



## **\$165,500 committed to create Coles County entrepreneurship class**

**JG-TC Staff Report | Posted: Friday, November 11, 2011 4:45 am**

CHARLESTON - More than 60 businesses and individuals have committed \$165,500 over a three-year period to fund a proposed county-wide experiential entrepreneurship class, according to a press release.

This was announced at the BSC/SCORE Annual Breakfast Oct. 20 at the Lifespan Center. The class will be open to Charleston, Mattoon and Oakland high school juniors and seniors beginning in the fall of 2012.

Each student in the class will start their own business, which will offer a life-changing look into the opportunities and challenges of creating and running a new venture. A key component of the class is the involvement of the community to serve as: advisory board members, expert speakers, job shadowing sites and workplace mentors.

The ultimate goal is to have the students return to Coles County and use their business connections to create new ventures that will possibly sell globally but be based locally to create more jobs and secure more taxes for Coles County. This class is modeled after the successful Effingham County Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) class that is in its third year of operation.

"We are thrilled to see the amount of support for this project," Jeanne Dau, director of the Business Solutions Center at EIU, said in the press release. "Once businesses and educators heard about the project, many stepped up and not only gave money but helped raise money and awareness from their colleagues."

Isaac Dallas, son of John and Lisa Dallas, a sophomore high school student and graduate of Camp e3 - energizing emerging entrepreneurs summer camp - unveiled the poster that listed the class investors. "Thank you for giving me the opportunity to continue exploring my entrepreneurial interests," said Dallas.

EIU's Business Solutions Center has served as the catalyst for this initiative with support from the Consolidated Communication Fund for Economic Development and Community Leadership. The Mattoon Area Community Foundation will serve as the fiscal agent and Eastern Illinois Education for Employment Systems will be the managing organization with the direction coming from a community committee.

The newly elected committee members are: Bob Jones of Marketing by Jones, president; Joyce Madigan of Gilbert Metzger, Madigan LLP, president elect; Chris Swing of Pinnacle Foods, treasurer; Krista Jackley of Mattoon High School, secretary; Todd Vilardo of Charleston Community School District No. 1; Steve Brockman of Oakland High School; Jeanne Foley of McDonalds of Coles County; Jim Zimmer of Eastern Illinois Properties; Aldo Ruffolo of Bella Vein Laser Center Medical Spa; Jon Fulton of the Mattoon Area Community Foundation; Gary Philippi of the Eastern Illinois Education for Employment Systems; and Dau.

The following business partners have committed \$1,000 per year for three years: Adams Memorials; Advanced Digital Solutions; anonymous; Armstrong, Grove & Shoaf Law; Bella Vein Laser Center Medical Spa; City of Charleston; City of Mattoon; Coldwell Banker Real Estate; Commercial Electric; Consolidated Communications; Corrie Appraisal & Consulting, Inc.; Curry Construction; Curry & Company; Diepholz Auto Group; Doehring, Winders & Co. LLP; Ealy Appraisals; Eastern Illinois Properties; First Federal Savings & Loan; First Mid-Illinois Bank and Trust; First Neighbor Bank; Flesor's Candy Kitchen; Gilbert, Metzger & Madigan, LLP; Jerome C. Groniger; Howell Paving, Inc.; Innovative Staff Solutions; J.G. Scholes Trucking, Inc.; Jimmy Johns (Mattoon); Clyde's Animal Clinic; Lake Land College; LD Mechanical Contractors; Lifetime Eye Care; Marketing by Jones, LLC; Mars Petcare US; McDonald's of Coles County; Midas; Mid-Illinois Concrete; Paap Auto Body; Dan Pilson Auto Centers; Porter Auto Body; Reed Fly-On; RexDon, Inc.; Ronchetti Distributing Co.; Rural King Supply; Sarah Bush Lincoln Health System; Eli Sidwell; State Farm Insurance, Mattoon; The Sparks Foundation; Unique Home Properties; United Graphics, Inc.; Upchurch Group, Inc.; Veolia Environmental Services; Wells Fargo Advisors; West & Company, LLC.

Other financial commitments have been received by: anonymous; Coles Moultrie Electric Co-op; KIMA Management, LLC; Lanman Oil; Lorenz Supply Company; Mattoon Precision Mfg.; The First National Bank; Watts Copy Systems.

September 1, 2011

Letter to the Editor  
c/o Journal Gazette/Times-Courier  
700 Broadway Ave. E, Suite 9A  
Mattoon, IL 61938

Dear Editor, Journal Gazette/Times-Courier:

Recently, several area community members have recruited the support of county business owners and operators in an attempt to start a county-wide class that teaches entrepreneurial skills to high school students. Currently known as the Coles County Entrepreneurship Class, the course would be open to junior and senior students and based upon applications to a local advisory board consisting of area business and education stakeholders. One aim of the class is to help students develop entrepreneurial skill sets in order to grow our local business leaders of tomorrow.

This letter is written with sincere appreciation to those who have made a commitment to fulfilling the vision of this opportunity for local students. The project's community and business partners have shown their support by contributing \$1,000 per year over the next three years. Others have shown their support by serving as an advisory board member or mentor, providing in-kind donations of equipment, or hosting the class for a quarter. As of this writing, 20 partners have made commitments to the project.

For those still wanting to join in these efforts, calls to Jeanne Dau, Director of the Business Solutions Center at Eastern Illinois University (581-2913); Todd Vilardo, Assistant Superintendent of Charleston CUSD #1 (639-1007); or Jon Fulton, Mattoon Area Community Foundation (235-2500) are welcome.

With gratitude,

Jim Littleford  
Superintendent  
Charleston CUSD #1

Larry D. Lilly  
Superintendent  
Mattoon CUSD #2

Lance Landeck  
Superintendent  
Oakland CUSD #5

## Guest Column

# Student describes benefits of high school CEO class

By Alexis Teichmiller

ENI Freshman and CEO Class graduate

"Could you imagine a class that students are clamoring to get into? Where they arrive before the 7:30 a.m. start time and have to be encouraged to leave at the end of class? Now imagine a class that transforms students so that they become connected to the community, start and run real businesses while in high school, and dream big in to the future. Then picture that the class pulls the community together: business leaders and educators achieving a whole new level of understanding and cooperation. Finally, imagine what it could mean for economic development and community pride. The Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) class is such a class, and it is something so powerful that it changes the lives of everyone it touches."

-Susan Hanfland, CEO class investor

Let me begin by stating that

I am a typical 18 year old. I would sleep until 10 in the morning if my mom would allow me and I occasionally text under the table at dinner. But, by taking the CEO class my senior year of high school, I now realize how unproductive it is to sleep-in late, and how disrespectful it is to text under the table. I've changed from being a "typical" teenager to becoming a respectable young adult.

One of the more unique attributes of the class is the students get to form personal relationships with business leaders in the community. The owners of the small-town businesses and the managers of nationally known companies sat down and shared their success and failure stories with a room full of juniors and seniors in high school. Not only did we learn the in's and out's of their professional journeys, we also gained a sense of new found responsibility.

Each of the business leaders and educators who spoke to the

class shared one common piece of information. They made mistakes. They failed. What separates you from your competition is do you have what it takes to get back up and keep trying? Did you take responsibility for your actions? I discovered that life was not centered on me, and my actions did affect the people around me.

By touring over 40 businesses in my community and having the privilege of hearing over 35 guest speakers, I have a desire to come back to my community and start my own business. I never really understood the economic impact our local businesses have and how many lives they affect positively. They are the lifeblood of our community and I want to be a part of that. I want to give back to the community that has given so much to me. One way I am planning on giving back is by being a mentor for one of the students in the new 2011-2012 CEO class.

As previously mentioned, each CEO student starts and runs

their own business in the last semester of the year. My business: I authored my first book and sold them at our Annual CEO Tradeshow, which showcases each of the businesses the students start, and continue to sell them. The title of my book is Investing in Human Capital and it is a short non-fiction account of my journey through the CEO class. It includes six interviews with businesses leaders in my community that had influenced me the most throughout the class.

I want to end with a short excerpt from my book.

"So often, education is placed in a silo by itself. However, the Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities class integrates its experiences with its community. My parents always told me that without a firm foundation, you will crumble. Becoming a part of the CEO community has strengthened my foundation in a way that the vision of community is much larger than I ever imag-

ined. If you can allow this class to affect you, it is capable of growing the sense of community within your self.

I know that taking this class, is just the beginning. The CEO class, metaphorically, represents a window into my future, but it is still up to me to continue opening new doors. The Internet has become our personal GPS. We refer to it when we need to quickly find our way throughout life. However, due to my exposure to successful entrepreneurs, I have been blessed with personal tour guides who are willing to help me until I can one day read my own road map and create roads to the future."

Editor's Note: Alexis Teichmiller a graduate of the CEO high school class in Effingham. A similar class is being planned for Coles County. Organizers currently are raising funds and preparing to organize an advisory board. The timeline is to start the class in 2012-13.

8/30/11  
JB-TC

working individual. He also established the 10,000 rule that states, "The key to success in any field is to a large extent, a matter of practicing a specific task for a total of around 10,000 hours."

Second, he concludes that no-one is a "self-made man." Invariably successful people have had hidden advantages and extraordinary opportunities that allow them to learn, work hard and make sense of the world in ways others cannot.

He uses Bill Gates of Microsoft as a prime example. Bill had the good fortune of having a computer club in junior high in 1968. Yes, 1968! Computerization of small businesses didn't happen for another ten to fifteen years.

Another advantage Bill had was that he lived in a university town. As a teenager, Bill would sneak out of bed at night, pretend to be a college student and sign up for computer time between 3-5 a.m. because that was the only time real college students weren't using them. He was well on his way to racking up 10,000 hours in computing when opportunity came knocking.

Fast forward a few years. Bill moved his fledging start-up from Albuquerque, New Mexico back to his hometown of Seattle, Washington for family support and to tap into his father's business connections, which helped take Microsoft public. This expansion created thousands of jobs and hundreds of millionaires for Seattle and raised the standard of living for the area.

I'm sure all counties in Central Illinois would love to have economic success like Microsoft. What can we do to make it happen? I strongly

suggest investing in the Coles County Entrepreneurship Class and the Effingham County CEO class. By supporting these yearlong classes, you:

- give them hands-on learning time with local businesses

- provide an environment to promote networking and mentoring

- promote an atmosphere of out-of-the-box thinking and problem-solving

To make the Coles County E-class a reality for fall 2012, we need 50 businesses or individuals to invest \$1,000 per year of 3 years. We need to have most of the pledges by Labor Day. Help us reach our goal and support the economic vitality of Coles County.

JEANNE DAU  
Charleston

## Guidelines set priorities for immigration issues

A recent letter on this page (8/23) alleges that our President has set an immigration policy rendering police 'unable to arrest and prosecute all the evildoers,' 'the illegal aliens who violate our laws,' and that 'it follows that all the murderers, thieves, side-walk spitters etc. are free and clear.'

I am guessing that this refers to recently issued immigration enforcement guidelines regarding deportation proceedings for undocumented immigrants. Here are the facts:

With 10 million undocumented immigrants now among us, and limited resources to deal with them, the memorandum sets priorities for which should be pursued and which not. At the top of the list are those who

## Here's a great way to promote success

Malcolm Gladwell, in his best-selling book, "Outliers: The Story of Success," explores why some folks are wildly successful in their field and others are not.

Two factors hit home for me. First, success is not usually achieved by the most talented, but by the most hard-

# Sponsors line up for Coles entrepreneur class by EIU

CHARLESTON — Nearly 20 sponsors have already pledged support to starting a county-wide entrepreneurship class for Charleston, Mattoon and Oakland high school juniors and seniors scheduled to begin in fall 2012.

The goal of the class that Eastern Illinois University's Business Solutions Center is organizing is to prepare youth to become entrepreneurs who can contribute to the economic development of Coles County. Students accepted into the class, patterned after an existing class in Effingham County, will establish and run their own businesses.

Business Solutions Center officials are trying to recruit 50 businesses and/or individuals to each pledge \$1,000 per year for three years for the class before Labor Day in order to get final approval for the class to be held next year. Center advisory board members are contacting businesses to secure the financial resources to fund the class.

9/11/11

A Business Solutions Center press release reported that the involvement of the business and education community is a key component for the class. Volunteers are needed to serve as advisory board members, guest speakers, and student mentors. The class will meet at a different local business location every nine weeks.

Sponsors so far include Armstrong, Grove & Shoaff Law; City of Charleston; City of Mattoon; Consolidated Communications; Corrie Appraisal; Curry Construction; First Mid-Illinois Bank & Trust; Gilbert, Metzger & Madigan, LLP; Jerry Groniger; Howell Paving, Inc.; Lifetime Eye-care; McDonalds of Coles County; Porter Auto Body; Rural King; Eli Sidwell; State Farm of Mattoon; RexDon, Inc.; The Upchurch Group; and Wells Fargo Advisors.

For more information about investing or volunteering in the Coles County Entrepreneurship Class, contact Business Solutions Center Director Jeanne Dau at 581-2912 or [jcdau@eiu.edu](mailto:jcdau@eiu.edu) or view the website at [www.eiu.edu/bsc](http://www.eiu.edu/bsc).

## LETTER: Without reservation, support for high school class

By **BILL HILL Charleston** | Posted: Thursday, September 22, 2011 5:00 am

In a column in THE CONCISE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ECONOMICS, Russell S. Sobel states that an entrepreneur is someone who organizes, manages and assumes the risks of a business or enterprise. Sobel's statement frames the planning for the proposed Entrepreneurship Class of Coles County high school students in junior and senior classes starting 2012.

Three years ago, a class was started in Effingham County for junior and senior high school students. The class, "Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities," has been most successful. The class has received words of praise from business and industry leaders underwriting the initiative.

The proposed Coles County class would provide students with personal growth learning opportunities in these instructional areas:

- Provide students with opportunities and the know how to explore various career options and the impact their future career decisions will make on their life.
- Provide students with observed and hands on experiences exploring the world of work.
- Provide students with the opportunity to actually start a business and experience the realities of the ups and downs of operating and managing a business.
- Provide students with the understanding of the importance networking and building other community connections through onsite visits to businesses around the area.

Bulleted are a just a few learning opportunities students will be provided in the proposed entrepreneurial class for Coles County students.

Unfortunately, from the perspective of a long time school teacher/ administrator, this type of potentially life-changing class was not offered to students during my career. Without reservations, I endorse the efforts of all involved in making this class a reality for our students in Coles County.

The Business Solutions Center of EIU and partners are seeking 50 sponsors to pledge \$ 1,000 per year for three years for the class to become a reality. Approximately 40 businesses have already pledged to this effort. The money will be used to pay the salary of a teacher, teaching expenses and operating expenses. Please consider sponsoring this class that will, hopefully provide students with the determination to put their entrepreneurial learned skills to work in the Coles County communities.

For more information, please contact the EIU Business Solutions Center Director Jeanne Dau at 581-2913 or [jcdau@eiu.edu](mailto:jcdau@eiu.edu).