



SOUTHWEST  
MINNESOTA

powering on the  
entrepreneurial spirit

26

ANNUAL  
REPORT



# Resilience reigns as a lasting trait in participants of SWMN CEO program

This year's SWMN CEO program brought together 18 driven high school students representing five different schools across Southwest Minnesota, forming a diverse and dynamic cohort united by curiosity, creativity, and a willingness to step outside their comfort zones. As their facilitator, I had the privilege of witnessing firsthand how these students evolved—not only as young entrepreneurs, but as confident individuals prepared to take on real-world challenges.

From the very beginning, the program emphasized experiential learning. Students didn't just study entrepreneurship—they lived it. Through a combination of local business visits, guest speakers, and hands-on projects, they were immersed in the realities of building and sustaining a business. Early activities focused on developing soft skills such as communication, professionalism, and accountability, which quickly became the foundation for their growth throughout the year.

One of the most impactful components of the program was the creation of their individual businesses. Each student was challenged to conceptualize, launch, and manage their own venture from the ground up. This process required them to identify market needs, develop products or services,



Katie Baustian  
SWMN CEO Facilitator

manage finances, and adapt to setbacks. While each journey was unique, a common theme emerged: resilience. Students learned that failure is not the end point, but rather a critical step toward improvement and innovation. Collaboration in the badge and class business also played a key role in the program's success. Despite coming from different schools and backgrounds, the group quickly developed a strong sense of camaraderie. They supported one another through challenges, shared ideas openly, and celebrated each other's successes. This environment of trust and mutual respect fostered deeper learning and encouraged students to take meaningful risks. Community engagement remained at the heart of the SWMN CEO experience. Local business leaders generously shared



their time, insights, and mentorship, helping students connect classroom concepts to real-world applications. These interactions not only enriched the students' understanding of entrepreneurship but also strengthened their ties to the local business community.

By the end of the year, the transformation in these 18 students was remarkable. They became more confident in their abilities, more articulate in their communication, and more prepared to navigate the uncertainties of the future. Whether they choose to pursue entrepreneurship or another path, the skills and mindset they developed will serve them well beyond this program. The SWMN CEO program continues to demonstrate the power of experiential education. It equips students with more than just business knowledge—it instills confidence, fosters independence, and inspires a mindset of lifelong learning. It has been an honor to guide this year's cohort, and I look forward to seeing the impact they will make in their communities and beyond.



## Our Mission

Entrepreneurship education seeks to prepare people, especially youth, to be responsible, enterprising individuals who become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers and contribute to economic development and sustainable communities.

The CEO program is much more than a textbook course. Rather, students are immersed in real life learning experiences with the opportunities to take risks, manage the results, and learn from the outcomes.

[southwestminnesotaceo.com](http://southwestminnesotaceo.com)



## Joe Douty Memorial Scholarship

The SWMN CEO board created a scholarship for those who participated in the program, which they have now named in honor of board member and generous business sponsor Joe Douty. THREE \$1,000 scholarships were awarded. The application included writing an essay about their experiences in SWMN CEO, as well as their participation and attendance throughout the year.

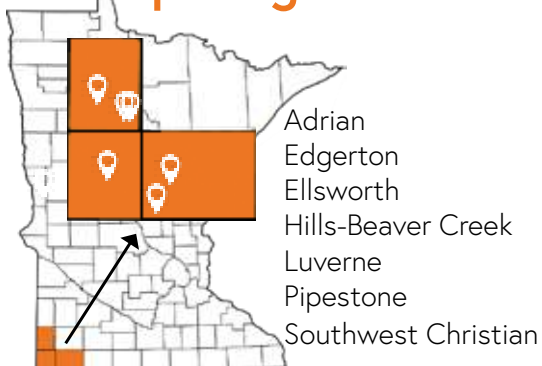
This year's winners are: EJ Wegener, Ashton Pick, Hazel Sailor



# CEO: A PROGRAM WITH A WIDE IMPACT



## Participating Schools



## Board members

- |                            |                                 |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Craig Oftedahl • Luverne   | Tyler Bush • Hills-Beaver Creek |
| Lisa Dinger • Luverne      | Dan LaRock • Hills-Beaver Creek |
| Blake Klinsing • Pipestone | Cate Koehne • Adrian            |
| Scott Dahl • Pipestone     | Jill Wolf • Adrian              |
| Lisa Pfeifle • Edgerton    | Casey Schilling • Ellsworth     |
| Ron Honken • Edgerton      |                                 |

# Letter from the Board Chair:

## Commitment is evident at all levels of CEO

When this year's class of young professionals completes their time in the Southwest Minnesota CEO Program, we will have 131 Alumni from the program, with a committed group of 23 Young Professionals in the 2026-2027 class representing 6 high schools.

I was introduced to the CEO program in 2020, and my first interaction with the participants was at the Trade Show hosted by the 2nd group in the program. I was certainly appreciative of the products and services that they were offering through their individual businesses, but I was most impressed by the strong class and character they displayed, the ability to look one in the eye, shake a hand, and carry on a purposeful conversation.

Since that event I've been honored to serve as a mentor, Board member, and now completing my term as Chairman. It has truly been one of the best returns on investment I have ever made.

Alumni are now actively involved in their communities as business leaders and/or business owners,



Ron Honken  
SWMN CEO Board Chair

and the Board of Directors will soon welcome an alumnus to the group. I believe the future will see many of the Board be alumni that lead the organization through continual evolution as community and business needs change. The alumni network for future participants to call upon will be quite a powerful force of influence and connections.

The current and past board members have continuously displayed a genuine commitment and intention to make this program the standard that other programs would be measured against, and one that each

community we represent would not only be proud of but have a desire to actively support. A member of this board is not allowed to just attend a few meetings; it is one in which real work is involved throughout the year. I can tell all of them, "Well done!"

The true cornerstone of the program is the facilitator, and we are blessed to have simply the best! Katie Baustian has shown grit and grace as she pushed all board members and young professionals to strive for greatness every day. She has been willing to be challenged to evolve the program, ensures all schools are updated on the program, and has been a trusted advisor and mentor to the Young Professionals. Katie, the program is extremely blessed to have you leading the way with purpose!

Tonight, I hope you'll seek opportunities to learn about each business that has been created, offer feedback, and perhaps the opportunity to continue the conversation after the event and beyond. I have no doubt that you'll be glad you did.

# Our class

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**BRYNN BAKKEN** is a junior at Hills-Beaver Creek High School and is the daughter of Jay and Suzie Bakken. She participates in National Honor Society, FCA, math league, Student Council, basketball, volleyball, track and field, and softball. In college, Brynn plans to run track and pursue a degree in psychology. During her time in CEO, she has learned many new skills that will help in all aspects of life. Her network has expanded greatly, giving her many new opportunities to learn and grow. She has developed her knowledge about public speaking, managing conflict, and the different aspects of running a business. Brynn's individual business, Exalted, provides tarnish-free Christian charm necklaces that allow customers to subtly express their faith. Exalted is fully committed to providing quality jewelry and building relationships with customers. Looking back at her time in the program, she is incredibly grateful for the opportunity, and would like to thank all of the people who made it possible.



**HANNAH COWELL** is a junior at Luverne Public Schools. She is the daughter of Missy and Billy Cowell. Hannah participates in volleyball, basketball, and Faith Club. She enjoys spending time with family and friends and is also actively involved in her church, where she continues to grow in her faith. Hannah's biggest takeaway from the CEO class has been the relationships she has built with business owners in the surrounding communities. She has gained valuable skills through the process of creating her own business, Sugar Crush. Sugar Crush makes homemade bundt cakes for special occasions or simply as a sweet treat. Another important takeaway for Hannah has been the growth in her confidence, especially when speaking in front of large groups. She thanks the CEO program, the facilitator, her mentor Ladonna VanAartsen, and her classmates.



**TESSA CLARK-CRAWFORD** is a senior from Hills-Beaver Creek High School. She is the daughter of Blake Crawford and Kala Clark. She participates in the CEO program, peer tutoring, and FFA. After she graduates, she plans on getting married in June and moving to Sioux Falls and continuing to grow her business. Through the CEO program she has learned what it takes to make a great business and to trust her mentors with any help she needs. Tessa has also built her confidence in her speaking and leadership skills she did not know that she needed. She built up her networking team from the ground up. The business Tessa started is Heart&Hive Personal Assisting and Organizing, where she plans on making all of her clients feel refreshed and light. Heart&Hive is a value-based business, where the business focuses on faith, care and intention. Tessa could have never done any of this without the help of her mentor Heather Kittilson.



**MYA ERICKSON** is a senior from Hills-Beaver Creek High School. She is the daughter of Aaron and Heather Erickson. In school, she participates in volleyball, Student Council, math league, National Honor Society, FFA, peer tutoring, and FCA. Next year, she will continue her education at South Dakota State University, majoring in either elementary education or business. Through CEO, she has significantly grown her confidence in public speaking, learned the importance of networking, how to work better in a team, and discovered many local businesses in her community. Mya is the owner and founder of Hometown Paws & Co., which provides high-quality, handmade, and customizable pet bandanas that allow pet owners to express their pets' personalities. Mya is so grateful for the friendships she has made and the opportunity to be involved in the CEO class.

**KEEGAN HAMM** is a Senior at Southwest Minnesota Christian High School. He is the son of Derek and Cayla Hamm. He participates in soccer, golf, youth group, and the CEO program. Keegan's plans after high school are to go to SDSU for aviation. Keegan has learned social skills and teamwork throughout the year. He is more confident in speaking in groups and having conversations with adults. As the CEO of this year's class, he learned how to become a better leader and the importance of communication and teamwork. Keegan's individual business is called Precision Exterior Cleaning. Precision Exterior Cleaning is a business that cleans windows, gutters, or anything that needs to be pressure-washed. Keegan has made some great memories in this class, and he has also made new friends that will last a lifetime. He is very grateful for the opportunity he was given to be a part of this program.



**BEN HARTQUIST** is a junior at Luverne High School and the son of Jeff and Sara Hartquist. He is involved in hockey, golf, football, Student Council (serving as class president), youth group, peer tutoring, Cardinal Academies, choir, and National Honor Society. Ben plans to pursue a career in the medical field. Through his experience in the CEO program, he has developed skills such as communication, organization, professionalism, and problem solving. One piece of advice that has stood out to him is to surround yourself with good people, because you become the average of the five people you spend the most time with. Ben is the owner and creator of Canvas Creations, a business that produces high-quality prints featuring historic photographs from local communities. The goal of Canvas Creations is to preserve and showcase local history by turning historic images into modern wall art that people are proud to display in their homes or offices. Ben is grateful for everything he has learned through the CEO program and looks forward to applying these experiences and skills in the future.



**RYLEE KURTZ** is a junior at Luverne High School. She is the daughter of Austin and Ashley Kurtz. She participates in hockey, softball, National Honor Society, choir, BPA, youth group, Cardinal Academies, and is also a Lifeguard at Luverne Aquatics and Fitness. Through the CEO program, she has been able to become comfortable with the uncomfortable. She gained important soft skills, such as a handshake and being able to have a good conversation with people she may not know. She has learned that small things such as first impressions, dressing professionally, work ethic, and having a good attitude can bring someone a long way. Rylee's business, Bonded Permanent Jewelry, provides its customers with clasp-free permanent jewelry that means something more. The CEO program has left a lasting impact on Rylee. She looks back at her time during the program and is so grateful for the amazing experience and the people she got to meet and share the experience with.



**HUNTER LEENDERTS** is a junior at Hills-Beaver Creek High School and the son of Greg and Laura Leenderts. He participates in football, track and field, summer strength training, and FFA. During his time in the CEO program, Hunter has developed many skills that will benefit him throughout his life. He has built a strong network of professional contacts who will be valuable resources for future business advice and guidance. Throughout the class, Hunter gained confidence in public speaking, learned how to start conversations with new people, and developed a deeper understanding of the many aspects of running a business. Hunter's individual business, Big Rig Shine, specializes in polishing aluminum using a three-step process that restores metal surfaces to look like new again. Big Rig Shine is committed to building quality relationships with customers while meeting their polishing needs with excellent service.





**DAVID LINGEN** is a senior from Pipestone Area Schools. He is son of Mark Lingen and Analyn Hamot. He is involved in journaling, yearbook and peer tutoring. Through his time in CEO, he gained new connections and learned to take calculated risk. David is the founder of STRS Clothing. STRS Clothing is a hoodie business that provides comfortable, sleek style. David's favorite part of the CEO program was working as a team towards the class business. He plans on going to SDSU for marketing in the future while also saving up money for a business.



**ABIGAYL OLSON** is a senior at Hills-Beaver Creek High School. She is the daughter of Dana and Alyson Olson. She is involved in Student Council, Math League, FFA, National Honor Society, and golf. Her future plans include majoring in psychology and sports management at North Dakota State University. Abby's biggest takeaways from CEO have been learning how to better communicate and developing professional skills. She appreciates the relationship she built with her mentor, and learning about all the businesses in the community. Abby's personal business is Sunkissed Skin & Co., a body care business that specializes in handcrafted body butters and body oils. The mission of her business is to provide high quality, nourishing, non-greasy body care products that promote healthy skin and everyday self-care. She is very grateful for the opportunity to be in CEO and to grow her network and skills.



**ASHTON PICK** is a junior at Luverne High School and the son of Renae and Brian Pick. He is actively involved in sports, participating in both basketball and track and field. Through his experience in the CEO program, Ashton has developed valuable skills, especially in public speaking and time management as he balances academics, athletics, and his role as CFO of the class business. One of his biggest takeaways from the program is the importance of meeting deadlines—not just to complete tasks, but to build trust and reliability. Ashton has also gained real-world insight through his business, AP Curb & Clean, which focuses on improving the exterior appearance of properties. Ashton values the life lessons learned through CEO and looks forward to continuing to grow and apply these skills in the future.



**RIGGINS RHEAULT** is a junior at Hill-Beaver Creek High School. Riggins is the son of Josh and Val Rheault. He participates in football, basketball, golf, math league, Knowledge Bowl, and Student Council. Riggins has learned a lot of skills during his time as CEO that he will use throughout life. He has built a lot of connections with business owners around the area that can provide help whenever he needs it. Riggins also learned communication skills, learning how to greet people, and learning about business behind the scenes. Riggins individual business, PRO-FIT GRIP, is a golf club regripping business that provides efficient, high-quality service for the avid golfers in the local communities. Riggins is grateful for this program and all the opportunities that have been presented to him from this program.

**GAVYN ROWDEN** is a Junior at Pipestone Area High School and the son of Jeff and Samantha Rowden. He is involved in football, baseball, and youth group. Gavyn plans to attend college to pursue a degree in construction management while continuing to grow his interest in business and entrepreneurship. One piece of advice that has stood out to him is to surround yourself with good people, because you become the average of the five people you spend the most time with. Gavyn is the owner and founder of Gloss & Go Mobile Detailing, a business dedicated to providing convenient, high-quality car detailing services directly to customers. The goal of Gloss & Go Mobile Detailing is to make professional vehicle cleaning accessible to busy car owners by bringing reliable detailing services right to their home or workplace. Gavyn is grateful for everything he has learned through the CEO program and looks forward to applying these experiences and skills as he continues to grow his business and pursue future opportunities.



**HAZEL SAILOR** is the daughter of April and Nick Wassenaar and a junior at Luverne High School. She is involved in track and field, Student Council, peer tutoring, BPA, Cardinal Academies, and youth group. Hazel's biggest takeaway from her involvement in CEO has been learning the value of teamwork and the importance of communication. She also enjoyed the many connections CEO provided and the professional network she has built within her surrounding communities. Hazel is the owner of Refined, a handcrafted bath and body brand. Through Refined, she offers sugar scrubs and soaps made with skin-loving ingredients that gently exfoliate, cleanse, and nourish. Hazel is extremely grateful for the opportunity to be part of a program like CEO and for the many life skills she has gained through the experience.



**HADLEY SPATH** is a senior from Hills-Beaver Creek High School. Hadley is the daughter of Mike Spath and Robin Kroon. She participates in basketball, volleyball, FFA, National Honor Society, peer tutoring, and math league. Hadley plans to attend the University of South Dakota, double-majoring in elementary education and special education. Through CEO, she has learned communication, time management, and organizational skills. Hadley's individual business is called H.S. Photography. H.S. Photography aims to become a trusted photographer who captures meaningful milestones and memories. The goal is to celebrate moments such as love, family growth, and important events while creating photos that clients can look back on for many years. Hadley has been so blessed to be able to be in the CEO program and learn so many important skills that will help her in her future life.



**AVA STEINHOFF** is a junior at Hills-Beaver Creek High School. She is involved in the National Honor Society, basketball, volleyball, track, and math league. She plans on getting a degree in Marketing and Business. CEO has taught Ava many things like teamwork and overcoming disagreements. Ava has grown as an individual and gained confidence in new settings. Her business is Lumea. Lumea is an affordable, waterproof, customizable charm jewelry brand. Lumea sells both earrings and necklaces. Ava is so grateful for the opportunity to start her own business and the skills she has learned along the way.





**KAITLYN TAYLOR** is a senior at Adrian High School and the daughter of Rachel Snyder and Dustin Taylor. She is involved in track, 4-H, and Girl Scouts. Through the CEO program, she has learned a great deal from local business owners and her mentor, while also growing more confident in her public speaking skills. After high school, she plans to pursue a career in cosmetology. Kaitlyn is the owner of Dirty Grounds, a business that offers dirty sodas and coffee. Through this venture, she hopes to bring a cozy and welcoming coffee and soda shop to the community of Adrian, Minnesota. She is incredibly grateful for the opportunity to be part of the CEO program and has truly enjoyed her time working alongside her classmates, mentors, board members, and facilitator.



**EDUARDO WEGENER** is a senior at Hills-Beaver Creek Highschool. His parents are Matt and Kayla Boeve, and Dan Wegener. He is involved in football, basketball, track, FCA, and National Honor Society. His future plans are to go to Northwestern and play football while studying Ag Business. In the CEO program Eduardo exercised his team-first mindset as the one of the members of the top sales teams of the class business. Through his role, he learned how to deal with opposing opinions and making sure things are getting done. Eduardo is the owner of Platinum Can where he aims to bring his customers high-quality, long-lasting fresh can that offer exceptional cleanliness in addition to their amazing properties. EJ is very thankful for the CEO program and the lessons and relationships he has gained through it.

## Guest speakers and business visits – inspirational and informational

Adrian Auto  
Adrian Dental  
Area Chamber of Commerce Panel  
Ashley Chapman  
Barn on 60th  
Blac-X-Farms  
Blake Klinsing  
B's Fitness

Carrie Young  
Cattnach Insurance Agency  
Christensen Broadcasting  
Christine Bullerman  
Chuck Shaver  
Clothier By Dawn.  
Dahl Motors  
Dari King  
Dayton Avenue Orchard  
DeBoer Chevrolet  
Desiree Petrich  
Doug Eisma  
Dr. Jonathon Aho  
Edgerton Bakery  
Edgerton Enterprise  
Fey Industries  
First Bank & Trust  
First State Bank SW  
Full Family Farms  
Game Plan 4 Hope  
Harnack Brothers Builders

Hartquist Funeral Home  
Henning Construction  
Holly Sammons  
Jill Wolf  
K&M Concrete  
Keith Elbers  
Midwest Fire  
Midwest Kennel  
Ms. Jasper's Etiquette Class  
New Vision Co-op  
Pipestone Helping Farmers  
Pipestone Medical Center  
Professional Ag Marketing  
Quality Printing  
Reactive Wellness  
Rock County History Center  
Rock Ranch  
Rock River Ag  
S&S Locker  
Sailor Plastics  
Second Nature Taxidermy

Sunshine Foods  
The Cidery  
Tinklenberg Lumber  
Tri-State Hood Cleaning  
Whispering Pines Events Center  
White Tail Farms  
Windy Ridge Veterinary Clinic  
Winter Title & Abstract





## Our days

During the CEO year there are four types of days: class day, business visit, guest speaker and fun day. The majority of our days involve visiting businesses in our five communities. The students have the opportunity to meet many business owners, hear their story, and learn how they operate their business. The students also learn about various career possibilities in Southwest Minnesota. Some guest speakers visit the class to share their stories along with

life wisdom and advice. On class days CEO meets in assigned locations in each community. On these days, the students may learn a skill, work on their class or individual business. Every once in a while they need to have fun! These days are designed to build rapport within the group and have a more casual encounter.

# Our mentors – making the difference



A mentoring program provides an effective networking model for Southwest Minnesota CEO students. Establishing effective one on one connections, that will strengthen the student's awareness of employment opportunities in our county and develop greater social skills through this mentorship experience. Every Southwest Minnesota CEO student, known as a young professional, is matched with a mentor from the business community. Ultimately, these relationships strengthen the CEO program's success and builds generational bridges between the student and the business community.

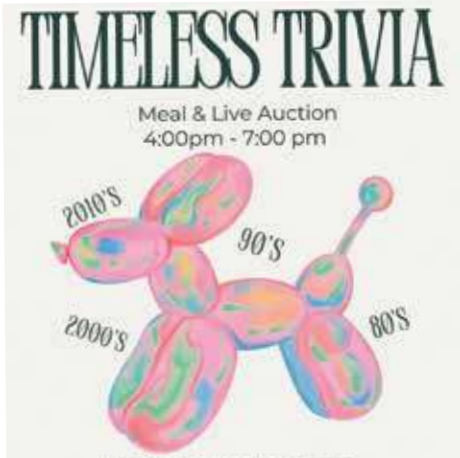
## **Responsibilities and activities:**

- Meet for scheduled meetings to discuss what they are learning in CEO
- Attend Monthly Mentor Mornings
- Review the student's business plan for their individual business
- Experience the weekly progress of their protege through reading their journal entries of what they experience each day in CEO

## **2025-26 Mentors**

Marie LaRock  
Heather Kittleson  
LaDonna VanAartsen  
Molly Schilling  
Doug Eisma  
Cade Wenninger  
Jessica Mead  
Chris Harnack  
Tyler Bush  
Dawn Heidebrink  
Quinn Buss  
Lisa Dinger  
Blake Jasper  
Jordan Papik  
Dan LaRock  
Tammy Loosbrock  
Josh Rheault  
Jessica Martens

# Class business – Trivia event



This year, our CEO class successfully planned and hosted a Timeless Trivia Night event.

The entire experience gave us valuable insight into what it truly takes to organize an event, while also teaching us important lessons about communication, teamwork, and leadership. Our event was held at Generations in Luverne and featured a catered meal, a live auction, sponsored tables, and multiple rounds of trivia focused on past decades.

An immense amount of effort went into planning the event. From the beginning, we knew we wanted to create something unique, an event that stood out from those hosted by previous classes. After each of us presented our ideas, we collectively decided that a Trivia Night would be both fun and original. Once that decision was made, we immediately

moved into the planning process.

To stay organized and make the most of our time, we divided into committees. Some focused on marketing, while others handled decorations, transforming the venue into a space inspired by the 80s and 90s. Another group worked on creating engaging trivia questions for the event. Delegating responsibilities in this way kept everyone involved, made the workload more manageable, and allowed us to use our individual strengths while learning from one another.

Throughout the process, we learned many important lessons. One of the most significant was the importance of listening. Early on, our meetings were often unproductive because people would talk over each other, making it difficult to hear everyone's ideas and reach decisions. This

slowed our progress and created unnecessary frustration.

Over time, we recognized this issue and worked to improve. We became more intentional about listening, ensuring that everyone had the opportunity to share their thoughts. Once we made a decision, we committed to it and avoided revisiting it unnecessarily. This shift helped us communicate more effectively and work more efficiently as a team.

A major factor in the success of our event was the strong support we received throughout the planning process. We are incredibly grateful for the local businesses, mentors, sponsors, and board members who generously contributed their time, services, and resources. Their support not only enhanced our event but also created a strong sense of community.

Despite the challenges and occasional disagreements, we ultimately came together to create a memorable and successful event. Timeless Trivia Night was not just about raising money—it was about collaboration, personal growth, and enjoying the experience as a team. In the end, it was truly a night to remember.

~ Rylee Kurtz



# Alumni

## 2019

Sixta Barrios  
Claire Baustian  
Lilli Donohue  
Courtney Fey

Audra Homandberg  
Kiara Honken  
Halle Hough  
Sara Knips

Beau Loosbrock  
Mallary Remund  
Josie Scholten  
Oscar Serreyn

Madison Spath  
McCall Stegenga  
Joseph Van Essen  
Matthew Ziegler

## 2020

Brinna Bloemendaal  
Quinn Buss  
Colby Crabtree  
Jonathan Eisma

Regan Feit  
Rylee Gee  
Brenna Henning  
Teagan Leusink

Bryn Mongeau  
Nathan Nekali  
Scott Nolan  
Isabel Smeins

Austin Taylor  
Lindsey Trujillo  
Cade Wenninger

## 2021

Kaden Anderson  
Reghan Bork  
Kendall Buss  
Wyatt Decker

Keegan Fey  
Elli Kracht  
Shelby Kracht  
Allison LaRock

Elsie O'Neil  
Jayson Rops  
Haleah Soto

Jori Strasser  
Cybil VanderTop  
Mia Wenzel

## 2022

Hunter Ahrendt  
Julianne Eisma  
Hiltyn Heitkamp  
Ellynor Klosterbuer  
Jocelynn Mann

Noah Mehlhaff  
Samantha Moser  
Mallory Nelson  
Mary Opitz

Melody Remund  
Braydon Ripka  
Rogen Smidt  
Hermella Suda

Kamryn VanBatavia  
Owen Vogel  
Mallory VonTersch  
Mackenzie Voss

## 2023

Kayla Bloemendaal  
Anika Boll  
Abby Boltjes  
Morgan Bonnett  
Olivia Bork

Kai Buss  
Connor Connell  
Kristofer Eischens  
Jacie Graham  
Mason Hamm

Lauren Hansen  
Henry Hartquist  
Camden Hoven  
Isabella Oye  
Chloe Olivier

Belle Smidt  
Will Serie  
Gavin Reisch  
Ana Wolf

## 2024

Christopher Amundson  
Hailey Boll  
Amira Cowell  
Malyki Little

Taylor Post  
Maria Rops  
Harli Rozeboom  
Alex Schlosser

Kiesli Smith  
Sarah Stegenga  
Riley Tatge

Joy Taubert  
Kylie Vander Lugt  
Makhi Winter

## 2025

Beau Bakken  
Payton Behr  
Connor Bose  
Kasey Buss  
Cathryn Feikema

Avery Feye  
Jackson Gacke  
Clara Joens  
Jaydon Johnson  
Blake Leenderts

Paula Martinez Penuelas  
Morgan McTigue  
Olivia Muyskens  
Jackson Post

Jordyn Reisch  
Kaylyn Urdahl  
Kianna Winter  
Isabel Wysong

# Financial Data

Since its inception in 2016, the SWMN CEO program has thrived thanks to the generous support of local organizations, businesses, and individuals across southwest Minnesota. Nearly 40 contributors from communities such as Adrian, Beaver Creek, Edgerton, Ellsworth, Hardwick, Hills, Jasper, Leota, Luverne, and Pipestone have played a vital role in sustaining this initiative.

Funding is provided entirely through community donations, in-kind contributions, and grants. These gifts support one of the premier entrepreneurial education programs available to high school juniors and seniors in the region. Each year, the curriculum continues to evolve and improve, offering students a dynamic and impactful learning experience.

## Financial Stewardship

All contributions are received and managed by the Rock County Community Foundation (RCCF) on behalf of the SWMN CEO program. The foundation's accounting and administrative services are essential to the program's continued success, and their support is deeply appreciated.

Participating school districts are not required to provide financial support. Instead, they are asked to promote the program to interested students and offer administrative assistance to those selected. We are grateful for the time and resources these districts dedicate to ensuring each student's success.

### 2024 Financial Summary

Beginning Balance (January 1, 2025): \$133,334.52

Total Revenues (2025): \$42,950.00

Total Expenses (2025): \$77,294.39

Ending Balance (December 31, 2025): \$93,990.13

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**Current Balance (as of April 15, 2026): \$78,921.99**

Revenues include contributions and pledged support. Expenses cover facilitator compensation, marketing and supplies for class businesses, educational tools, technology, and facility rentals.

### Looking Ahead

As the 2025–2026 academic year concludes, the SWMN CEO program remains in a stable financial position, though slightly below the strength of the prior year. Continued corporate and community support has allowed us to meet current needs, and we are focused on expanding our base of supporters and contributions in the year(s) ahead. The board extends its sincere appreciation to our partners whose generosity continues to sustain the program and support the development of future entrepreneurs.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Tyler Bush, Treasurer



# Thank you to our financial supporters

Adrian Auto & Towing

Adrian Family Dental

Big Top Tents and Events

Blac-X-Farms

Buffalo Ridge Concrete

Buffalo Ridge Insurance

Busse Plumbing & Heating

Cap CO2 Solutions

Christensen Broadcasting

C & B Operations

Cattnach Insurance Agency

City of Luverne

Continental Western Group

Dahl Motors

Dan and Marie LaRock

DeBoer Chevrolet

DHS AG

Dinger Sales and Services

Dingmann and Sons Funeral Home

Fey Financial Group

Fey Industries Inc.

First Bank And Trust

First Farmers and Merchants

First State Bank Southwest

Graphenteen Real Estate Group

Highmark Performance

Honken Consulting, LLC

Hords Farms West

Hartquist Funeral Home

K&M Concrete

Lineage Logistics

Luverne Area Chamber

Luverne Building Center

McClure Plumbing and Heating Inc

Meulebroeck Taubert & Company

Midwest Fire

Minnwest Bank

Papik Motors

Pipestone County Medical Center

Pipestone Helping Farmers

Professional Ag Marketing

Quality Printing

Real Estate Retrievers

Rock County Community  
Foundation

Rock River Ag

Rock/Nobles Cattleman

S&S Trucking

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Southwest Initiative Foundation

Southwest Mutual Insurance

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Sunshine Foods

V&M Locker

Wilson Manufacturing

Winter Title and Abstract

Woodstock Communications

## Would you like to become a supporter?

Southwest Minnesota CEO program is fully funded by community businesses. This support covers the salary of the facilitator and program expenses while allowing the students to learn about how a business is operated and the opportunities available to them in Southwest Minnesota. A supporter commits to a three-year contribution of \$1,000 each year. Please contact Dan LaRock if you are interested in becoming a supporter.

