

Edwardsville Community Foundation helps launch new CEO Program in Edwardsville

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EDWARDSVILLE - The Edwardsville Community Foundation and the newly formed Edwardsville Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) Program are teaming up to give high school seniors firsthand business experience from local business owners.

The CEO Program is a year-long course that is designed to teach students how to develop and run successful businesses. The course, which began in 2008 in Effingham, Illinois, is open to seniors at Edwardsville High School, Father McGivney Catholic High School and Metro East Lutheran High School.

“When students meet investors and feel the support that local businesses provide, they begin to truly believe in the concepts and ideas that are being taught to them,” said Edwardsville CEO Facilitator and Program Coordinator Hannah Allison. “The CEO Program allows students to gain real world business knowledge from successful leaders in our community and develop skills that will give them a head start in their chosen professions.”

ECF is the fiscal agent for the innovative program that is designed to develop students’ skills in problem-solving, teamwork, self-motivation, responsibility, higher-order thinking, communication and inquiry. Through the course, students visit area businesses, learn from guest speakers, participate in class businesses and start and operate their own businesses. Nine students are currently enrolled in the program, and more than 18 local businesses have committed to supporting the program or serving as speakers.

“Edwardsville has a great business community and we’ve already seen a lot of positive support for this program,” said ECF Executive Director Pam Farrar. “So far, 19 local businesses have pledged \$3,000 over the next three years to help fund the program and more than a half dozen others have committed to smaller donations or acting as mentors for the program. It’s really exciting to see that kind of community support.”

Allison said the CEO program is always looking for guest speakers and local investors. For more information on how to get involved, contact Hannah Allison at 618-610-9714 or visit the Edwardsville CEO program website at EdwardsvilleCEO.com. For more information about the Edwardsville Community Foundation, call Pam Farrar at 618-520-8099 or go to www.edwardsvillecommunityfoundation.org.

About the CEO Program:

The first CEO program began when a high school student and entrepreneur in Effingham came together to form a class based on real world, real life opportunities and experiences. There are currently 41 CEO programs throughout Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota and Colorado. The program continues to grow each year, and in 2019, the Collinsville-Triad CEO and Jerseyville CEO programs will begin.

About Edwardsville Community Foundation:

Edwardsville Community Foundation was founded to create an organization where people could donate money that would directly impact the quality of life in the local communities. ECF operates as a charitable trust that receives, manages, and distributes tax-deductible charitable contributions for the benefit of the residents living in the local communities, as defined by the Edwardsville School District 7. Since its inception in 1997, ECF has distributed more than \$6.2 million to charitable causes.