

ADAMS COUNTY **CEO**<sup>®</sup>

CREATING ENTREPRENEURIAL  
OPPORTUNITIES

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



CEO Supporters,

We had yet another extremely successful year of Adams County CEO. This was our third class to complete the program which consisted of 16 stellar students across six different schools, including our first homeschool student. We already have a record enrollment for next year and are excited for Fall!

The students shared that what they enjoyed most from the experience included developing friendships with the other students, making connections with local business professionals, and having the opportunity to learn outside of a traditional classroom setting.



When asked what life lessons the students learned from their participation, we were blown away by the responses. Some common themes include the importance of perseverance, consistency, and punctuality, being willing to fail, the value of first impressions, having an open mind, setting goals, and my personal favorite, "way more people than I thought want me to succeed and are willing to help me".

We are proud of this class for their dedication and hard work. It is truly an inspiration to see the growth they have made over this past year. They have become more confident in communicating with others, expanded their comfort zones, and learned more about their community in a positive way.

Whether you are an investor, friend of CEO, mentor, speaker, tour host, customer, tradeshow attendee, or simply cheered us on from the sidelines, we are so grateful. It is because of your support that we can help shape the future leaders of Adams County and beyond!

From the board, students, and schools, we sincerely thank you for your support and look forward to what next year has in store for our community!

Best Regards,  
Trenton Murfin  
Adams County CEO Board Chair



**MISSION:** CEO nurtures entrepreneurial thinkers who possess awareness of themselves and their communities.



There are five pillars in the CEO program. They are: learners, doers, owners, communicators, and connectors. How did we do this year?

**Learners** CEO students took the DISC assessment early in the school year to better understand their unique personalities and how they can best work together. They also learned that just sitting in a classroom and listening isn't enough. We have to ask questions and be curious.

**Doers** CEO students do not take quizzes or exams. They do the work. This year's students created a class business called Santa's Elves. When customers did not show up, they figured out how to promote the business in a better way. No one wrapped the presents for them. They worked as a team. No one collected the sales money for them. They learned to handle money and record the financials.

**Owners** Each student participated in the \$1-\$100 competition. While some worked harder than others, they all had to explain to board members their level of success and how they achieved it. When the trade show occurs, the CEO participants "own" it. If they have areas to improve, they will figure it out. If they are a success, they should be proud!

**Communicators** Talking to strangers can be difficult. Public speaking is tough. This year's class learned how to give impromptu speeches, prepare speeches for organizations, and pitch their businesses. They spoke on the radio in live interviews. They were very successful with television and newspaper interviews! They prepared written business plans that were read by banking professionals.

**Connectors** We took 44 tours, listened to 34 speakers, and met over 130 business leaders in total. Many of the students learned the power of networking and have already leveraged it. The rest of them will better understand this over the next couple of years as they reflect on their CEO experience.

I think the year was a success! Thank you, students, board members, parents/guardians, mentors, investors, tour hosts, speakers, and community leaders. I am proud to be a part of the Adams County CEO organization.

Sincerely,  
Roger Leenerts  
Adams County CEO Facilitator



# THANK YOU, INVESTORS & FRIENDS!

## INVESTORS

Adams County CEO Advisory Board Members  
Adams Electric Cooperative  
Adams Fiber  
Anonymous  
Blessing Health System  
CEO Class of 2021-2022  
City of Quincy  
Community Foundation of the Quincy Area  
Craig Industries  
Culver-Stockton College  
Edward Jones - Trenton Murfin  
First Bankers Trust Company  
First Mid Bank & Trust  
Gates Air  
Gerald and Virginia Holzgrafe  
Herald-Whig & WGEM  
Kunes Family Foundation - Kunes Country  
Liberty Bank  
Liberty Education Foundation  
Niemann Foods Foundation  
Nuessen Family Foundation  
Optimist Club of Quincy  
Panther Pride Foundation  
Quincy Area Chamber of Commerce  
Quincy Business & Technology Center  
Quincy Medical Group  
Quincy Notre Dame Foundation  
Quincy Public Schools Foundation  
Quincy Recycle  
Refreshment Services Pepsi  
Regional Office of Education Adams/Pike Counties  
Rural Adams Development Corp.  
Schmiedeskamp Robertson Neu & Mitchell LLP  
Servpro of Quincy  
State Street Bank & Trust Company  
Stevenson Paxton Group of Wells Fargo Advisors  
Titan International, Inc.  
Tracy Kiefer - O'Brien Insurance Agency  
Tracy Family Foundation



## FRIENDS

Great River Economic Development Foundation  
Jim & Karen Weede  
Kiwanis Quarter Madness  
Quincy Art Center  
Quincy Noon Kiwanis  
Tracy Family Foundation

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS & MENTORS

## 22-23 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

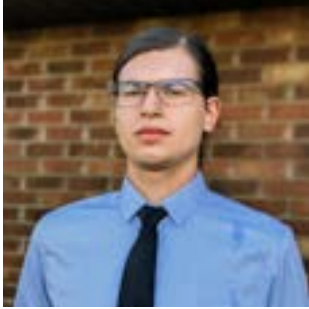
Chairperson **Trenton Murfin**, Financial Advisor, Edward Jones  
Vice Chair **Natalie Oswald**, Partner,  
Schmiedeskamp Robertson Neu & Mitchell LLP  
Treasurer **Matt Schmidt**, Development Director, Salvation Army  
Secretary **Gena Finley**, Program Coordinator, QAVTC  
**John Johannes**, President, First Mid Bank & Trust  
**Maggie Strong**, Owner, Strong Consulting  
**Mark McDowell**, Principal, Quincy Notre Dame  
**Donna Veile**, Superintendent, Payson CUSD #1  
**Joel Logue**, Engineer, BASF  
**Brian Fox**, VP & COO, Tracy Holdings, LLC  
**Jeff Longlett**, North Adams State Bank  
**Alex Eckhart**, Owner/Founder Q-Town Kicks  
Fiscal Agent: **Jonathan O'Neal**, CFO, Community Foundation  
Admin Agent: **Ryan Whicker**, Business Manager, Quincy Public Schools

## OUR MENTORS

**Sayed Ali**  
Schlipman Wealth Advisors  
**Melanie Allen**  
Shortridge Construction  
**Paul Bealor**  
North Adams State Bank  
**Max Dancer**  
Happel Inc. Realtors  
**Jeremy Farlow**  
Farlow Real Estate Experts  
**Erin Frazier**  
Knapheide  
**Kyle Grimm**  
Davis & Associates, Realtors  
**Jonathan Hoover**  
Schmiedeskamp Robertson Neu & Mitchell LLP  
**Jeff Longlett**  
North Adams State Bank  
**Tad Luebbehusen**  
Northwestern Mutual  
**Tyler Myers**  
Madison Park Christian Church  
**Taylor Rakers**  
Junior Achievement  
**Payne Schoen**  
Payne Schoen Consulting  
**Curtis Sethaler**  
Young Life Quincy  
**Maggie Strong**  
Strong Consulting  
**Zach Weaver**  
Barhop Design Quincy  
**Brittany Weise**  
Blessing Health System







**Charlie Anderson** attended Quincy Senior High School. He is a member of the QHS Beta Club and marching QHS Blue Devils. He is also an active member of Scouts BSA working towards his Eagle Scout. Charlie created the business **CRA Blacksmithing** with his vision "Turning scrap metal into art, one hammer strike at a time". He plans to attend Truman State University to major in business management. Charlie joined the CEO program to help jump start a career in business management by learning from owners of successful businesses.



**Makayla Andrews** attended Central High School. She enjoys arts and crafts, listening to music, and reading. Her CEO business is **Kayla's Color Rush**. She produced tie-dyed t-shirts, bandanas, and onesies for customers to wear and to have a unique look. Makayla plans to continue her education in the area of nursing. She joined CEO because she is a hands-on learner and wanted to explore different career opportunities. Makayla also felt that exploring these different opportunities could help her build connections that would help in her career.



**Alex Connoyer** attended Quincy Notre Dame High School. He enjoys playing baseball and basketball, traveling, and spending time with family and friends. Alex focused on a business that sells pre-owned, quality sporting goods called **asc retail**. After high school, he plans to go to Quincy University to play baseball and get a biology degree with a goal of becoming a dentist. He joined CEO to learn more about business and to meet business owners in Quincy. Alex feels the class provides real-world experiences and allowed him to meet many people.



**Kannon Dickerman** attended Quincy Notre Dame High School. At QND, he is a leader in the house system and involved in soccer, drumline, and the Mixed Nuts comedy troupe. Kannon created a business called **Dickey's Detailing**, which focuses on interior automobile detailing. After high school, he plans to attend John Wood Community College to major in business. Kannon joined the CEO program to get the opportunity to experience how to run a business and provide inspiration for him to be a business leader in the future.



“ I enjoyed learning how to work with diverse personalities from different schools. ”



**Travis Duke** attended Liberty High School. He was the President of the Liberty FFA Chapter and enjoys hunting, fishing, and hanging out with friends. Travis works many hours per week at a local agribusiness company. He created the business **Fremont Custom Wood Works & Design**, which focuses on personalized, custom, decorative wooden products. Travis plans to attend John Wood Community College for two years and then transfer to Murray State University and major in Agribusiness. He joined CEO to gain more knowledge in business and entrepreneurship.



**Daxton Failor** attended Quincy Senior High School. He was actively involved with the Q-City Drumline. Daxton stays busy with various part-time jobs including running his own small landscaping and lawn care company. For his CEO business, he focused on a unique, branded clothing line called **OMM Gear**, targeting the 16-28 year-old market. He plans to attend John Wood Community College in the Fall to get his associates degree in business and train in diesel mechanics. Daxton joined CEO to learn better skills on how to run a business and make connections to local business owners.



**Megan Fessler** attended Liberty High School. She is currently employed as a physical therapy technician. In her free time, Megan enjoys working out, fishing, taking pictures along with editing. She also enjoys spending time with friends and family. In the CEO program, she worked on growing her business **Fessler Photography**. She plans to attend John Wood Community College after high school. Megan joined CEO because she wants to turn her interest in photography into a successful business that she could continue in the future.



**Nolan Flee** attended Quincy Senior High School. He played soccer throughout high school and participated in student council and the National Honor Society. Outside of school, he enjoys hanging out with friends, fishing, and golfing. Nolan created a unique business called **Drive-Ads**, which focuses on mobile marketing. He plans to continue playing soccer on a collegiate level at Quincy University. Nolan joined CEO to get a better insight on how successful businesses operate.



“ One life lesson I learned was the importance of "under promise and over deliver". ”



**Carter Kasparie** attended Unity High School. He played basketball and baseball throughout high school as well as serving as the Class Historian. Carter and his twin brother have been mowing and maintaining seven yards. From this experience, he focused on growing his business, **Kasparie Lawns**, as his CEO business. Carter plans to attend John Wood Community College. He joined CEO to visit businesses, meet successful people, and get a closer look at how businesses are run.



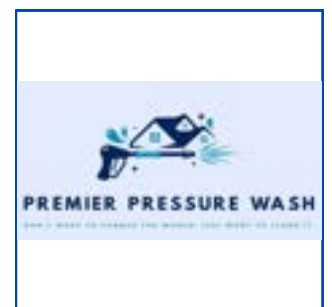
**Andrew Keane** attended Quincy Senior High School. He works at Home Depot as a front-end register associate. Some of his hobbies include fishing, golfing, and spending time with friends and family. Andrew created a business called **ACE GOLF CLEANING** as a service for golfers who want clean golf clubs, bags, and more. He plans to attend Southeast Missouri State University this coming fall. Andrew joined Adams County CEO because he wanted to see how a business is run and what it takes to make it successful.



**Ava Kenady** attended Quincy Notre Dame High School. During the school year, she was a proud member of the Key Club, Kindness Club, and QND's varsity cheerleading team. Ava created **Kenady Kleaning** products for her CEO business, which are all natural, gentle, and effective cleaning products. After high school she plans to attend the University of Missouri in Columbia. She joined CEO to get an introductory experience into the business world that would give her insight as to what career field to pursue.



**Dalton Miller** attended Quincy Notre Dame High School. He participated in football (1st team all-conference Linebacker) and baseball(all-state). Dalton created a business called **Premier Pressure Wash**, which provided a pressure washing business for home siding, sidewalks, and more. He will be attending State Fair Community College on a baseball scholarship and plans to study Construction Management. Dalton joined CEO to gain exposure and experience in the business field.



“ I enjoyed learning differently from a traditional classroom setting. ”

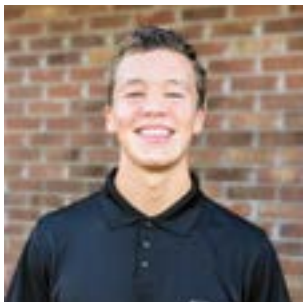




**Devin Mock** attended Quincy Senior High School. He played cornerback for the football team, and he likes to hunt, fish, and play video games. Devin developed his CEO business into **Adams County Firewood**. During the summer he worked with his brother in the construction business where he helped remodel and build houses. After high school, Devin plans to continue working in this activity area. He joined Adams County CEO because it was a great opportunity that he did not want to pass up.



**Lily Ouwenga** was a homeschooled senior who was already busy taking classes at JWCC. She is active in her church where she serves in mentor and leadership positions. Lily has played piano for 12 years and teaches private piano lessons. Lily created **Sunshine Smoothie Bowls** for her CEO business and served them at a number of events. After high school, she will be attending Clemson University. Lily joined CEO to get real word business experience that she could not find anywhere else.



**Will Venvertloh** attended Quincy Senior High School. He participated in band and was the section leader of the drumline. Will also enjoyed competing in swimming and track. In his free time, he likes to 3D print, which was the foundation of his CEO business called **3V Prints**. He created custom key chains and earrings for local Blue Devil fans. Will plans to study engineering at Iowa State University in the fall. He is interested in entrepreneurship and wanted to take the CEO class to learn more about the world of business.



**Nathan Winkler** attended Quincy Senior High School. He built a band called Sleeping with a Vampire from the ground up, of which he was the lead guitarist. He also enjoys designing and planning events. **Nathan's Skool of Rock** was created to teach young people how to play the guitar and allow them to pursue their dream of being a rock star. His future plans are to pursue his music dreams. Nathan took the CEO program to further his knowledge in business, which would give him the tools to grow his own successful business.



# 2022-2023 BUSINESS VISITS

## FALL 2022

### **Koontz Builders**

Scott Koontz

Tim Koontz

Matthew Koontz

### **Frese Nursery**

Ted & Sarah Genenbacher

### **Ursa Creek Lodge**

Duane & Pam Shaffer

### **Marlboro Wire**

Don Brown

Austin Brown

Steve Hawkins

### **JWCC Workforce Development Center**

Gordon Forbes

Keely Ragar

Chris Koetters

### **Adams Electrical Cooperative**

Bill Stalder

Laura Bergman

### **Terripin Farm Stand**

Jessica Whiston

### **Four Winds Farm**

Deborah Lee

### **Tiramisu**

Ilija Cucuk

### **Culver Stockton College**

Dr. Palmer

Dr. Gaither

Eric Larson

### **Kuhly's Import Specialists**

Colby Kuhlmeier

### **Knapheide Manufacturing**

Erin Frazier

Chris Russell

### **Kunes Country Honda of Quincy**

Jeff Conn

### **Doors-N-More**

Craig Hemming

### **Liberty Bank**

Mark Field

### **Nutrition HQ**

Tyler Hall

### **GemStone Countertops**

Lindsay Ertel

### **Great River Economic Development Foundation**

Kyle Moore

### **Quincy Area Chamber of Commerce**

Bruce Guthrie

### **Quincy Farm Products**

Jerrod Evans

### **Quincy Business & Technology Center**

Charles Bell

### **Integrity Secure Transport**

Jay Albert

Landon Tenhouse

### **Quincy Regional Airport**

Gabe Hannafin



## SPRING 2023

### **North Adams State Bank - Ursa**

Jeff Longlett

Paul Bealor

Hannah Longlett

### **Quincy Public Library**

Kathleen Helsabeck

Amanda Griesbaum

Victoria DeMent

### **Salvation Army**

Matt Schmidt

### **Kroc Center**

Chad Rodgers

### **Schlipman Wealth Advisors**

Sayed Ali

Cody Hildebrand

### **Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing**

Brittany Wiese

Callie Niederhauser

### **Schmiedeskamp Robertson Neu & Mitchell LLP**

Natalie Oswald

### **Quincy Racquet Club**

Monica Hinkamper

### **Peter Body Shop & Towing**

Stan Peter

Bryce Peter

### **City of Quincy**

Mayor Troup

### **County Clerk/Recorder**

Ryan Niekamp

### **Created for Motion**

Dr's Tyler & Michelle Rickelman

### **Quincy Art Center**

Kelsey Deters

Rachel Roundtree

### **Royal Printing**

Dan Asbury

Eric Asbury

### **Refreshment Services Pepsi**

Gregg Roseberry

### **Craig Industries**

Josh Craig

### **Lewis Seed Farms**

Bob Carlin

Randy Schwedes

### **United Way**

Jenna Hull

### **Bella Ease**

Dennis Williams

Gabrielle Esselman

### **Quincy Axe Company**

Jarid Jones

Curtis Sethaler

### **Quincy Community Theater**

Burgundy Hill

### **Quincy Medical Group**

Carol Brockmiller

Katie Schelp



# 2022-2023 SPEAKERS

## SPEAKERS

Michelle Howe - WIU

Maggie Strong - Strong Consulting

Don O'Brien - Better Business Bureau

Aiden McDonnell, Madison Badgley, Dalton Leebold -

Gem City Toastmasters

Catherine Meckes, Kent Embree -

Community Foundation

Ben Van Ness - WGEM

Payne Schoen - Payne Schoen Consulting

Wayne Olson - Author and Speaker

Shawn Valter - Adams County Farm Bureau

Siera Dueterhaus - U of I Extension

Trenton Murfin - Edward Jones

Laura Arnold - Cherrybrook Photography

Emily Reuschel - Motivational Speaker

Denise Tallcott - TEDDYCo, Inc

Brian Fox -The Atrium Hotel on Third

Megan Dueterhaus - Quanada

Commerce Bank - Ryan Goestenkors

Vervocity - Dean LaVelle

Luke Niederhauser - Dot Foods

Tracy Kiefer - O'Brien Insurance Agency

Luke Nixon - Nixon & Lindstrom Insurance

Julie Boll - Julie Boll Consulting

Marcelo Beroiza - Quincy Park District

Carlos Fernandez - retired media executive

Warren Ouwenga - businessman & entrepreneur

Keely Ragar - JWCC Workforce Development Center

Board Members - Adams County CEO Board





# PITCH CONTEST AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

CEO students work on their public speaking skills all year. They learn techniques from members of the Gem City Toastmasters Club and from all of the speakers who come to visit. Many of the students participated in public speaking engagements at local service clubs and were interviewed by the media (radio, television, and newspaper).



**Congratulations to the winners of our local pitch competition:**

1st Place - Lily Ouwenga

2nd Place - Will Venvertloh

3rd Place - Dalton Miller

**Special congratulations goes to Lily Ouwenga who was a top 18 finalist in the national pitch video competition! She beat out over 380 other submissions from across the country.**



# CLASS BUSINESS & BANKER DAY

The Adams County CEO Class of 2023 created and developed a business called **Santa's Elves**. This was a service business with a focus on wrapping Christmas presents. They selected their own leadership team, wrote a business plan, set financial goals, and promoted the event. The business made a net income of \$1,952. The Class used the proceeds to reinvest in CEO, buy supplies for their individual businesses, and give back to the community by donating to Qunada.



## BANKER DAY



Students present their individual business plans to local bankers. They get one-on-one feedback regarding their marketing plan, financials, and more. Thank you to our participating bankers:

- John Johannes - First Mid Bank & Trust
- Mark Reuschel - State Street Bank
- Troy Kemp - Mercantile Bank
- Ryan Goestenkers - Commerce Bank



# TRADE SHOW

# 2023 TRADESHOW

The 2023 Trade Show was held on April 23rd at the Kroc Center. Investors, friends, family, and community members came to show their support for the CEO Students. ***It was a successful event!***





# INVEST IN OUR FUTURE!



“ *I learned not to take failures to heart. Use failure and learn from it to be more successful.* ”

## ADAMS COUNTY INVESTOR PLEDGE FORM

Community Stakeholders are the heart of CEO. Your investment allows us to offer this program at *no cost* to participating students and schools, providing needed resources and ensuring our long-term sustainability. Your commitment of time is also critical to the success of Adams County CEO.

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

Community Foundation Serving West Central Illinois & Northeast Missouri  
4531 Maine Street, Quincy, IL 62305, CHECK MEMO LINE: ADAMS COUNTY CEO PROGRAM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Name as you would like it to appear in promotional materials: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I/we wish to make a contribution to the ADAMS COUNTY CEO Program. In consideration of the gifts of others for the same purpose, I/we hereby agree to contribute the following. (Please check all that apply.)

INVESTOR: \$1,000/year for 3 years or \$3,000 one-time payment in full.

FRIEND OF CEO: (Less than \$1,000/Year) Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

MENTOR: I would like to be paired with a student for the course of the class year.

HOST SITE: I would like to provide a meeting place for 20 people for up to 9 weeks at a time.

BUSINESS VISIT: The class may tour my business at least one time in the course of the class year.

GUEST SPEAKER: I would like to volunteer to speak to the class about business or life skills.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# ADAMS COUNTY



After participating in Adams County CEO this year:  
**100%** of students gained business knowledge and,  
**81.3%** became more confident in communication with others.

### A few quotes from Adams County CEO students:

"Gave me a bigger appreciation to the businesses in my town."

"CEO has brought me out of my comfort zone, and really shaped me to the person I am today!"

"It's life changing."

"I loved it and couldn't imagine the year without taking this class."

### INVEST IN TOMORROW, TODAY.

**CEO TRANSFORMS** high school students into creative problem solvers & entrepreneurial thinkers.

**CEO INGRAINS** essential employability skills in your future workforce.

**CEO IMPACTS** economic development through the cultivation of future business owners and the launch of 15-20 new businesses every year like clockwork.

**CEO GROWS** your entrepreneurial ecosystem, connecting students to their community, and showing them the opportunity that exists in their hometowns.

## CEO IS A GROWING NATIONAL MOVEMENT.

