

FUTURE CEO STARS



Amber and her Amazing Balloons were featured at the 2011 Entrepreneurship Education forum in Cincinnati, OH.

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W i n t e r Welcomes

**By Alex Metcalf
and
Christian Kubelle**



Our names are Alex and Christian and we are the owners of “Winter Welcomes.” We go to Maple Road School in West Milford, NJ. For the TREP\$ Marketplace at our school this year, we produced Fencepost Snowmen.

We didn’t start out with the idea of the fencepost snowmen. At first we planned to do tie-dye t-shirts, but we gave up on that idea. Then, Alex’s mom, who had seen the basic idea for the snowmen in a store, mentioned it to us. We decided that the “Fencepost Snowman” was a good idea for two reasons—the product looks rustic and we live in a country area, and the timing was right since winter was approaching.

We had a great time doing TREP\$, but it wasn’t always easy. We both agree that the hardest challenge was making the snowmen!!! Where we live, it isn’t easy to find fence materials in the winter time, so that was our first challenge. Then, the paint was the trickiest part of production because not only did you have to do two coats on each one, there was the wait time for drying. Even though there were challenges, and it was a lot of work, our families chipped in and it was worth it. Production was really the only downside to our business.

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The Marketplace was the most fun part about TREP\$. We had so many customers at one time and they were getting squeezed by the crowd, so they did not stay to “chat.” When they could, some said things like, “This is creative” or “I LOVE IT” which was nice to hear. Many teachers at our school had pre-ordered our product, so we are glad we advertised and displayed our prototype. We did sell out quickly at the marketplace, but by taking additional orders, we DOUBLED our final profit. We even got the chance to walk around ourselves, and buy other kids’ products. It was really fun to see what everyone else had created to sell.

We aren’t sure what we will sell next year at the Marketplace. Even though this product was such a hit, we have concerns about selling them next year. These snowmen are made to last; they have primer which means the wood does not rot. Therefore, we are afraid that we would not have repeat customers. If we did plan to make them again, we would start in the summer when the fence-posts were more available! □



TREP\$

Planning for Success



For the fourth consecutive year IGNITE will be holding its annual business plan competition during National Entrepreneurship Week, February 18-25, 2012. The contest encourages students in grades 6-12 to enter not only well-written and polished business plans, but plans for businesses that youth may actually start.

“There are lots of great business plan competitions out there for students,” comments Holly Hetzner, Project Coordinator for Moving Ideas to Market, IGNITE’s parent project. “What makes ours unique is that we want to put award money into the hands of students who have viable business ideas that they might actually launch. This isn’t simply an academic exercise.”

And that unique twist can be seen in the contest’s past winners. Alexandra Reau won the first ever IGNITE competition for her entry Garden to Go, a Community Supported Agriculture Business plan, and was able to leverage her winnings to purchase necessary start up supplies for her garden. In the three years since her business has tripled in size and she has had her story featured in the New York Times.

The competition continues to evolve. The 2011 contest added awards for the best science and technology based business. 2012 will see even more opportunities with the inclusion of an essay contest. “The essay contest will allow us to hear directly from students their aspirations, goals and thoughts on the role of entrepreneurship in American society, even if they don’t have a specific business that they would like to start,” notes Hetzner.

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Annie Munson, a winner in the 2011 competition also leveraged her prize money to improve her business, Vibrant Images Photography, by purchasing a better camera. Although she had been taking photos for friends and family for a while, the competition allowed her to take her business to the next level. “It really helped me organize my thoughts. It really helped me lay out the finances needed to launch a real business,” she states. It took her almost 15 hours to write and edit her plan, but in the end she feels it was worth it. Now a college student at MSU studying nursing and international business, Annie continues to pursue her passion for photography, although she admits she has had to alter her business plan somewhat to accommodate her collegiate schedule. When asked her advice for students considering entering the 2012 competition, she says, “make it [the business plan] as detailed as possible. It will really help you set goals and predict what might happen in the future.”

Leah Simon, another winner in the 2011 competition adds this piece of advice to prospective youth entrepreneurs, “Pick something you’re interested in. A hobby or activity you already know something about. Pick something where you already know people who might be part of your target market.” For Leah, that was horses. Specifically, her winning entry, Equestrian Tack and Apparel, was a consignment service for high end saddles and horseback riding gear. Although she has taken a break from her business while attending Northwood University, she stills values the experience. “It changes the way you look at money,” she notes.

Excitement for the 2012 competition continues to build as the details of the competition are being worked out. New features for 2012 will include online business plan submission, an essay contest, and much larger cash prizes. To ensure you receive the latest on competition announcements, including the official competition entry materials, follow us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Moving-Ideas-to-Market/>. You can also sign up to receive contest notifications via email by sending your contact information to holly.hetzner@primacivitas.org. □



BUZZING With ACTIVITY

By Jack Schuppie



BEGINNINGS AND INSPIRATION

My story is *buzzing* with *activity* and my hope is you will *bee* able to enjoy the ongoing tale. I began my entrepreneurial activities in 7th grade when my science teacher, Dr. Stephen Doherty, in the Magnet Program I was enrolled in at Howard Bishop Middle School in Gainesville, Florida, inspired me to start an organic garden. We had one at school and I decided to plant one at home. Early in the school year, my teacher, Dr. D. gave me a book about bees and how important they are to plant life everywhere especially in the pollination of fruits and vegetables. What began as a little hobby became a passion as I developed a strategy to ensure my plants were pollinated – I would become a bee keeper!

The book Dr. D. gave me explained about CCD (Colony Collapse Disorder) and how it is devastating to farmers and gardeners. It related that there are more diseases that affect bees than there are diseases that attack mankind. A beehive is warm, moist, and there is an abundance of food –making it is an ideal environment for a multitude of parasites. Throughout the course of that year, I began to study bees and decided to investigate CCD as well as to test some of my theories of how I could provide a healthy and happy environment for honey bees. I collected data and later used it to do my science fair experiment on CCD in 8th grade. I'd been *stung*, this was it; I wanted to be a part of the effort to save the honey bees.

Becoming a beekeeper was not just my idea; my family got involved too. My dad and I read books about beekeeping and began to go to bee keeper meetings. We invested in seeds for plants and wildflowers that honey bees favor, and began to grow them in order to create a yard full of food for our bees. My mom put in a fountain so that the bees would have a

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close source of fresh water. We purchased supplies from a wholesaler, built the hives and personalized them with paintings, ordered our bee suits and helmets, and we were finally ready for our initial purchase of bees. We received the first bees in March, 2010 and that was the official start of my new entrepreneurial business.

DISTINCTIVE MARKETING

Once we had our hive, it didn't take long for the entire family to become enthusiasts. Fortunately, as we began to talk about our bees, we kept a list of all those people who said, "Let me know when you get some honey and I'll buy it." Although we didn't harvest the honey for 15 months, we did sell out in a matter of days because of our initial marketing efforts. Our marketing has been largely word of mouth, and of course writing down the names of all those individuals who expressed an interest in our future products. My customers have come from our church community, neighbors, teachers, friends and some of my parents' business colleagues. Those individuals have helped spread the word for me. Our second harvest will be in the fall and will be the last for the year, as the bees need to have honey in their hives to survive the winter. Fortunately, we have done a second round of marketing to the people who purchased the first time and they can preorder, which will help us with forecasting how many containers to purchase and how much honey to harvest.

Currently the localvore trend is my friend in this business venture. Consumers want to purchase locally grown or harvested, raw or unprocessed products. They also want the health benefits that honey offers. Studies have shown that consuming a daily teaspoon of local honey will prevent all kinds of seasonal allergies. Since CCD is prevalent in the news, the consuming public wants to support local beekeepers whose industry is directly impacting and protecting our environment. My market is such that my clientele drives the demand for other bee products that they will purchase. I have lists of items that I have not even produced that my customers want to purchase when they become available. Purchasers are willing to pay a higher price for a product that is hand packaged and locally grown.

UNIQUE FAQ

Quite often, when people hear about my hobby, they say, "Don't you get stung?" It's a common enough reaction, I suppose, but I never get tired of surprising them with the answer "Of course, but it doesn't hurt anymore because the more you get stung the more resistant you are to the venom. Now it just feels like a little pin prick." I did have to learn how to remove the stinger correctly, so that the venom flow stops. The stinger detaches from the honeybee after it strikes its victim. If the stinger is flicked off – then venom stops – if the victim squeezes the stinger or pushes on it, more venom will be sent into the victim, and that can be painful. My sister and I will often collect the male bees, called drones,

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after they are kicked out of the hive to the grass and will play with them. They don't have a stinger and are gentle. We have tried to race them – but no matter which way you turn them, they always face the hive and try to make their way back. But the drones will only live a day or so, and then they will weaken and die, as the workers have no use for them once they have preformed their single job of mating with the new queen on her virgin flight.



THE CHALLENGES OF RAISING HONEYBEES

The world of bees is unpredictable and as such, can be frustrating to a beekeeper. When the queen decides to swarm – that is, leave the hive to a new queen who has just hatched– she takes about half the hive with her. They leave the hive, following her pheromones, and land somewhere close by while she sends out scouts to find a new location for her hive. Within 24-48 hours they will follow the queen to the new location and that is the last you may see of them. If you, as a beekeeper, can capture them during the time they are swarmed around her and put them into a new hive that is great news! You have a strong queen and will have a healthy hive that you have helped to cultivate. That's the fun part. The frustrating part is that unfortunately, if they fly too high in the initial flight, or go too far away, it is almost impossible to recapture them. In the time I have been beekeeping, I have only lost 2 swarms that way, but both times it was disappointing. On the other hand, during the time I have been keeping bees, my dad and I have had the luck to recapture 7 of our swarms, and have rescued another three from unfortunate situations. Because it seemed for awhile that we had swarm after swarm and no place to put them; we were able to find other beekeepers to house the bees. To date, we have given away six hives and all are still healthy and thriving. We have kept in touch with those new beekeepers and have formed our own network of entrepreneurs.

The life of a honey bee is a fascination in itself. The workers live for about 30 days, during which time they never stop working. They have periods of rest during the night, but never actually sleep. Every honey bee has a responsibility and they graduate from one to another as they grow. They start with taking care of the pupa and larva of un-hatched bees and then feed the larva, they also clean the hive. A few bees are promoted to guard duty at the entrance of the hive to attack any bees that are not from their hives or any other creatures seeking entrance. The rest are receivers and receive the pollen and nectar from the foragers

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and pack it into the cells where it ferments and becomes honey. As foragers die off and the seasonal pollen bloom increases receivers are promoted to foragers. Foragers get food for the hive, in the form of nectar and pollen, and pollinate the vegetation in up to a 5 mile range of the hive.



UNIQUE ASPECTS OF MY BUSINESS and SECRETS OF MY SUCCESS

When I think about why my business will remain successful, one reason is because it is a consumer non-durable. In other words, it is consumable and the demand is high for my product. Also, there is a unique aspect to it in that I am working with living animals but the hive is an organism by itself. The bees do all the work of making the end product. In fact, the honeybee is the only insect that produces a food that humans consume. I am riding the coattails of the localvore movement in the food world; foodies love local products. My product is locally produced and hand packaged and as such, I have virtually no competition. My marketing is purely word of mouth and, of course, I wouldn't have a repeat market if I weren't producing a high quality product, and my honey, Schuppie's Pure Strained Wildflower Honey, is fantastic!

OBSTACLES

There have been some obstacles along the way. Unfortunately, one disappointment has been unruly neighbors that don't see honey bees as beneficial but let fear of a sting rule their attitude. Honey bees are so different than wasps or other stinging insects, but the uninformed don't realize that. Honey bees are curious creatures and will even walk on you without stinging – it is only when they are swatted or sense aggression that they react with a sting.

There were several other obstacles. Initially, the cost to set up hives and purchase all the supplies (gear, boxes and the actual bees) is expensive. Caring for a new hive is time consuming at first: feeding the bees, making sure potential enemies do not infest the hives while they are weak and just forming their defenses, cleaning beetle traps, monitoring the population to avoid swarms, but if they do swarm - recapturing the swarms requires dropping everything to follow the queen. The example that I think of when I think of providing protection to a new hive is this: think of a pirate's raid on a small town that can't defend itself, versus a raid on a well established colony. A new hive needs time to build up a secure and strong defense against pirating parasites. Occasionally products I purchased were not engineered properly and didn't work correctly: examples are the feeders and the queen excluder. It took time to figure out how to make them work or to decide to just return them.

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LOVES AND HATES OF THE BUSINESS

Of course, one of the best benefits of my beekeeping business is that I work for myself. I can decide the price, when to harvest, who to market to, how to market - basically everything is my decision. Cleaning and routine checks on the hives have to be done to make sure they are healthy and when they need to be split but it's on my timeframe. I love that I am helping the environment by helping to keep a species healthy and productive. I can't forget to say that the end product – honey – is the best part – it is fabulous wildflower honey and better than anything you'll ever taste. The entire process from taking care of the bees to harvesting the honey is interesting and fun – it's hard to believe I can make a great income from something so enjoyable. My business gives me a great sense of accomplishment.

There really isn't a down side except to say that the heat inside the bee suit can be, well, sweltering. Especially in light of the record heat waves Florida has experienced this summer – it wasn't too much fun being in the suit during daylight hours. But, I did manage to do most of the bee suit work either early in the morning or late in the afternoon. I also had to take breaks to hydrate or just go into the shade. Throughout the spring and fall, the suit is pretty comfortable, it is just when added to the outside heat it became unbearable.

THE FUTURE

As I look towards the future, there are several markets I want to explore. The first is commercial pollination, for which my small business isn't large enough yet. I would like to raise queens to sell to breeders for profit. I also want to expand my end products from honey to creamed honey, chap sticks, tincture and more products from the propolis and wax. As I continue to study the beekeeping industry, I hope to create original products for the marketplace. □





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prepared 4Life Lemonade Day! Lemonadeday.org

By Maddie's mom, Tracy Harris

We really enjoyed the Lemonade Day experience. Maddie got so much out of it and we are so proud of her decision to help others. She is ALWAYS asking to do a lemonade stand. Honestly, I say no a lot because I feel uncomfortable asking neighbors to pay for a drink. But I said yes to this because I saw what a great educational opportunity it was. She learned so much about the business side of a lemonade stand. It was great. Not to mention how much she learned about the joy of giving to others. This was a powerful learning experience in her life.

It all came about as we were talking through the goal setting part of the workbook. She had initially thought her goal might be an apple i-touch, but then started thinking bigger. We talked about helping others and that is when I saw her eyes light up. We had already planned to go on a mission trip to build a house in Mexico for an impoverished family this summer, so she took the idea and ran. She decided that she would use 100% of her profits to buy toys for the children that we meet in Mexico.

We are going on the trip with an organization called YWAM (Youth With A Mission.) The home we are building is in Tijuana. It will have electricity but no running water. The family we are building the home for has saved their money to buy the land. The home and furnishings are then donated. The family will work with us on the build site. We are told that Maddie will have the opportunity to play with these kids quite a bit while we are building and kids from all over will come and watch and play while we are there. Maddie's hope is that these toys will really be a blessing to these children. She can't wait to buy the toys and hand them out. □



We want your story!



Are you running a successful business, or hope to, and want to tell others about it?

Do you want to give acknowledgement or thanks to those that have helped you along the way?

Could other students gain from learning about your successes or warnings about your mistakes?

With the exception of cleaning up some grammar, spelling, and other technical stuff your English teacher wanted you to pay attention to, we'll leave your message the way you send it to us. It is, after all, your message and this is your magazine.

All we really need is one page (typed) with a picture or two (1500kb jpeg files or larger are best) about what you want to say. Of course, the articles and pictures you send become the property of the magazine and will not be returned. Also, they may be used for other promotional purposes by the magazine and its parent company, The Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education.

If we use your story, we will get your final approval of all edits before we print it. To make it easy we even have a writing

instruction sheet to give you some suggestions on how to put your story together. Just write us (at the address below) and we'll be glad to send it to you.

What have you got to lose? Here is a free chance (there is absolutely no charge for students to submit their story) to get no cost advertising for your product, web page or service. Opportunities like this don't happen often.

This is your magazine. It's reaching thousands of classrooms each month. This is your chance to help yourself and help others in the process.

Change has to begin somewhere and often the best way to pay something back is to pay it forward!

Sincerely,

Mike Ashmore

Editor, Future CEO Stars Magazine
mashmore@entre-ed.org

Bring Lemonade Day to your city!

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This year 100,000 kids across the nation will start their own lemonade stand business on May 2. By 2013, Lemonade Day will reach 1 million young entrepreneurs in 100 cities. We want to bring this community-wide event for kids to YOUR city!

Great project for business schools, foundations, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, youth sports and after-school programs!

Let's talk!

Contact Executive Director

Julie Eberly at 713.626.KIDS or

jeberly@prepared4life.org.

www.LemonadeDay.org





Lemonade Day!



Lemonade Day FAQ

What is Lemonade Day?

Lemonade Day is a **FREE**, community-wide, educational initiative designed to teach children how to start, own and operate their own business – a lemonade stand.

How did Lemonade Day get started?

Michael Holthouse, a Houston entrepreneur and philanthropist, co-founded Prepared 4 Life (P4L), a nonprofit that provides fun, proactive programs infused with life skills, character education and entrepreneurship. Inspired by the lessons he was able to teach his young daughter and her friend when they set up a lemonade stand, Holthouse launched Lemonade Day in Houston, Texas in 2007. It has now become P4L's number one outreach and educational priority.

When is Lemonade Day?

Lemonade Day takes place the first Sunday in May.

Who can participate?

Youth of all ages, from pre-K through high school, can register for an official Lemonade Day stand. Adults are needed to participate as mentors and volunteers. In addition, community support from schools, churches, businesses, and youth organizations is essential to the success of Lemonade Day.

How does it work?

Each child that registers for Lemonade Day receives a bright, yellow backpack with an informational workbook for the child and another for a responsible adult. The workbooks outline the steps needed to start a business, from setting a goal, creating a business plan, forming a budget and finding an investor to saving money and donating a portion back to their community. (Materials are available in Spanish.)

How does a child register?

Beginning in the spring, a child can register by completing a printed application available through participating partners, such as schools or youth organizations. Youth can register online at www.LemonadeDay.org. They can also sign up and receive a backpack at numerous events in the spring in each city.

What do children learn?

The objective of Lemonade Day is to teach youth how to start and run their own lemonade business. Children learn the entrepreneurial skills necessary to be successful in the future and become contributing members of their communities. The best part of the program for kids is that after covering their expenses and paying back their investors, they can keep what they earn. With this in mind, children are encouraged to open a youth savings account so their profits can continue to grow as well as give a portion of their earnings to charity.

Who can get involved and how?

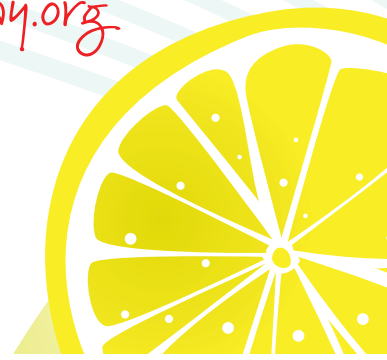
Anyone and everyone can be involved in Lemonade Day. Young entrepreneurs with lemonade stands need mentors, investors, employees and customers! Sponsors and volunteers are also needed to make Lemonade Day a success. All money raised through local donations and sponsorships is used directly to support Lemonade Day in your city. [To get involved, please visit your local Lemonade Day website at www.LemonadeDay.org.](http://www.LemonadeDay.org)

How can I bring Lemonade Day to my community?

To learn how to bring Lemonade Day to your community, call 713.626.KIDS (5437).

www.LemonadeDay.org

Lemonade Day is the perfect opportunity for the entire community to come together and train the next generation of entrepreneurs.





Technically Speaking ... with Chip Lowe

A Deserved “Thank You”

I generally write my articles on interesting new technologies that teachers, students, or businesses can utilize to make life easier, and way more fun! But, in this article, I thought it would be fitting to instead honor a man that has made so much of today’s innovation possible - Steve Jobs.

Without the iMac, iPod, iTunes, iPhone, iPad, and just about everything else that Apple makes, we wouldn’t have the technology we have today; technology that has seamlessly integrated into all aspects of our lives. Apple has pushed innovation way beyond the barriers set in place by industry, engineering, marketing, and logistics. They have literally made the impossible happen in their industry: from computers, to music, to phones, and to tablet computing.

And the most important part of that journey is that it was a team effort. Steve Jobs was not into taking credit for everything Apple did, or being glorified as a technological genius of the world. Instead, he lived in a decent, neighborhood house in Palo Alto, and drove his BMW without a license plate to buck the

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authority of the DMV, as he had been known to push the limits of authority before. I think it is important to use this article to appreciate Steve Jobs because he was a down to earth innovator that changed all of our lives, and that is commendable.

Great entrepreneurs and great people like Steve don't come along every day, and his passing should not go by without veneration of his life. I would like to thank him for his service to Apple, his love to his family, and his willingness to think differently.

Without those crazy ones willing to go against the status quo, our world would be light years behind where we are today. □

Thank you, Steve.





More than an “APPLE” a Day!

After freshmen year in high school, I traveled to Beijing to learn Chinese, become more acquainted with my culture, and do some community service. What started as just something to keep me busy over the summer has since become an integral part of my life. The weeks that I spent in China teaching English to children from low-income families encouraged me to start the Apple Project, a not-for-profit organization that now serves hundreds of children every year with volunteers from New York to California. I remember, during the first class that I ever taught, I asked, “What is your favorite fruit?” Almost every student yelled, “Apple!” It soon became apparent that the children only answered “apple” because their vocabulary was limited. The enthusiasm exuded by these students, who knew so little but were nevertheless eager to learn, was surprisingly touching. Upon reflection, it seems almost laughable that one word could have such a powerful impact, but I was inspired to continue the service of teaching English, despite the many obstacles, largely in part because of the simple concept represented by this incident. I hoped that the program would, one day, help children all across China acquire a vocabulary that consisted of more than just the word apple.



In China, the ability to speak English is an invaluable skill when looking for a job as the language is commonly used in both business and diplomacy. While English has become a required component

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of the Chinese education system, there exists a clear discrepancy between the quality of English instruction in wealthier schools and their less affluent counterparts. To address this issue, the Apple Project coordinates lessons in which volunteers from across the United States teach English to underprivileged children in China via webcam. All volunteers are American high school students, who write their own lesson plans tailored to the curriculum of the schools in China. Lessons are once a week for an hour. The program focuses on basic grammar, pronunciation, and American culture through the use of pictures, games, dialogues, and songs.

Shortly after my trip to Beijing in 2008, I ran into Margie Chen, a philanthropist that laid the foundation for what is the Apple Project today. Unfortunately, Margie passed away just two short months after classes began. The program, it seemed, was going to fall apart. I began to search for possible partners, contacting several non-profit organizations with a focus on improving education in China. Unfortunately, given the bureaucracy ingrained throughout Chinese society, it proved difficult to motivate anybody to work with the program without personal connections. I felt frustrated



because most officials refused to take me seriously, since I was, from their perspective, only a fifteen-year-old high school student. On top of it all, the infiltration of foreign ideas still remains a sensitive topic for the Chinese populace. After several months of failed attempts, I found a school willing to participate in Fuzhou, Fujian, China. A semester later, the Apple Project expanded to serve three elementary schools in the city. Soon after, the education bureau of Fuzhou issued its official approval of the service, and schools in Shandong joined the program. In China, a newspaper published an article about the Apple Project, while in Texas, one of the volunteers gave a speech about the positive impact the organization had on those involved. With the help of a friend, a website (www.theappleproject.org) was launched to promote the program.



Over the past several years, the Apple Project has grown from an experiment with one elementary school to a public benefit corporation officially recognized by the Chinese government. Several years ago, I never would have imagined that the organization would become what it is today. Without the support of friends (in particular, Angela Liu, Alex Foote, Susan Shen, and

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Sasha Spala), a relentless spirit of perseverance, and a bit of luck, none of this would have been possible. My work with the Apple Project has taught me that anyone can make a difference. Every one of us has the power to change the world for the better, so we should take the initiative to do so. And while the project has come a long way, there still remains much to be done. Whether that involves making operations more efficient or expanding the service, I plan to continue working to improve the organization for many years to come.

A recipient of the Robertson scholarship, Joyce is currently a freshman at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. The Robertson is a full-ride merit award at Duke University and UNC– Chapel Hill given to individuals from around the world for their leadership potential and dedication to the community.

For more information, please check out our website (www.theappleproject.org) or contact us at theappleproject.org@gmail.com. □



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A TOWEL A DAY

By Will Cape



My name is Will Cape. I am a senior at Fresno State University and I am launching my first business called “University Linen Services”. My business concept is a linen company targeted to college campuses’ dormitories. When I was living in student housing I always had trouble finding the time to do my laundry. Like most students I spent my days in class and my nights at work. I found it difficult and overwhelming to balance all of my new adult responsibilities. My struggles would eventually inspire the idea for my first business.

I saw an opportunity in this transition new students face as they move away from home and into the dormitories. I wanted to create a service that would make the transition less overwhelming and difficult. I wanted to make students lives more manageable by doing some of the laundry for them. I decided to concentrate on towels. I wanted to provide a service that would provide dormitory students with fresh clean towels just like a hotel guest. My goal is to provide consistency to student’s lives by providing a clean towel for every day of the week.

I transferred to Fresno State last year. I got involved immediately with all the programs that worked with my schedule. Fresno state provides such incredible programs like the Entrepreneurship Mentor Program and the Student Hatchery. Through the mentor program I have had the opportunity to learn from several successful professionals and entrepreneurs. No one has influenced my business plan more than my mentor, Terance Frazier. He gave me the direction to turn my idea into a feasible business plan. The hatchery has given me every recourse I could need to turn my business plan into an actual business. I am grateful

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that a program like the Lyles Center exists at Fresno State. I would encourage anybody who is interested in entrepreneurship to get involved in the programs offered at the Lyles Center. They will change your life.

Now I am ready to launch my small business. Beginning in the spring semester my towel service will be available to the students living in the Fresno State dorms. I am excited to provide quality services matched with great customer services to my peers. I am confident I can deliver these services with the skills I have developed in the Lyles Center. I am also excited to continue to develop my skills in a real life environment.



My advice to anybody just getting started on his or her education is to get involved early. Going to class every day only gives you the basic curriculum. It is essential to apply what you are learning to your life outside the classroom. Join clubs, fraternities or sororities, and attend events. This is the only way to meet the people and make connections that will change your life. Getting involved outside of the classroom has changed my life, and it will change yours too! □





A
Creative
TWIST



Determination and a strong desire to “own my own business” motivated 15-year-old Amber Liggett, proprietress of Amber’s Amazing Animal Balloons, to embark on a creative journey at 9-years-old. Enthralled with the idea of being her own boss, and being full of artistic ideas, Amber (a self-taught balloon artist) practiced daily making animal shapes out of balloons. She began with a small list of creations, and now creates over 65 different shapes with balloons, and the menu grows constantly.

Amber graced the 2008-2009 cover of the Greater Pittsburgh Women’s Yellow Pages, and is the newest member of the Mystic Magicians of Beaver Valley (Society of American Magicians, 157). In 2009 at the age of 12, she became one of 15 nationwide recipients (ages 12 – 18) of a Girls Going Places National Scholarship. During the summer of 2010, Amber competed in a regional business camp, and earned the honor of the “2010 Entrepreneurship Youth’s Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year Award”, and won first place in the business plan competition. She is a high honors student and volleyball player at Lincoln Park Performing Arts Charter School (in Midland, PA), for voice (recently inducted into the Music Honor’s Society).

This January, Amber received the “2011 Global Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award”, an international honor only bestowed upon 24 youth annually. In June, 2011 she won the George W. Tippins Regional Business Plan Competition, and advanced to the NFTE National Business Plan Competition, which was held in NYC October 6, 2011. Amber successfully advanced to the semi-finals (one of twelve students out of over 20,000 students

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in the NFTE program), and received praises from the judges for delivering a “flawless presentation”! Also in June 2011, Amber was named Ernst & Young’s - Young Entrepreneur of the Year (for the Pittsburgh, PA region). During fall, 2011, Senator Elder Vogel personally invited Amber to serve on his Business Advisory Board.



Creating balloon art for birthday and holiday parties, community events, fundraisers, company/ corporate parties, and many other venues gives Amber the opportunity to entertain a large range of customers, including the Beaver County Commissioners and Rep. Jim Christiana. At Senator Elder Vogel’s Children’s Expo last spring, Amber twisted up lots of fun.

It means the world to Amber to see a smile on people’s faces. Giving back to the community is of great importance to her. She participates in many fundraisers, and completed her second annual county wide fundraiser for Beaver County Head Start, “in efforts to obliterate poverty”. During the summers of 2010 & 2011, Amber conducted balloon making and carnival creation workshops for the autism camp at Community College of Beaver County (CCBC). She taught, and continues to teach balloon workshops each semester at CCBC since the summer of 2010.

In Amber’s words:



In March 2012, my story will be told in an upcoming book, “A DivaGirl’s Guide to Style and Self-Respect”, that teaches self-empowerment to young ladies. Most recently I was filmed and will be featured in an upcoming episode of the nationally syndicated TV program Biz Kid\$, which airs on PBS to over a million viewers.

Amber’s Balloons gives back to the community by volunteering time, and donating proceeds to various organizations.

Believing strongly in philanthropy, I have conducted annual fundraisers for my local Headstart, which benefited over 500 families, in efforts to obliterate poverty. As part of my short and long

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term business goals, I will expand balloon designs, and offer additional services. Currently I am taking college level Spanish courses and will soon offer bilingual services. I will increase capacity by training and developing young people to entertain and empower others while retaining a youthful perspective at each event. This expansion includes partnering with various child centered organizations such as the Autism Society or Children's Hospitals.

I am also investigating the possibility of making my business a franchise. Profits will be used toward college tuition and for a car in order to be more self-sufficient. Ultimately, I wish to fulfill my dream of owning a resort, where I will offer year round workshops in efforts to promote entrepreneurialism, social responsibility and develop future leaders. □



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