



CROSSING THE BRIDGE
YOUTH ENTREPRENEUR

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Crossing the Bridge Youth Entrepreneur is an innovative and exciting program that empowers local middle and high school students to become confident, real-world entrepreneurs. Over the course of a year, students in grades 6-12 develop business ideas, conduct market research, write business plans, pitch to a panel of investors, and launch their own companies.

The program offers numerous opportunities for **local community members to get involved**. From engaging guest lecturers and exciting field trips to innovative companies, to dedicated business mentors and investor panelists, there are many ways to support these students as they build businesses and grow into passionate local leaders.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Local Investor Panelists hold a prestigious role, evaluating, judging, and providing start-up capital to real student businesses at the exciting Investor Panel Event. The panel allocates funding to various business ideas based on the quality of the pitches and presentations, selecting the one with the greatest potential for success to advance to the national semi-finals and compete for a college scholarship.

Business Mentors work one-on-one with student businesses to help them develop their business plans. Over seven weeks, mentors provide guidance and feedback during 90-minute sessions, assisting students as they consider all aspects of their business, write their plans, and prepare for their Investor Panel presentations.

CEO Roundtable Advisors: 3-5 local CEOs share insights about their roles, companies, and backgrounds while offering students valuable business and networking advice.

Local Pitch Experts ride in an elevator with the students, allowing them to practice and refine their crucial Elevator Pitches before the Trade Show and Investor Panel events.

Graphic Designers collaborate one-on-one with student businesses to create logos and printed materials such as business cards, brochures, and letterheads. They work approximately 5-10 hours remotely helping each student business develop a professional and polished brand identity.

Web Developers help create a new, exciting online presence for a student business start-up that promotes the company well. Each developer invests about 10-20 hours including an in-class visit with the student business.

Media Meet & Greet: Local reporters, anchors, producers, editors, and communications professionals speak with students about the power of the press, how to get stories covered, interviewing tips, and so much more!



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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Accountant Speakers talk to students about budgeting, financing, and taxes, touching on the role of an accountant and what small businesses owners should know about accounting services.

Attorney Guest Speakers introduce students to legal business structures, intellectual property, patents, trademarks, and how the law and court systems interact with small businesses.

E-Commerce Guest Speakers talk about the opportunities of conducting business online, explaining the pros and cons of e-commerce and why it's so important to small businesses in today's economy.

Insurance Guest Speakers discuss specific insurance needs of the various student enterprises, the risks different businesses face, how insurance works, and how small businesses benefit from the insurance industry.

Niche Marketing Speakers help students understand what a niche market is, explaining the pros and cons of operating within a niche market through their personal experiences and work.

Designation & Awards Speakers teach students how applying for, being nominated for, and receiving special awards can have a positive impact on a company's culture, customer base, and marketing campaigns.

Taxes & Business Speakers use their expertise and personal experiences to tell students what small businesses need to know about taxes, sales taxes, filing options, and the role of state and federal taxes on local enterprises.

Social Entrepreneurship Speakers teach students the importance of social entrepreneurship, the business behind non-profits, and the vital role that non-profit organizations play in a local community.

The Local Banking Partner gets involved directly with new student enterprises, provides free checking accounts to each business, and teaches the role of banking and business loans in small business.

Government Resource Speakers typically include a Mayor, County Executive, or Economic Development leader to speak with students about the role that local municipalities can play in creating a friendly business environment and incentives for local companies.

Sales Speakers teach how to effectively sell products or services to customers and draw on their experiences to explain the basics of successful sales pitches, how to interact best with customers, and how students should prepare for their Trade Show Event.



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FIELD TRIPS

The “Cool” Business Field Trip is designed to get students excited about the promise of enterprise and features a hip and fun local company that is visually appealing with a dynamic speaker. If your company is all about fun, this is a wonderful community engagement opportunity for you.

The Professional Style Field Trip is an exciting and fun trip leading up to the Investor Panel Event where students will pitch their plans for funding, this Extreme Makeover trip exposes students to the business aspect of a salon as well as the importance of dressing for success and presenting oneself in a professional manner.

The Advertising/Marketing Field Trip is an important part of any enterprise, this visit teaches students about various advertising, marketing, and public relations strategies that are vital to small business success. The students will learn how to enhance their company’s brand while attracting more customers and generating more sales.

The Franchising Field Trip helps students understand the real possibility of creating a quality branded enterprise that is replicable to serve more customers in more locations across the country and/or world. This is a great opportunity for students to learn the importance of this unique type of business operations and structure.

The Non-Profit Business Field Trip helps students understand nonprofit article incorporation step-by-step, showing how to set up a 501C3, understand nonprofit structure, set up boards and committees, how to obtain grants, and setting CEO and staff salaries. It is about living out your purpose and helping others.

The County Clerk’s Office Field Trip is a momentous day when students file their businesses legally as local DBAs. This helps students understand how government and legal structures impact local commerce.

