni
Maxine Clark, Build A Bear Workshop Founder



39 CEO Business Visits



Darin Chiropractic
Six Mile Museum + Work Day
Six Mile Regional Library
Mr. Twist
Weber Chevrolet
Pizza World
Prairie Farms
B Auto Parts
Dynamic Transit
Nicol Financial Services
GCS Credit Union
US Steel/Admin
Happy Trails Farm
Phillips 66
Uncle Linny's
US Steel/Hot Strip
1st MidAmerica Credit Union
icon Mechanical
Altered Grounds



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39 CEO Business Visits



Illinois Electric Works
Gateway Regional Medical Center
Port Harbor Railroad Inc.
Calvary Life Church
Rosemarie Brown, Chamber
America's Central Port
First Bank
Dixon Heating & Cooling
Amsted Rail
Shirts Galore & More
Stephanie's Spiritual Therapy
Business Networking International
First Bank
Sysco Food Service
Gaslight STL
T-Rex
Silverback Video
Avatar Studios
Momentum
Chestnut Health Systems



Special Events

Every day is special in CEO. However, students are invited to participate in several out of the box opportunities. Listed below are some of these extra special events. Thank you to the Nicol Foundation, icon Mechanical, CEO Board Members Alicia Lignoul and Kate Kite and Mr. Ron Dillard for supporting these CEO opportunities.



United Way Breakfast
CEO Empowerment Day
SWIC Manufacturing Day
CEO Board Meeting
Mentor Match plus Connects
Alicia Lignoul Photo Shoot
TrepStart Day
District #9 School Board Meeting
Apple Tree with Mr. Dillard
Business Networking International
Banker Day
Virtual Shark Tank



Our CEO Host Businesses



Six Mile Regional Library



Nicol Financial Services



Illinois Electric Works



Chestnut Health Systems



First Bank



Mentor Relationships

In the fall each student is matched with a mentor from our Granite City business community. Our mentors are professionals, entrepreneurs or intrepeneurs and are willing to share their time and expertise with CEO students. Students meet with their mentors during class-time about once a month and also outside of class. Kate Kite, CEO Board Member and Research and Instruction Librarian/Teen Services, coordinates the mentor/mentee mornings at our Six Mile Regional Library. This year students insisted their mentors experience the fun of the flying turtles game. We are grateful for our time with our mentors, shown below.

Andrea Gibson - Megan Dittman, Procurement Agent, Boeing
Kirstyn Martin - Alicia Lignoul, Community Relations Coordinator, 1st MidAmerica Credit Union
Nathan Merz - Jeff Kohler, General Manager, Weber Chevrolet
Cristian Romero - Dr. Almeda Lahr-Well, Founder/Owner, Lahr - Well Academy
Andrew Schmidt - Gail Mueller, Financial Advisor, Nicol Financial Services, Entrepreneur
Michael Stockton - Justin Brinkmeyer, Facilities Manager, Granite City Park District
Tyler Strack - Tom Cholevik, Transamerica Financial Advisor
Ellie Wiehardt - Jamie Hoge, Assistant Vice President/Branch Manager, First Bank



CEO Banker Day

Our Granite City CEO Banker Day was a success for our young entrepreneurs and our local bankers. Students were nervous but excited to meet one on one with each banker and share their business plan for their start ups. Each banker asked students questions about their financials and their marketing plan. Our local bankers shared feedback and suggestions for improving their business and their business plans. Our commercial lenders and the financial institutions that participated were:

Jamie Hoge, First Bank
Jeff Whitaker, 1st MidAmerica Credit Union
Shane Wecker, Guardian Savings Bank
Steve Selby, Processors Industrial Community Credit Union
Bobby Meszaros, Scott Credit Union
Jay Brefeld, Regions

CEO appreciates and thanks our local bankers and extend a shout out to Chestnut Health Systems for hosting our Granite City CEO Banker Day on March 12, 2020.



Developing CEO Team Building Skills

Solving problems and working together for a common goal is essential in our CEO journey and life. Students always looked forward to working as a team and embracing any challenge.



2020 CEO Advisory Board

Marc Voegelé
Board Chair

Express Employment Professionals
Owner, President

Kevin Nicol
Vice Chair

Nicol Financial Services
The Nicol Foundation
CEO and President

Tom Schooley
Secretary

Law Offices of Thomas E. Schooley
Attorney, President

Jennifer Hamilton
Treasurer

icon Mechanical Construction & Engineering, LLC
AR Manager

Members

Keith Burton

GCS Credit Union
CEO and President

Alex Doolittle

Busey Bank
Branch Manager

Jamie Hoge

First Bank
Assistant Vice President/Branch Manager

Dr. David Keel

Granite City Community Unit School District #9
Director of Secondary Education

Kate Kite

Six Mile Regional Library District
Research & Instruction Librarian/Teen Services

Alicia Lignoul

1st MidAmerica Credit Union
Community Relations Coordinator

Don Scaturro

Illinois Electric Works
Corporate Secretary, Mechanical Specialist



Granite City CEO Business Investors

CEO Business Investors are the heart of our community driven CEO program. An annual investment of \$1,000 provides the necessary resources for the current year facilitator salary and operating expenses, and ensures the sustainability of the Granite City CEO class for future students. In addition, investors host business visits, provide guest speakers and serve as mentors. Business Investor commitments of time and energy are also critical to the success of the Granite City CEO class.

1st MidAmerica Credit Union
America's Central Port
Amsted Rail
Calvary Life Church
Darin Chiropractic
Dr. Almeda Lahr-Well & Gail Mueller
Express Employment Professionals
First Bank
Gateway Regional Medical Center
GCS Credit Union
Glik's
icon Mechanical & Engineering LLC
Illinois Electric Works
Irwin Chapel
Karen and Jim Greenwald
Law Offices of Thomas E. Schooley
Nicol Financial Services
Phillips 66
Port Harbor Railroad Corp.
Prairie Farms
Roger Miller
Southern Illinois Healthcare Foundation
The Bank of Edwardsville
The Nicol Foundation
Weber Chevrolet

Friends of Granite City CEO

Altered Grounds Outdoor Services
Cindy & Mike Gagich
Coordinated Youth & Human Services
Granite City Optimist Club
Justine Petersen
Six Mile Regional Library District
U.S. Steel



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CREATING ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Commitment Form

Company/Organization Name: _____
 Contact Name: _____
 Street Address: _____
 City, State, ZIP: _____
 Phone: _____
 E-mail: _____
 Web Address: _____

Donor

I/We wish to contribute to the Granite City CEO program as follows:

Investor

Contributor

☐ \$1,000 annually for three years (\$3,000 total)

☐ One-time gift of \$ _____

Payment Method

☐ My check for the entire pledge is enclosed.

☐ My check for the first of three annual payments is enclosed.

☐ Please bill me.

I would like my name/company name to be listed in the acknowledgements as follows:

☐ I wish to remain anonymous.

Please make checks payable to Coordinated Youth & Human Services for the benefit of Granite City CEO. The Coordinated Youth is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization that acts as the fiduciary for the CEO program. Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Participant

I would like to be considered for: (Check all that apply)

☐ Hosting a CEO Class

☐ Speaking to a CEO Class

☐ Having a CEO Class visit my organization

☐ Mentoring a CEO student

☐ Other, please explain: _____

Return this form to:

Jennifer Hamilton, CEO Treasurer
 icon Mechanical
 1616 Cleveland Blvd.
 Granite City, IL 62040

jhamilton@iconmech.com
 618.452.0035
 Fax 618.452.0037





On behalf of the CEO Board of Directors, I would like to thank all of our investors and contributors to the Granite City program. You have been instrumental in impacting young lives and our community for years to come. We are headed into our seventh year and the program continues to grow in size and stature in Granite City. Since its inception locally in 2014, five other communities have followed our lead and started their own CEO programs in the Metro East area.

This unique approach, helping students uncover and develop vital skill sets, is truly cutting-edge and greatly valued. If you have been considering becoming an investor, I invite you to join us. Most join to help others, but usually see the benefit it brings to everyone, and become passionate themselves.

If you would like to join as a host location or become a mentor there is room for you. Watch our students run a group business and then develop their own individual businesses. See them transform from high school teenagers to business minded, community oriented, young adults who are eager to embrace the challenges and opportunities that life has to offer. It is never too late to join CEO, and you will be glad you did.

Marc Voegelé, Owner
Express Employment Professionals
Granite City CEO Advisory Board Chair

I extend a thank you to the Granite City CEO Board and the Granite City Community Unit School District #9 for selecting me to be the facilitator beginning with the 2020 - 2021 school year. I look forward to connecting with you and hearing your story about your business, your life, your successes and if any, failures. I am very excited to sustain and grow the Granite City CEO program, which offers students unique experiences in our local business community. Feel free to contact me for information and possible dates regarding being a guest speaker, hosting a business visit, being a mentor and/or Granite City CEO investor.

Respectfully,
Chris Harrison
chris.harrison@gcsd9.net
618.802.6518





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marc.voegele@expresspros.com

Karen Greenwald, Facilitator
Granite City CEO Class
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