

ANNUAL REPORT EDITION 2023

CENTRAL ILLINOIS **CEO**[®]



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.

CICEO (Central Illinois Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities) is based on the successful program in Effingham, Illinois. The communities of Blue Ridge, Clinton, Maroa-Forsyth and Warrensburg-Latham School Districts have worked together to establish the CICEO program to serve students from their high schools, beginning in the fall of 2019.

The CICEO Program:

- Is funded by business investors and organized by the CICEO Board which is not part of any school board or school district.
- Is open to high school juniors and seniors.
- Selects students through a rigorous application process.
- Meets for 90 minutes each day, provides 2 high school credits and students have the option of receiving 3 college credits.
- Utilizes area businesses as classrooms; does not meet on a school campus.
- Visits dozens of area businesses and hosts more than 50 guest speakers each year.
- Provides an opportunity for each student to start their own business.
- Provides a mentor from the business community for each CICEO student.
- Hosts an annual Trade Show to showcase students businesses.



As I look back, I can't help but think about how much the CICEO program has progressed over the last several years. Each year has presented its own set of challenges and we have learned to adapt and overcome. Thanks to the support we have received from our investors, the leadership of our facilitator, Melanie Brown and our board of directors we are finishing up another successful year.

This year's class has learned and experienced many of the challenges of running a small business. We have seen them grow in many areas, as young adults, and as entrepreneurs. As they move forward in life, I look forward to seeing what their futures bring for both them and the communities they represent.

The future is bright for CICEO. This year's class has not only shown they could be successful in this program, but they have shown other students the opportunities the class provides. Because of the dedication of the students, school counselors and administrators, next year's class will be the biggest yet. I appreciate everyone that has been involved and look forward to many more years of success.



Justin Fentress, Board Chair



Melanie Brown, Facilitator

Student recruitment for CEO occurs in the spring. One year ago the 10 students who are now graduating from the program took a very brave step and clicked SUBMIT on their CEO application. Some of them had a clear understanding of what the program was and others signed up looking for a non-traditional business course. When the school year started last August, many of them did not know each other but were quickly thrown into group projects and experiences that required them to lean on their teammates, make decisions and even conduct business meetings with local business owners. Watching them over the past 8 months as they navigated through the various projects, grew in their public speaking skills and overall confidence, coming together as a team, and launching their own businesses has been absolutely remarkable!

This program teaches about the world of business, but more importantly highlights the businesses within the communities in which they live, exposes them to a variety of industries, career paths and teaches life skills. I believe this experience leaves a mark not only on the students but our communities. These students are world changers and I cannot wait to see what they accomplish in the years to come!

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 Central Illinois CEO program for future students. Investors also contribute their time to the program. Hosting business visits, providing guest speakers and/or serving as mentors. All crucial to the success of Central IllinoisCEO Program.

121 Coffee Run

Baum Chevrolet Buick

Brown, Hay & Stephens

Busey Bank

Central Illinois Title Company

Chastain & Associates LLC

Clinton Chiropractic Center

Clinton Community Education Foundation

Corn Belt Energy

Dan Caulkins - Outreach 101

Dave and Susan Wilson

DeWitt Savings Bank

Drew and Kristin Moore

Enel

Exelon Corporation

Farm Credit IL

First Mid Insurance Group

First National Bank

Forvis

Harbrand

Heartland Ag Group, Ltd.

Hickory Point Bank

Horve Builders

Jake and Katherine Brodbeck

John and Cindy Oakley

Lion's Club of Warrensburg

Maroa Forsyth Foundation

Maxwell Counters

Drew & Kristin Moore

Moore and Warner

Kim Ekena

Northwestern Mutual

Nutrien Ag Solutions

Pioneer Seed

Regions

Risinger

Save A Lot

Taylor and Lynch

Warrensburg Fireman's Association

Warrensburg Latham Educational Foundation

WHOW

Wilson Chrysler Jeep





John Aupperle

Hello, my name is John Aupperle. I am a senior at Maroa-Forsyth High School. I like to stay involved with my school by taking part in many extracurricular activities. You may find me on a golf course with my friends, leading a FFA meeting, or giving ideas as part of the Principal's Advisory Committee. Serving my community is also an important part of my life as I am a member of the National Honor Society, which gives me opportunities to help within my town and county. When I am not consumed by extracurricular activities and school, I enjoy detailing vehicles as that is my individual business. After I graduate, I am planning to attend Iowa State University to major in Agriculture Business. My interest in business led me to pursue the CEO program to learn skills that I will be able to use in a business setting. CEO is teaching me very valuable lessons on how to network, lead, and problem solve. I would like to thank the investors, board members, and everyone who makes this amazing program possible.



Macy Carter

Hello! My name is Macy Carter & I am a junior at Clinton High School. I am in lots of extracurricular activities at my school such as student council Secretary, a freshman mentor, class representative, National Honor Society, and on the Clinton Cheer Team. I chose to join the CEO program because I have heard so many great things about the program, and it helps you learn so many responsibilities for later in life. My dream is to become a real estate agent and own my own business. Now that I have completed this program I feel like I am a step further in everything. The knowledge and skills you learn in this program is irreplaceable! (Even though it may take lots of coffee). I would like to thank our board members, investors, and our awesome facilitator Melanie for making this happen! Also follow my individual business on Facebook and Instagram @swisherhillorganics!!



Mason DeVore

My name is Mason DeVore. I am a junior at Maroa Forsyth High School. I am involved in the football program at Maroa and have played for seven years. I'm always having a good time and one of my strengths is that I do not get rattled in stressful situations. The main reason I decided to join the CEO program was to broaden my horizons while still in high school and to learn more about the business world, in order to become an entrepreneur when I'm older. I'd like to thank everyone who made this opportunity possible.



Alexa Harris

Hi! My name is Alexa Harris & I am a senior at Clinton High School. I am passionate about fashion, sustainability, and I love to cook during my free time. I love being a part of my school & community. During my time at CHS I have participated in many extracurricular activities such as cross country, track, excel club, freshmen mentoring, President of Student Council, & Secretary of the National Honor Society. As a member of the CEO class of 2023, I have gained confidence & have learned so many life skills. I have also learned a lot about myself and how to work with others. Through CEO, I created my brand Renewal which is a vintage clothing brand that also sells clothing that I reworked. After graduation, I plan on attending the University of Minnesota to study apparel design. I truly appreciate my time in CEO for making me the person I am today.



Jack Horve

Hello, my name is Jack Horve. I am currently a senior at Maroa-Forsyth High School. In school I participated in Football and National Honor Society. I enjoy reading, biking, and piano in my free time. I plan to attend the University of Illinois and study business as well as music theory. I joined CEO to further my knowledge of business and learn more about my community.



Makayla Hunt

Hello my name is MaKayla Hunt. I am currently attending Warrensburg Latham High school and plan to attend Paul Mitchell Cosmetology School after high school starting in August 2023. This program has helped me prepare for my future by helping me learn how to open my own hair salon one day. This program is absolutely fantastic and there is nothing like this in the regular school setting. I have never regretted my decision of joining this program. Anywhere from the classroom days to the guest speakers and business tours, you never see the same thing two days in a row. In my free time i enjoy spending time with family and friends and working on my individual business. My business is called Notorious Scents and I sell candles, wax melts, and car freshies.



Carlye Parson

Hi I'm Carlye Parson and I am a junior at Clinton High School. I plan to go to college in the future and I hope to be a Forensic Pathologist. In the meantime, I want to do something in the field of law enforcement. Education is very important to me. I believe having a good education is a great opportunity to set yourself up for success. I enjoy math, sciences, books, and documentaries. I also enjoy camping, spending time outside and working towards my goals in CEO. I joined the CEO program to become more social and to learn to work better with others. I also joined CEO because of the opportunities that it has provided and the people involved. The people who make the program possible mean alot to me. Thank you to everyone who makes this CEO program possible!



Elan Rodriguez

Hello, my name is Elan Rodriguez and I'm a senior at Maroa-Forsyth High-school. I'm a very busy individual and enjoy learning new skills or developing my current skills. Outside of school, I'm busy looking out for my businesses, a gas station, and a restaurant. In my free time I like to play guitar, study chess, study my schoolwork, & crunch numbers for my businesses. After I graduate I plan to go to SIUE to study orthodontics. What drove me to join CEO was to enhance my current business skills and become a better communicator. The CEO program has pushed me far beyond my boundaries in terms of communication & time management. It has helped me grow as a person, be a better salesman, and become a greater team player for my businesses, Tacos El Paisa, Mortera's gasoline, & Las Aguas Frescas. I'd like to thank every member of the CEO program to keep this program running for future entrepreneurs.

Jace Snyder



Hello, my name is Jace Snyder. I'm a junior at Maroa-Forsyth High School. I enjoy learning about the stock market and working my job. I used to play football but unfortunately I hurt my back and had to retire. Now I am focusing on school and learning as much as I can about business. I wanted to join the CICEO Program because I want to start my own business in Florida with Mason DeVore. I have this dream of owning a business together and then owning a investing firm on my own. I think CICEO will help show the path to how a successful business operates and will show me the business world. I would like to thank the board and investors that make this experience possible.

"It is only when we take chances. when our lives improve. The initial and the most difficult risk that we need to take is to become honest." - Walter Anderson



Aiden Tohill

My name is Aiden Toohill. I am a Junior at Clinton High School. I compete in Golf, Basketball and Baseball. I also enjoy being a part of FFA, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, and FCA. These clubs and foundations are extremely important to me. While I like to compete in sports, I love being involved with FCA and helping other students to strengthen their faith. I learned all year from local business owners and Mentors, and made friendships that will last a lifetime. I would like to thank the investors, board members, and everyone who makes this amazing program possible.

An important piece of the CEO experience is visiting local businesses in YOUR PROGRAM NAME HERE. 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. This year the CICEO students had the honor of visiting **more than 50 business owners** in the Central Illinois area.

Shirley Stelbrink, Learning Alliances Co.
Tom Kopieka
Stephanie McLeese, Santos McLeese PR
Karla Miller, Hickory Point Bank
George Streckfuss, Brass Horn
Wanda Timmons, Perfect Pair
Adam Brown, B&B Farms
Cameron Reynolds, CEO Alumni
Sue McLaughlin, Farmer City City Hall
Bruce Nims
David Tyrolt, Dunn Company
Connie Unruh, TS Institute
Anne Matalonis
Stephanie Brown, Chastain & Associates
Kim & Ray Fields, Papa Murphy's Pizza
First National Bank of Clinton
Julie Scheuler Photography
WHOW
First Light
Marco NPK
Kim Ekena
Eric Benting, Chick-Fil-A
Courtney McLaren, U of I
Chris Boerm, ADM
Curt Nettles
Bev Soltdwedel, Toast Masters
Drew Moore, ATI
Mark Mestemacher, Ceres Barges

Michelle Sawicki, Barclay Library
Jim Peck, Mayor of Forsyth
Andy Thomas, MCK CPA & Advisors
Bart Rose, Regions Bank
Lindsey Wise, Brown, Hay & Stephens
Tim Sinclair
Angi Carter, Farm Credit
Jessica Whitlock, Outrajess Impact
PrepZelz by Anzee
Busey Bank
Scott Baum, Baum Chevrolet
Millikin University
Michelle Witzke, The Vault
Michelle Howe, Western IL University
Decatur Memorial Hospital
Steven Wilson, Wilson Chrysler Jeep
Brett Madison, ADM
Crawford's Pizza, Matt & Hilary Crawford
Ray's Chili, Jay Nicole
Red Door Spices, Jeana Griffiths
Jess McLeary, Flower Corner
Warner Hospital & Health Services
Herff Jones
Carpet Weavers





Each month we took time to participate in team building activities. Two activities the students participated this year were the high ropes course at Little Galilee and the human knot. They learned about communication and problem solving while having fun as a team.



The students were encouraged to participate in community service each quarter. They volunteered at the Feed My Starving Children mobile pack, made blankets and donated them to a local animal shelter and spent a morning cleaning windows at The Vault.



MENTORS



A Mentor is a business owner, entrepreneur, or intraprenuer from the PROGRAM NAME business community. A mentor is someone willing to share their time and expertise with a CEO student.



Julie Bilbrey, Executive Director
Memorial Hospital Foundation

Matt & Hilary Crawford, Owner
Crawford's Pizza

Kim Ekena
Retired ADM Exec.



Brynn Girdler, Co-owner
Crafted Commons & Coffee Corner

Kylie Hubrich, Co-owner
Crafted Commons & Coffee Corner

Tom Kopeika
Retired Computer Programmer



Alec Martin, Financial Advisor
Edward Jones

Matt Riley, Fiduciary Officer, Vice President
First National Bank & Trust Company of Clinton

Paul Skowron, CEO
Warner Hospital & Health Services

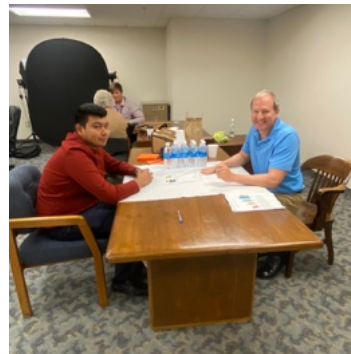
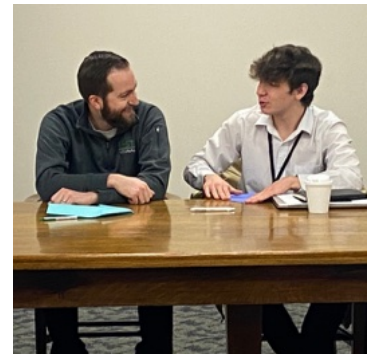
Camelle Tedrick, Real Estate Manager
Remax



Connie Unruh, Financial Literacy Coordinator
TS Institute

Nathan Wentworth, Farmer
Wentworth Farms

Karol Wilson, Vice President
Wilson Chrysler Jeep





The students made a net profit of over \$10,000 from their event. After expenses were accounted for they had approximately \$6,000 remaining. The CICEO Board granted each student a \$350 grant to help them launch their individual businesses. The remaining monies are used from program expenses.

Thank you to the sponsors of The Holiday Hustle!

Dunn Company	Fleet Feet
ATI	Star Silkscreen
Forsyth Fire Department	The City of Forsyth
Extended Pharmacy	Hearland Ag Group
Homewood Inn & Suites	Kim Ekena
Colee's Corner Pharmacy	
NEUHOF Media	
DeWitt Savings Bank	
TooHill Seed & Beef Service	
Baum Chevrolet	

The CICEO Class hosted a holiday themed 5k walk & run on December 17 at the Forsyth Park. In addition to the 5k, they had a silent auction and bake sale. Their goal was to spread Christmas cheer by having Christmas activities incorporated into a fun run/walk while making a profit.

More than 100 individuals sign up for the 5k on that cold winter's day! We even had two special visitors, Santa & the Grinch!

The students planned the event from start to finish. They secured more than \$5000 in sponsorships, worked with a local insurance company to obtain event insurance, partnered with the City of Forsyth, gathered items from local businesses for the silent auction and had a marketing strategy that included social media as well as radio ads.



Highlights from the year



Each year we host a Shark Tank Pitch event for the CICEO students to prepare them for Trade Show. We want to thank our sharks, Ben Cochran, NorthWestern Mutual Mary Diener, Blue Ridge High School Bruce Nims, entrepreneur Michelle Sawicki, Barclay Library

The students give a 3-5 minute pitch to the sharks and are evaluated on creativity, sustainability from a feasibility standpoint and overall pitch. The sharks select a "winner" and that student is awarded \$250 to help with the launch expenses of their business. Congratulations to the CICEO Shark Tank winner Jack Horve and thank you to NorthWestern Mutual for sponsoring the event!



The students hosted Coffee & Networking events; one in the fall and one in the spring. It was a great opportunity for them to get to network with investors, mentors, board members and community leaders!



Public speaking is a huge part of the CEO program. The students gain a lot of experience over the course of the year by presenting to a few board members or a panel, to presenting to more than 150 students while recruiting students.





Dedicated 2 Detail is an auto detailing business created by John Aupperle that allows you to get your vehicle looking brand new. Services range for a simple hand wash and hand dry all the way to the last layer of wax. He strives to keep vehicles clean and people feeling good about the vehicles they drive. You can follow along with his journey on Facebook @ Dedicated2Detail.



Swisher Hill Organics was established in 2023 by Macy Carter. She offers organic beauty products that are made with simple ingredients that are healthy for your skin. Her goal is to have everyone's skin feeling better and refreshed by using her products. It even provides fun things for you to use on your skin for people who have sensitive skin! Go do your skin a favor and go buy her products on instagram and facebook @swisherhillorganics



Mason's lawn care was established in 2023 by Mason DeVore. My company is a lawn care and snow removal company that I started to help people within the Decatur area that need their yard or driveway cleaned up and taken care of. You can follow my progress by following my Facebook page at Mason's Lawn Care.



Renewal is a reworked vintage clothing brand made by Alexa Harris in 2023. Alexa started this business to show her customers that being more sustainable did not mean that your style would suffer. If you want sustainable and unique clothing, you can follow Renewal on Instagram and Etsy @renewalbyalexa



Sunscents soaps is a soap company based out of Forsyth Illinois. Sunscents sells mostly to hotels and assisted livings around the area. Sunscents offers eight individual scents that are available in the form of bar soap and liquid soap. The soap is made with all natural ingredients that exfoliate and enhance skin condition.



Notorious Scents was established in 2023 by MaKayla Hunt. Inspired by her father's businesses Notorious P.I.G. and Notorious mEATS, she wanted to follow in his footsteps modeling her business name after his. Notorious Scents provides great smelling candles, wax melts, and car freshies. Suitable for men and women, Notorious Scents has a great scent for you and your family! Follow us on Facebook at Notorious Scents!



Bliss Boxes was created by Carlye Parson as an effort to help readers with ironically one of the biggest struggles they have; picking books. By picking those books for you based on your interests and creating a "bliss at home." Which you can also experience by following her on Instagram or Facebook at bliss_boxxess or emailing her at carlyeparson@icloud.com



Las Aguas Frescas is a small Mexican beverage business created by Elan Rodriguez. The beverages are mixtures of water, sugar, and various prominent flavors. Las Aguas Frescas works closely with Tacos El Paisa. They are both located at 104 S Route. Check both Facebook pages out! @El Pais & @Las Aguas Frescas.



Snyder Sneakers was established in 2023 by Jace Snyder. The idea of Snyder Sneakers sparked last summer when Jace sold his first pair of Jordans. Jace then knew he wanted to start a sneaker reselling side hustle. CEO allowed and gave Jace the push to start his sneaker reselling business. Snyder Sneakers buys and sells online on Facebook, Instagram, and OfferUp @SnyderSneakers.



Big Bad BBQ was established in 2023 by Aiden Toohill. It is a homemade BBQ sauce business that he created to help people never have a bad barbecue, eating experience again. You can follow his journey on Instagram @big_bad_bbq and Facebook @Big Bad BBQ

BOARD MEMBERS



Justin Fentress
Board Chair
Dewitt Savings Bank
President



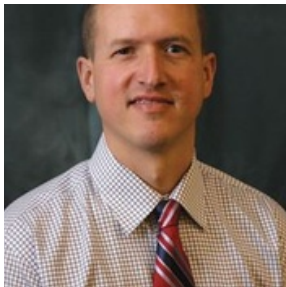
Kraig Ritter
Vice Chair
Board Officer Role



Angi Carter
Treasurer
Farm Credit IL
Vice President Lending



Katherine Brodbeck
Secretary
Sector 1 LLC
Owner



Ryan Aupperle
Board Member
Heartland Ag Group Ltd.
Farm Manager



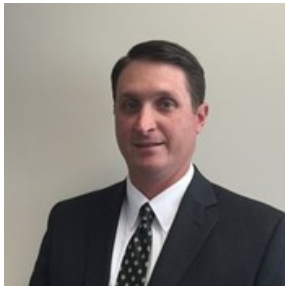
Curt Nettles
Board Member
Clinton Unit School District #15
Superintendent



Hillary Stanifer
Board Member
Blue Ridge CUSD #18
Superintendent



Cheryl Warner
Board Member
Warrensburg-Latham CUSD #11
Superintendent



Bart Rose
Board Member
Regions Bank
Marketing Executive



Kevin Maxwell
Board Member
Maxwell Counters
Founder



Kim Ekena
Board Member
Retired ADM



Cameron Reynolds
Board Member
CEO Alumni



Karol Wilson
Board Member
Wilson Chrysler Jeep
Vice President

CENTRAL ILLINOIS 



www.centralillinoisceo.com

Facebook: Central IL CEO

Instagram: centralillinoisceo

Facilitator@centralillinoisceo.com



Class of 2022:

Rachel Wisner, Grace Coffey, Brooke Oakley, Boston Hale, Reanna Munjoy and Morgan Jones.

Class of 2021:

Marina Rohman, Rheys Sams-Moore, Emma Culbertson, Mackenzee Willoughby, Emmah Cook and Jordan Gearlds.



Class of 2020:

Brenden Flannell, Trenton Sanders, Gabriel Jenkins, Madison Miller, Cameron Reynolds, Terry Hendriex, Vince Baldassari, Colton Hoback, Max Stauffer, Ruslan Turner

