
LAND OF LINCOLN



21 ANNUAL
22 REPORT

CEO®

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Midland 
Institute for Entrepreneurship
AN ENTREPRENEURIAL
EDUCATION PARTNER



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 stands for “Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities”. This program is unlike any you’ll find in a traditional classroom: no textbooks, no tests, no daily homework assignments. Sounds easy, right? Ask our students and they’ll tell you CEO is one of the most challenging - and rewarding - experiences of their high school career.

From day one, students are encouraged to move out of their comfort zone. They build relationships, take risks, learn from failure, engage in creative problem solving, and accept personal responsibility. This can seem like a tall order for a teenager, but CEO students rise to the challenge time and again.

My first year as a facilitator has opened my eyes to what a truly unique and enriching experience CEO offers. More than one of our guest speakers has commented, “I wish this program existed when I was in high school.” Indeed, it has been my privilege to receive this world-class entrepreneurial education right along with the students!

As I write this, the class is preparing for the trade show. For the short term, they are focused on details like banners and business cards. They may not realize it yet, but the previous months have afforded them the space and opportunity to grow in ways they could never have imagined. I am confident their time in CEO will serve them well no matter what path they take after graduation.

This year’s class made the shift from thinking like high school students to embracing the entrepreneur mindset. Mission accomplished! I invite you to visit each young business owner and see for yourself how hard they have worked to achieve their goals. I could not not be more proud of them.



Lisa Kuhlman

Land of Lincoln CEO Facilitator

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 Land of Lincoln CEO class for future students. Investors also contribute their time to the program. Hosting business visits, provide guest speakers and serve as mentors. All crucial to the success of LLCEO.

Lincoln Memorial Hospital
 Atlanta National Bank
 Central Illinois Ag Inc
 Christian Homes Inc
 City of Lincoln
 Connections Financial Advisors
 CEO Class 2018-2019
 CEO Class 2019-2020
 CEO Class 2020-2021
 Deron Powell State Farm Agency
 Eaton Corporation
 Eric E. Burwell
 Eric Graue, Merrill Lynch
 First National Bank Tremont/
 New Holland Banking Center
 Graue Inc
 Heartland Community College

Integrity Data, Inc.
 JM Abbott & Associates/Pacesetter
 Financial
 Lincoln College
 Lincoln Community High School
 Foundation
 Logan County Professional Network
 McDonalds
 ME Realty
 Mt. Pulaski Econ. Dev. & Planning Board
 Nikles of Petersburg
 RK PR Solutions, LLC
 Rolling Prairie Subdivision, LLC
 State Bank of Lincoln/Heartland Bank
 Stuart Solutions
 Susan Hoblit



*Thank
 you!*



CLASS HOST SITES

The CEO class met in three different local businesses throughout the course of the year. Meeting in an established, professional business environment sets the stage for learning and encourages students to picture themselves beyond their school years. The following businesses have generously opened their doors to CEO class meetings this year. Thank you so much for your contribution to the success of the CEO program.



FRIENDS

Friends of CEO are businesses or individuals that gave money or in-kind donations to the CEO program. We are thankful for their contribution to Land of Lincoln CEO.



Curtis Fox



TRADE SHOW SPONSORS

Putting on a professional Trade Show takes a significant amount of physical labor, money and time. We are grateful for those that support this capstone event.



A Mentor is a business owner, entrepreneur, or intrapreneur from the Land of Lincoln CEO business community. A mentor is someone willing to share their time and expertise with a CEO student.



2020-2021 Mentors

Lesleigh Bennett
Sarah Stuart Faith
Seth Goodman
Abby Miller
Dianna Pickett
Angela Stoltzenburg
Janell Woolard



LLCEO hosted "A Morning With Young Entrepreneurs." Business owners, mentors, and other CEO supporters were invited to hear from students about how the program has impacted them. Featured speakers included 2017 alumni Adriana Doolin, Ashley Zinser, and Jordan Crowell from the class of 2022.





THE CEO JOURNEY THROUGH THE YEAR

Launch Individual Business

Group Business Venture

Initial Business Venture



CEO is a dual credit class. Students receive both high school credit and three tuition free hours of Business Technology credit from Heartland Community College.



Heartland Community College also offers a scholarship specifically for CEO Graduates



Grace Doolin

Hello! My name is Grace Doolin. My business, Harvest Moon Design Co. creates custom wooden signs for your home or for a loved one. Being able to decorate and personalize your home to your own individual design style is something that is very important to me, and providing an opportunity for people to do just that is a great feeling. CEO has taught me the importance of diligence and communication while working both as a team and individually. I am currently a senior at Hartsburg-Emden High School. I am a member of the Senior Beta Club, chess team, volleyball team, and scholastic bowl team. I am also a dancer at Audra's Studio of Dance. I am currently employed at Culver's in Lincoln. After high school, I plan to attend Heartland Community College in Bloomington, and then transfer to Illinois State University and graduate with an undecided major. In the future I want to own my own business while being a stay at home mom, and potentially earn my private pilot's license.



Jordan Crowell

Hello, my name is Jordan Crowell and I am a senior at Lincoln Community High School. I currently work at Mel-O-Cream and do some work for a local farmer during the planting and harvest seasons. After Graduation, I plan to attend Heartland Community College in Bloomington and get an associate's degree in Ag Business or Small Business Management. After that, I may transfer to a four-year university. After college, I hope to create my own cattle ranch and cattle breeding business, while possibly doing woodworking on the side. CEO has given me an opportunity to expand my network, and has shown me the impact business has on a community. My business, Rustic Nail Wood Creations, creates handmade wooden household essentials that are customizable for your home. I like working with natural materials, and the craftsmanship involved with woodworking is something I like to achieve.



Alex Schmidt

As the founder of A5 Lawncare I have discovered the need for an excellent lawn. A5 lawncare gives you an easy and timeless approach to have the perfect lawn! I'm currently a junior at Lincoln Community High School. I actively participate in the boy's tennis and soccer programs. After high school, I would like to continue on into studying business. If I had to take one thing away from the CEO program, it would have to be the connections I have made in the class. It truly has helped immensely in my personal growth.



Faith Sanders



Hello, my name is Faith Sanders and I'm currently a junior at Hartsburg-Emden Jr/Sr. HS. By being a part of CEO I had the opportunity to begin my business, In Stitches With Love. Structured as a crochet based gift shop, I'm striving to use this idea as a way to be able to share my love for crochet and handmade gift items. Through my business I offer crochet craft boxes, as well as individual crocheted items. My craft boxes are unique to others found on the market, because within each kit I include not only the pattern and materials, but the option to receive an additional finished item as well.

CEO has taught me so much that I believe will help carry me through the rest of my life, but I think where it's helped me the most is with communication skills. Even though I still have a long ways to go, I recognize that I've come along in developing my communication skills and broadening my network, all the while learning to understand and appreciate the importance of it.

Outside of CEO, I've participated in many school activities, including volleyball, cheer, chess club, scholastic bowl, band, and choir. I've also done Bible Quizzing for several years and have been a long time member of 4-H. After high school, I'd like to attend college and earn a degree in accounting. At the moment, I'm planning to spend at least a year at Heartland Community College before transferring to a four year Christian university.



Payton Johnson

My name is Payton Johnson, and I am a junior at Lincoln Community High School. My business is Full Circle Catfish, a company specializing in the production and selling of high-quality catfish rigs. I knew that fishing was a big deal in the Midwest, but I didn't believe there were any local tackle manufactures, inspiring me to start my business. My goals after high school are to continue my education at the college of my choosing. I'm not sure what I would like to do yet, but I am sure that it will be something that I enjoy. I participate in the National Honor Society at LCHS. I also participate in both football and track and field. I currently work for Bloodline Tackle, a local shark fishing tackle manufacturer. The most important thing I have learned in CEO is to never allow failure to stop you from attaining a goal.



FISHING JUST BECAME EASY



Shivang Patel

I am the owner of Midwest Auto Pros, a local car detailing business. Detailing is totally different than a regular car wash! Midwest Auto Pros thoroughly goes through every nook and cranny of your vehicle and makes it look "brand new"! I'm a junior at Lincoln Community High School. I actively participated during the 2021-2022 winter boys basketball season along with the National Honor Society. I'd love to get into the Computer Science industry, specifically in the automotive field after college graduation. If I had to take one thing away from the CEO program, it would be that the amount of connections you make during this is priceless. I've made so many connections from this program! I've personally been inspired to create my business by my passion for cars from a young age! I love anything automotive-related, specifically sporty cars!



Elizabeth Stewart

My name is Elizabeth Stewart and I am a junior at Lincoln Community High School. Throughout high school, I have been involved in cheerleading, dance, golf, soccer and student government. I currently work at the Elks Golf Pro Shop during the summer, while babysitting during the off season. After graduation, I plan to go to a university and continue my business education, while also studying foreign languages. I hope to travel abroad further down the line as well. In life, I hope to successfully run my own business and be fully independent. Thanks to the CEO program, I have been shown the first steps I needed to take in order to achieve these goals. CEO has helped me not only in terms of business knowledge, but also in terms of social skills. I have grown much more confident in myself because of this class and I have also met many amazing business owners who are also very supportive of my growth. Throughout the year, I have been working deliberately on my own business named Over the Rainbow Earrings. At Over the Rainbow Earrings, we sell homemade, hand-crafted, polymer clay earrings. I was inspired by many people, specifically the women who participate in CEO. I noticed how many of these leading women always wore earrings, which made me think that there are other women out there who want to wear stylish and unique earrings. With new designs monthly, women don't have to worry about fitting in anymore.



The event took place January 29th, 2022 at the Park District Recreation Center. Admission was being collected for the youth in attendance. Adults entered at no charge. Winter Fest offered an afternoon of indoor fun with a bouncy house, obstacle course, face painting, giant Jenga, henna tattoos, and lots more games and activities.



LAND OF LINCOLN CEO® WINTER FEST SPONSORS

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Friends of Winter Fest

Evolve Salon Nuthatch Hill BBO LMH Regions Bank

An important piece of the CEO experience is visiting local businesses in the Land of Lincoln CEO area. 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.

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

Integrity Data
Central Illinois Ag
Lincoln Park District
Logan County Tourism Bureau
Central Illinois Direct Care
PrairiErth Farm
JM Abbott & Associates
Salt Creek Attic
Bryan J. Clark State Farm Agent
Flossie & Delzena's Gourmet Grind & Gifts
The Christian Village
The Atlanta National Bank
Tremont National Bank
Logan County Farm Bureau
Eaton Corporation
Graue, Inc.
The Atlanta National Bank
Deron Powell State Farm Agent
Holland Barry & Bennett Funeral Home
Precision Movement
RK PR Solutions
Guest House Coffee & Pastries
Sublime Skin
City of Lincoln
Moksha Center
Logan County Recorder
Lincoln First United Methodist Church
Marco NPK
State Bank of Lincoln
The Vault
Hammer Strength & Fitness
McDonald's
Altitude Trampoline Park
Mass VR

Patrick Doolin
Jennifer Keith
Michelle Bauer
Amy Tarr
Michael Gowin
Laura Myers
Cale West
Rachael Judd
Bridget Schneider
Jacob Mason
Matt Puckett
Andy Fitzpatrick
Bryan Clark
Grace Stephenson
Shellie Reed
Ashley Zinser
Abby Miller
Michael Schmidt
Sarah Judd
Sarah Faith
Lindy Belley
Paul Kelson
Nila Smith
Ryan Keith
Andrea Runge
Bridget Schneider
Derek Martin
Kristi Powell
Dana Sydney
Cindy Smith
Deanne Mott
Erin Solomon









Michael Schmidt and Ashley Zinser

Michael Schmidt, owner and president of Central Illinois Ag spoke to the Land of Lincoln CEO class at the beginning of Ashley's senior semester in 2016. Ashley knew she was interested in agriculture, but had no idea what she wanted to do after school other than attend college. Michael recognized Ashley as he spoke to the class. He knew that her family, Tim Clark Concrete Construction had poured concrete for the new Central Illinois Ag building. He asked her if she had a job lined up after school. From that visit, Ashley began her career with Central Illinois Ag in 2017. After high school, Ashley attended Heartland Community College on a full ride scholarship and graduated in 2019 with an Associates in Arts. She then attended Illinois State University with help from Central Illinois Ag and graduated in 2021 with a Bachelors in Ag Business. She has been working with Central Illinois Ag since high school. Through her career, she started 3 platforms of online e stores. She has worked with parts and service. Now she is the Warranty Administrator and gets to work with all aspects of the company. Her favorite part of her career is that it's family owned and she feels like part of the family. She loves the consistency and how everyone works so well together. Ashley began serving on the Land of Lincoln CEO Board in 2021. She loves being a part of this opportunity because it allows her to give back to the program that has given her endless opportunities and support.



Central Illinois Ag Business visit 2016



Central Illinois Ag speaks to the students in 2022



Ashley's first month working with Central Illinois Ag



"I am so thankful that the Land of Lincoln CEO program connected me with Central Illinois Ag. This has opened so many doors for me and gave me a path to lead."

-Ashley Zinser



Bridget Schneider
Owner of Connections
Financial Advisors, LLC
Board Chair



Rachael Judd
Lincoln First United
Methodist Church -
Executive Director
Board Vice Chair



Andy Fitzpatrick
J.M. Abbott and
Associates, LTD
Board Treasurer



Sara Sisk
Lincoln Community High
School Counselor
Board Secretary



Jennifer Keith
CEO of Keith Technology
and Educational
Consulting
Board Member



Jason Mauhar
Owner of By Design
Landscaping
Board Member



Brad Nikles
Owner of Nikles of
Petersburg
Board Member



Kristi Powell
President and CEO of
The Lodge off 66
Board Member



Matt Puckett
Lincoln Community High
School - Lincoln Land
Technical Education
Center Director
Board Member



Michelle Bauer
Country Financial - Financial
Representative
Board Member



Lisa Steve
Olympia High School -
College and Career
Counselor
Board Member



Ashley Zinser
Central Illinois Ag -
Warranty Administrator
Board Member

CEO® pillars



Vision

CEO nurtures entrepreneurial thinkers who possess awareness of themselves and their communities.



Mission

To be learners, owners, creators, communicators, and connectors



Connector

Participants build a strong professional network that, combined with their skills and experience, they can grow their career and improve their community.



Communicator

Participants develop the skills and confidence to clearly express ideas that make sense to people from diverse backgrounds and experiences.



Creator

Participants become creators through the experiences of applying their knowledge to solve problems or bring a concept to product.



Owner

Participants take accountability for their words and actions as well as build the mentality to see failures as learning opportunities.



Learner

Participants build a foundation for life-long learning and receptiveness to new ideas.

LAND OF LINCOLN 

CREATING ENTREPRENEURIAL
OPPORTUNITIES

**CEO is the standard
for entrepreneurship
education in the
United States.**

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