

UNION COUNTY **CEO**®

2021-2022 Annual Report

unioncountyceo.com





OUR MISSION

We will prepare our youth to be responsible individuals who become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers and contribute to the economic development and sustainability of Union County, Illinois. It is our hope that these young entrepreneurs will follow in the footsteps of our business and community leaders, and will reside, work, raise families, and continue to give back to our community.

WHAT IS CEO?

Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) is a unique learning experience for Union County High School Students. Students visit area businesses, create and implement a class business, and develop business plans to start and operate their own small business as part of the CEO curriculum.

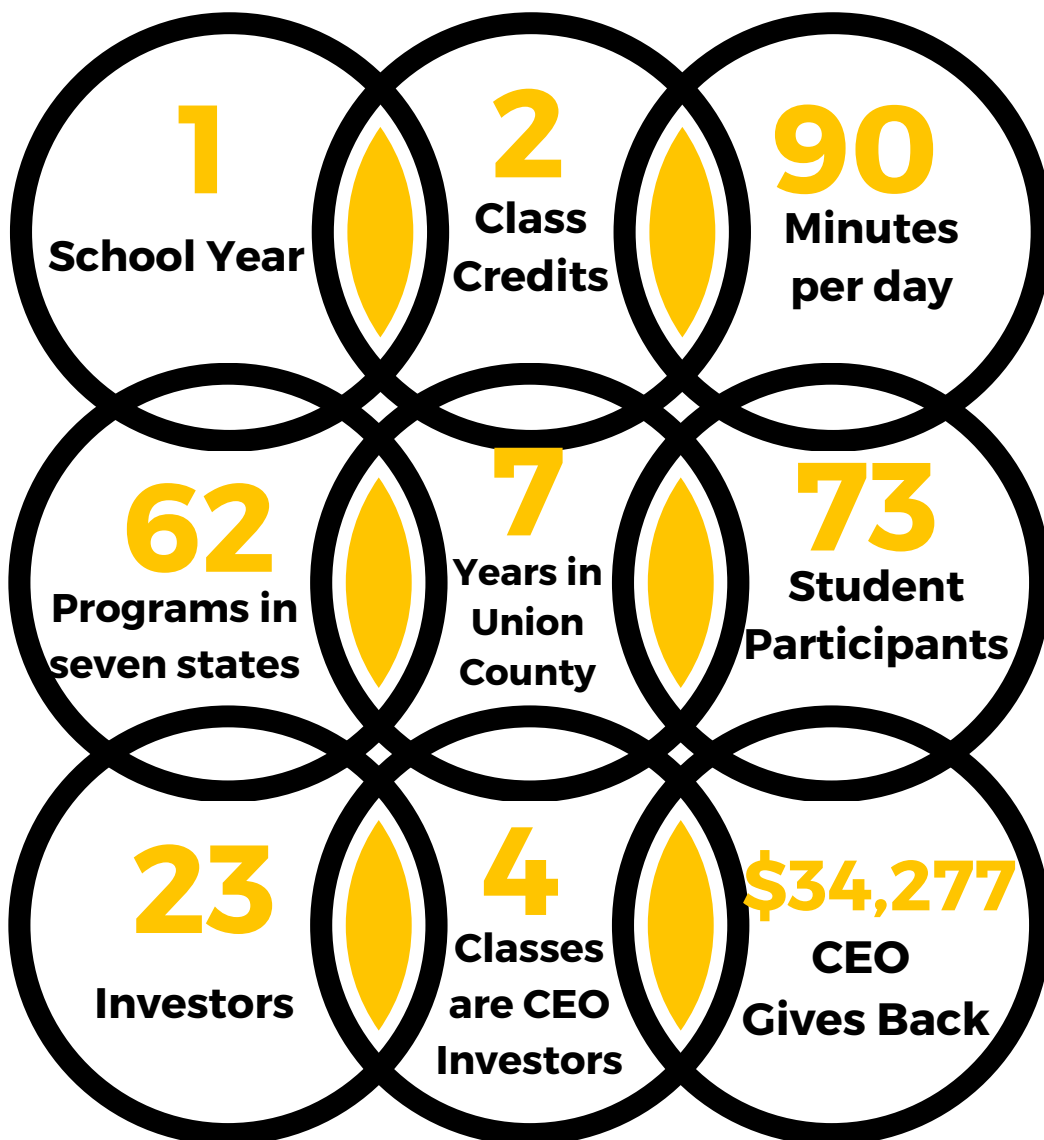
CEO is fully funded by individuals, organizations, and business investors allowing the high schools to give class credit for participation without impacting their budget. These investments allow the program to prepare the next generation of leaders to make a positive impact in their community and area of expertise.

FUNDING SOURCE



100% Investor Funding
0% from local high schools

KEY PROGRAM STATS



A NOTE FROM OUR FACILITATOR

The publication of the UCCEO Annual Report is an indication that the UCCEO program is closing out the current year in our county. Sure enough, the 2022 term is the 7th year for the UCCEO program and also marks the second year for me as the facilitator. The continued success of this program is largely in part because of the support we get from YOU, our CEO friends and family.

This year, we had students from Anna-Jonesboro High School, Cobden High School and Dongola High School. We went from wondering what in the world we might have in common with each other to becoming a team, accomplishing some big goals and seeing the opportunities available in our community.

As our mission states, we prepare our youth to be responsible individuals who become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers, and contribute to the economic development and sustainability of Union County, Illinois.

We accomplish this mission because of the many area business and community leaders who welcome us into their businesses and share their wisdom, knowledge and experience with us.

I am so honored and thrilled to be a part of this process. It is such a privilege for me to meet with, visit and learn from all of the people who support this program and to work with these students. Thank you for your continued investment into the UCCEO program.

A photograph of Melanie Smith, the program facilitator, speaking at a podium. She is wearing a red cardigan over a floral patterned top and dark pants. She is holding a microphone and gesturing with her right hand. The background is a plain wall with a white curtain.

Melanie Smith, Program Facilitator



BOARD MEMBERS

Chris Clark, Chair
Evelyn Bailey, Secretary
Stephanie Cox, Treasurer

Members At Large:

Angela Boyd
Kathy Bryan
Mindy Carter
Mark Chamness
Scott Finders
Teresa Goddard
Salina Hilliard
Dr. Cody Hubble

Beth Marks
April Reiman
Lisa Tomazzoli

INVESTORS

We are extremely grateful for the generous support of our Investors. Their support allows the mission and tradition of the CEO Program to continue in Union County. Thank you for the impact your support has on our students.

Anna-Jonesboro National Bank

Anna Hospital Corporation

Anna State Bank

CEO Class of 2020

CEO Class of 2021

City of Anna

Cobden Civic Industrial Foundation

Country Financial

ET Simonds

Grassy Lake Hunting Club

Gurley & Son Heating and AC

Mike and Kathy Stegle

Moreland Eyecare

Rusty's Home Center

SIU Credit Union

Southern Illinois Healthcare

The Bailey Family

Union County Women in Business

Union County Government

Union County Technology Solutions

Whitney Accounting

Wright Bros. LLC

FRIENDS

Friends of CEO offer their time as consultants, space for meetings, donations of resources or financial support to provide our students with invaluable opportunities.

Thank you for supporting Union County CEO!



Angela and Chris Boyd
Anna Fire and Rescue Department
Anna Jonesboro National Bank

Anna Kiwanis

B & D Signs, Jon Oxford

Bruce Bell

Bryan and Mary Kay Miller

Crain Funeral Home, Elaine Crain

Davie School Inn, The Woodrums

Dr. Deb Barnett, SIU SBDC

Dori Bigler

Gary Dahmer

Gerhardt T. Schaefer

Ken Stoner, SIU SBDC

KiKi's Coffeehouse, Kathy Bryan

Midgette Bigler

Nalee Rae's Boutique, Betsy Oxford

Rendleman Orchards, Michelle Sirles

Reppert's Office Furniture, Jerry Reppert

Schaefer Excavating,

Colton & Alyssa Penrod

Shawnee Hills Real Estate,

Nancy Watkins

Steve Hornbeak Productions

The Barn Event Center, Carl Dillow

The Gazette Democrat, Geof Skinner

WIBH, Moury Bass



HOMEBASE

Our homebase partners provide space for team meetings.

These locations become our meeting space on days we have guest speakers, work on the class business or projects and host fun team building activities.

Thank you for the hospitality!

Anna Fire and Rescue Department

Grassy Lake Hunting Club

Hebrewz

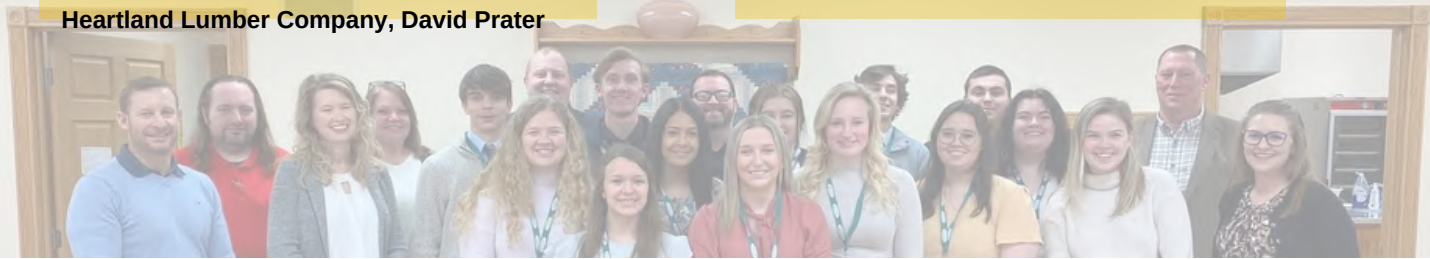
Schaefer Excavating

Union County Abstract

BUSINESS VISITS & SPEAKERS

AJ National Bank, Kati Denny
AJ National Bank, Melanie Lasley
AJ National Bank, Stephanie Cox
Amanda Myers Neilson Photography, Amanda Myers-Neilson
Angela Boyd, UCCEO Board Member
Anna Arts Center, Lee Hackney
Anna Baking Company, Kim Emery
Anna Quarry, Will Pyatt
Anna State Bank, David Carter
Anna State Bank, Greg George
Annabelle Market, Tanya Loveless
Army National Guard, SSG Steven Wiseman
ArrowLeaf, Rollie Hawk
Bald Knob Cross, Jeffrey Isbell
Bison Bluff Farms, Margaret Howell
CEO Alum, Aubrey Fisher
CEO Alum, Drake Roach
CEO Alum, Jackson Laster
CEO Alum, Joe Brumleve
CEO Alum, Julia Hall
CEO Alum, Julia Lasley
CEO Alum, Lexie Lingle
CEO Alum, Olivia Capel
CEO Alum, On Brand Marketing, Samantha Smith
Chris Egelston Entertainment, Chris Egelston
City of Anna, Dori Bigler, Gary Dahmer
Country Financial, Charlotte Clover
Country Financial, Danielle Stevens
Crain Funeral Home, Bryan and Stacey Crain
Curt's Classics, Curtis Walker
Dairy Queen, Khrista Lence
Davie School Inn, Lyle and Tammy Woodrum
Davis Pastry, Brooke O'Reilly
Doc's Lakeside Cabin, Tanya Loveless
Edward Jones, Kelli Wood
ET Simonds, Beck Simonds
Evelyn Bailey, UCCEO Board Member
First Class Cookies, Sharon Laster
First Class Cookies, Theresa Goddard
First Mid Bank & Trust, Jennifer Wendt
Flamm Orchards, Jeff, Austin & Parker Flamm
Grassy Lake Hunting Club, Collin Cain
H&R Block, Mary Kay Miller
Heartland Lumber Company, David Prater

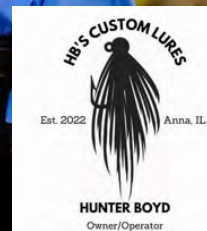
Heartland Lumber Company, Noah Prater
KiKi's Coffee House, Kathy Bryan
Lambdin Farms, Randy & Matt Lambdin
Larry Carter
Little Egypt Mosquito, Brock Buckner
Matt Lasley
Midland Institute, Amy Tarr
Midland Institute, Kent Probst
Mindy Carter, UCCEO Board Member
Moreland Eyecare, Amber Moreland
Nathan Hodges
Parrish & Lambdin, Leni Lambdin
Peachbarn Winery & Café, Jenny Schroeder
Rendleman Orchards, Michelle & Wayne Sirles
Rise Performance 618, Dawson Monfort
Rise Performance 618, Noah Prater
Rusty's Home Center, Rusty Flamm
Schaefer Excavating, Colton Penrod
Shawnee Community College
Shawnee Hills Lavender Farm, Charlotte & Doug Clover
SIH Medical Group, Stephany Hoehner
SIH, Woody Thorne
SIU Credit Union, Kim Babbington
SIU School of Business, Rachel Richey
SIU Small Business Development Center, Dr. Deb Barnett
SIU Small Business Development Center, Ken Stoner
SIU Touch of Nature Environmental Center, Brian Croft
Southernmost Illinois Tourism, Carol Hoffman
State Farm, Bill Ecker
The Villa-Pizza Villa, Josh Stegle
TriState RV, Ken & Nicole Frick
U of I Extension, Susan Odum
Union County Chamber of Commerce
Union County Clerk, Lance Meisenheimer
Union County Fair, Mike and Marilyn Meisenheimer
Union County Market, Sam O'Neal
Union County Women in Business
Whitney Accounting, Mark Chamness
WIBH, Moury Bass



Hunter Boyd is a 2022 graduate of Anna-Jonesboro Community High School. He was a member of the Beta Club and Outdoor Club and also a member of the fishing team and represented his school in several high school fishing tournaments each year. Hunter is also a current member of the Anna Kiwanis Club. In his spare time, he enjoys being outdoors, fishing and hunting for whatever animal is in season. Hunter is the owner of HB's Custom Lures, a local source for high quality fishing lures. After high school, Hunter plans to attend Shawnee Community College to pursue an Associate of Science degree and transfer elsewhere after to study to be a financial advisor.

"CEO enhanced my professionalism and helped me to create my business. I learned many new skills that I will use everyday. CEO overall has better prepared me for the real world. I would highly recommend this program to anyone who is interested because I have made leaps and bounds of progress from when I started the program.

I see big changes in myself and you will too."



Natalee Brown graduated from Anna-Jonesboro Community High School. She was a student council senior rep, a member of yearbook staff and FCA, and enjoyed cheering at football and basketball games. In her spare time she is working at Dairy Queen as a manager and also spending time with friends and family. Natalee is the owner of Living Edge Decor. She begins school at SIU-Edwardsville in August and plans to study Elementary Education.

Journal Entry: "One of my favorite experiences during CEO was the honor of helping at the Gala for Hadley's Haven. It was such an amazing experience being there to see all of the support from the community who want to help bring a beautiful park to our community. I spent a majority of my night taking pictures of everyone and sharing laughs with many people in the community, but my favorite part of the night was being able to see the joy on Hadley's parents' faces when we presented our check to them from our class business. Being able to do that makes every single bit of the stress that our class went through for our class business worth it. I'm happy to know that when that park goes up one day, that our CEO class worked hard to contribute to that being built!"



Olivia Brumleve is a 2022 graduate of Cobden High School. She was the Cobden FFA Reporter and Scholar Bowl captain and was also active in volleyball, Educators Rising, College and Career Pathway, FCS, FCA, Beta Club, Spanish Club, CYCA, and Student Mental Health Advisory Council. Olivia enjoys working on her family farm and in her spare time she enjoys photography, playing volleyball with her cousins, and hanging out with friends. Her individual business is called "Farm to Jar" and features homemade jams and jellies using local ingredients. After high school Olivia plans to further her education at SIU Carbondale and become an Agriscience teacher.

Journal entry: "It felt really weird leaving Shawnee Hills Lavender, because that was our last real CEO day. I have really enjoyed my time in CEO and I have learned so much. I have become so much more confident with myself and I would not trade this experience for the world!"



*Olivia
Brumleve*



Abigail Dahmer is a 2022 graduate of Anna-Jonesboro Community High School. She is involved in many school activities such as, FFA, FBLA, Beta Club, Prom Committee, Student Council, and is on the varsity softball team. She also participates in non school activities like travel softball and is president of her 4-H club. In her spare time Abigail is usually at the Shawnee Forest Campground weed eating or checking in campers. She also likes to fish, help around the farm, hang out with friends, and practice softball. In the fall, Abigail will be attending Southeast Missouri State University. Abigail's individual business is Buttercups Barn Quilts, featuring handmade barn quilts.

Journal entry: "Wednesday was 'Throw Your Pitch Day' for some of us. I think that it was a great experience to finally put my business out there to our scouts and to prove that I can run a business. I also felt like when in the lobby, I got closer with some of my classmates because we were just having a great time talking about school, life, and all kinds of things."



*Abigail
Dahmer*



Kirstin Guardian is graduating next year as a member of the Class of 2023 at Cobden High School and is also the proud owner of Dekals by K. At Cobden she is not only a dedicated student, but is also a member of the WYSE/Math Team, CYCA, FCS, and prom committee. She is a part-time employee at Texas Roadhouse. When she isn't working, you can find her around town with friends or shopping around locally. When she graduates from high school, she plans on attending a four year university to start her path to becoming an orthodontist!

"When I first started in the UCCEO program, I thought it would look good on a college or work application. It certainly does, but being in this program has also taught me a lot about the community I grew up in. I highly recommend this program to anyone who has a goal or a dream, because while you may not realize it now, your goals can be achieved right here in Union County."



*Kirstin
Guardian*



Kyle Hall is a member of the Cobden High School Class of 2022. While in high school he was a member of Beta Club, FCA, Honor Roll, and the Anna-Jonesboro Cobden soccer team. He is also a Volunteer Firefighter for the Cobden Fire Department. Kyle spends his weekends working at the Iron Whisk as a host. In his spare time he enjoys fishing with his grandpa, hunting, hiking, and being with friends and family. Kyle will be attending National Park College in Arkansas and will also be a member of their soccer team.

"The CEO Program has definitely impacted my mind on what I want to become and who I want to become. This is a great program and teaches you more than just business. It has also taught me respect and morals that I can use in the business environment and in everyday situations. The biggest take away from this program is that it will teach you how to think, rather than what to think."



*Kyle
Hall*

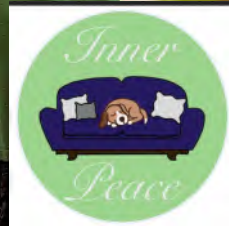


Madi Hawk attended AJCHS and also started the business Inner Peace Sitting Services, a pet sitting and house sitting service. Over the summer her business has been very successful and she has been able to put some of the money towards a payment on her dorm for college. Madi will be attending SIC in the fall on a bowling scholarship and then plans to transfer to SEMO.

"My biggest takeaway from CEO was that anybody at any age can start a business and be successful at it. These days, all you need is a Facebook page to run a successful business. My favorite visit this year was going to the Anna Quarry. I didn't really know what it was used for so it was really neat to learn about all the intricate details and functions. Our class business this year was the Small Business Christmas and it is phenomenal how successful it was. It was a lot of hard work but it's nice to see it all come together. I really appreciate all the board has done for us this year and how they've made things possible for us to do. I never realized how the business owners of Union county all worked together and how nice they were to each other. I would recommend this program to anybody who wants a different experience than school and is interested in doing anything in the business realm. You gain many valuable connections."



Madilyn Hawk



Camden Hodges is a 2022 graduate of Anna Jonesboro Community High School. He was a member of the scholar bowl team and played wide receiver for the football team. In his spare time he likes playing pickleball, skeet shooting, bird photography, and playing video games with friends. Camden is the founder of BackYard Bonfire, a rental bonfire business where he sets up bonfires wherever you need it with some extra things like s'mores and cornhole. In the fall, Camden plans on going to University of Illinois to major in business.

Journal entry: "We went to the Union County Courthouse for a tour detailing some of the internal offices and how they work. Mr. Lance Meisenheimer, Union County Clerk, took us around the building and introduced us to a lot of the staff. I always had thought the courthouse was for court cases and nothing else but there's a whole network of people behind it. There were over a dozen people all with unique jobs vital to keeping Union Country running. Many of these people had jobs I didn't even know existed. It really shows that you need an army to keep a town running. Mr. Meisenheimer also showed us the records room where they've been keeping records since the 1800s. These records ranged from as basic as a land deed, to minor's marriage. This was a very interesting visit with a whole lot to take in from it!"



Camden Hodges



Makenzie Howell is a member of the Cobden High School Class of 2022 and the founder of the graphic design company, E-Makulate Designs. She was valedictorian and was involved in many different extracurricular activities, including vice president of CYCA and Art Club, Secretary of Spanish Club, Beta Club, WYSE/Math Team, ACES, and National Honor Society. Makenzie was also a member of the softball and volleyball teams. After high school, Makenzie will be attending Fontbonne University to play softball and will be majoring in dietetics/nutrition in hopes of becoming a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist.

"CEO has given each and every one of us the experience of a lifetime. We got to experience many different things from how to properly decorate Christmas cookies to going into the bottom of the rock quarry in Anna. CEO has personally been life changing for me, not only because of the new connections that I have made, but also because before this class I would not have stood up here and talked in front of all of you. I am so grateful for all of the opportunities and lessons I have learned through CEO and I will carry them with me throughout the rest of my life."



*Makenzie
Howell*

Lucas Lasley is a member of the Anna-Jonesboro Community High School class of 2022. Luke is the proud owner and founder of Hangin' J's Lanyards. Hangin' J's Lanyards are gun slings and duck call lanyards made out of paracord and leather. While in high school, he played two sports, golf and baseball. He was a member of Outdoor Club, Student Council, and also a member of the fishing team. In his spare time he enjoys playing golf with friends, being outdoors, hunting and fishing. Luke plans to attend John A. Logan College on a golf scholarship.

"You really can't put into words how much the community supports the CEO program. I never really saw it until I was in it. The community truly believes in the CEO program. CEO has shown me that I can be or do whatever I put my mind to in my future."



*Lucas
Lasley*

Hangin' J
Lanyards

Peyton Lingle is a member of the Class of 2023 at Dongola High School. She is the owner of Ele and Nels - a women's online clothing boutique. She is involved in various school clubs and teams, including the FFA officer team, she is president of her Beta club and the Junior class, she is a member of the cheer team and the volleyball team. In her free time, you can find her reading, hanging out with her sisters, and working with her show cattle. She works various jobs, including waitressing, babysitting, mowing yards, and working on the family farm. In the future, Peyton plans to continue her current studies at Shawnee Community College, then transfer to SEMO to study early childhood education, in the hopes of becoming an elementary teacher.

Journal entry: "On Tuesday, we met at Schaefer Excavating for the monthly CEO board meeting. This will be the last time we meet with the board members in such a setting, which really made me realize - we're almost done. Our time in the Union County CEO program as students is almost up, which is insane to me. I remember last semester wishing for the end to come sooner, all I wanted to do was sleep, and now, I know I will miss it."



Abby Ramsey is 2022 graduate of Cobden High School and the proud founder and owner of the business: Farmhouse Creations. At Cobden, she was involved in many extracurricular activities. She was a member of the student council and was involved in various athletics and clubs such as volleyball, basketball, FFA, FCA, FCS, National Honor Society, Beta Club, Spanish Club, and Math & WYSE Team. In her free time, Abby enjoys spending time and helping on the family farm, hanging out with friends, going out on the lake, and playing sports. After high school, Abby plans to attend University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and major in Business Administration and Marketing.

"CEO has been the most influential and impactful experience I have ever had. It opened my eyes to how amazing our community and area really are. Before CEO, I wanted to leave for college and I didn't think there was a career here for me. I now want to go away to college, but come back and start my career here and help my community. Union County is a very unique area of opportunity and legacy, and I do not think there is anywhere else like it. Through CEO, we were able to do various activities and speak with very intelligent people that taught us many life lessons. This program has made me a more outgoing person and also taught me how to professionally speak with others."



ORIENTATION

Orientation, just like new employee orientation at a business, provides the new students with concise and accurate information to be successful in the CEO Program.

**Thank you to our Orientation Sponsor
Anna Jonesboro National Bank**



Micro Business

The CEO Class microbusiness allows team members the opportunity to begin their relationships with the business community within the first few weeks of class. The microbusiness helps earn seed money for the class business and cover the cost of professional logo apparel. **We would like to thank the following businesses for supporting the 2022 Microbusiness: AJ National Bank, Brumleve Farms, Curt's Classics, Flamm Orchards, Havisham House, and Rendleman Orchards**



"A mentor is not someone who walks ahead of you to show you how they did it. A mentor walks alongside you to show you what you can do" ~Anonymous



MENTORS

Dori Bigler
Stephanie Cox
Samantha Dawson
Kati Denny
Kim Emery
Brent Goforth

Cortni Hicks
Travis Holtkamp
Tanya Loveless
Amber Moreland
Dane Spalt
Karl Sweitzer

Class Business

This year the class had the opportunity to partner with The City of Anna to bring an ice skating rink to town on Small Business Saturday. The class decided to expand this to a full event complete with an ice skating rink, vendors, food trucks, and the pick-up location for the Small Business Christmas Gift Boxes.

What a great success! Many words were used to describe our community and this event; fabulous, happy, fun, super, amazing, awesome, joyful, wonderful family fun and the one the team was hoping to create "like a Hallmark Movie." All of these are true and many more could be included but it is really hard to express how amazing it was and how much work was put in by so many to make this a huge success. Thank you to our wonderful community!

Thank you to everyone who made this the most successful class business to date, allowing the 2022 UCCEO Team to generously give back at the end of the year.



Jingle and Mingle



Jingle and Mingle is an opportunity for investors, alumni, board members, mentors and the UCCEO Team to gather for a holiday social event. Guests enjoyed food prepared by Anna Baking Company, coffee from KiKi's Coffeehouse, and the beautifully decorated P.A.S.T.(Promoting Appreciation of Structural Treasures) House.

Take me out to the ballgame

After lots of hard work this year it was time for fun at the ballpark.



ALL STAR CELEBRATION & TRADE SHOW

The culmination of this amazing year was the All Star Celebration and Trade Show held at The Barn Event Center.

The All Star Celebration and Trade Show gives the team a chance to set up a professional booth and pitch their businesses to the attendees. They did a fabulous job with their booths and presentations. It also allows the stakeholders to celebrate the students' overall growth.

Congratulations to Kyle Hall. Kyle received Honorable Mention Recognition for his entry in Midland Institute's National Pitch Competition.

All Star CEO Awards were presented to Jessica Glasco (CEO Class of 2017) and Samantha Smith (CEO Class of 2016). These awards are made possible thanks to the generosity and hard work of previous CEO classes who have "given back" to the CEO scholarship fund.

The awards may be used for college expenses, technical training or to further entrepreneurial experiences.

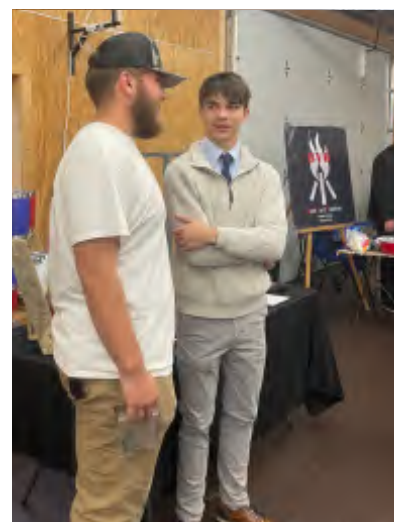
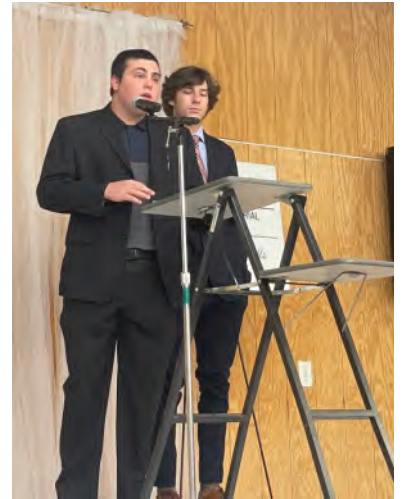
The 2021-2022 Class presented their "give back" awards. They chose to make donations to Grassy Lake Hunting Club, Davie School Inn and Hadley's Haven.

Grassy Lake Hunting Club and Davie School Inn accepted awards for their annual Wounded Warrior Hunting experience for disabled veterans. Hadley's Haven accepted the award to help bring an All-Inclusive Playground to the area.

In addition, the 2021-2022 Class presented two scholarships to classmates. Hunter Boyd and Madilyn Hawk were the recipients.



ALL STAR CELEBRATION AND TRADE SHOW



Special Thanks....

To Alyssa and Colton Penrod for the office space at Schaefer Excavating



To Amanda Myers-Neilson, of Amanda Myers-Neilson Photography for the professional headshots

CEO is open to any junior or senior who lives in or attends school in Union County. Students are selected via a blind evaluation process after online application submission. If you know of a potential candidate, have them talk with their school counselor for more information.

To follow our journey, like us on Facebook or go to unioncounty.ceo.org/news.

Union County CEO receives financial and other support ONLY from businesses, organizations or individuals.

