

DEAR NETWORK KANSAS E-COMMUNITIES,

Welcome to the 2021 fiscal year*! Despite the pandemic, which dramatically shifted our collective priorities and resources during the final four months of FY 2020, it was a great year. Together, 64 E-Communities collectively made great progress on building entrepreneurial ecosystems and providing gap financing to local businesses, and we thank you for your partnership and perseverance. We also thank you for finding time in the midst of everything to help NetWork Kansas deploy Hospitality Industry Relief Emergency (HIRE) and Strengthening People and Revitalizing Kansas (SPARK) funds on behalf of the state. Your partnership is very important to us and we look forward to working alongside you to creatively and adaptively grow the entrepreneurial environment.


Erik Pedersen

Vice President of Entrepreneurship

We have gathered a few statistics to highlight that success:

E-COMMUNITY LOAN STATISTICS

FY 2020 E-Community Loan Statistics

- **71** E-Community Loans awarded totaling **\$2.35M**
- **37** E-Communities approved at least one loan during FY 2020

*E-Community Loan Statistics for 2007-2020***

- **674** E-Community loans awarded (to 643 businesses) totaling **\$21.8M**
- E-Community funding leveraged an additional **\$99.9M** in resource partner loans, bank financing, owner investment, and down payment

*The NetWork Kansas fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30.

**Through June 30, 2020

***Rounded to nearest whole number

E-COMMUNITY LOAN CHARACTERISTICS FY 2020

Business Industry	
Service	48%
Retail	28%
Restaurant	19%
Mfg	5%

Business Composition	
Startups	40%
Expansions	34%
Other (purchases, succession managements, and retentions)	26%

Population of Business Location***	
<1K	12%
1-5K	36%
5-10K	8%
10-25K	22%
25-50K	15%
Urban/Distressed	6%

2020 BOARD CERTIFIED PROGRAMS

E-Communities utilize NetWork Kansas board certified programs to catalyze entrepreneurship activity. To cultivate startup culture and teach entrepreneurial problem solving, it's the Ice House Entrepreneurship Program. To strengthen existing businesses, it's Growing Rural Businesses and Destination Business BootCamp®. For communities interested in starting their own entrepreneurship-driven maker spaces, it's the Maker Space Boot Camp. One of our most popular programs is our homegrown Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge Series, which provides young people with an immersive, interactive entrepreneurship experience. Our board of directors approves these as superlative entrepreneurship programs for which NetWork Kansas supplies supplemental funding, personnel support, and resources.

GROWING RURAL BUSINESSES

This eight-week program provides practical and applied information to help small businesses thrive in rural communities. The course is taught in the community by presenters from the Wichita State University Center for Entrepreneurship. The following E-Communities hosted Growing Rural Businesses during 2020 for a total of 40 participants from:

- Allen & Neosho Counties (23)
- Ellis & Rooks Counties (17) (virtual)

DESTINATION BUSINESS BOOTCAMP® (DBC)

The 2 ½ day workshop in Longmont, CO is taught by Jon Schallert for businesses that would like to become a dominant "destination business" preferred by customers. This course uses a 14-step strategy and features in-depth instruction and tactics about how to accomplish this goal. DBC provides inspiration and real-world data to help business owners make manageable, inexpensive modifications that can have a key impact on their small business. Fourteen E-Communities sent at least one business to DBC or took advantage of another one of Jon Schallert's destination-focused programs and used NetWork Kansas funding during 2020:

- 2 E-Communities sent 4 businesses to DBC (Cherokee, Linn Counties)
- 4 E-Communities sent groups of 6+ businesses to the DBC Community Reinvention Program (CRP) (Ellis, Mitchell, Morton, Rooks Counties)

- Montgomery County hosted New Rules of Business Success in March
- 6 E-Communities engaged in Train the Trainer in April (Anderson, Cherokee, Hodgeman, Linn, Miami, Pawnee Counties)
- 3 E-Communities engaged in Destination Creation in April (Anderson and Thomas Counties and Girard)
- All engagements later in FY 2020 went virtual due to COVID-19

ICE HOUSE ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM

Ice House develops an entrepreneurial mindset and skills like critical thinking, communication, problem solving, and other key assets crucial for success in business and life. Five E-Communities hosted a total of six Ice House Entrepreneurship Programs, including a virtual-hybrid class due to COVID-19, using NetWork Kansas funding during 2020 for a total of 57 participants from:

- Chase County (8)
- Clay County (8)
- Clay County High School (6)
- Ellis County (15)
- Greeley County (9)
- Montgomery County (11)

YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP CHALLENGE (YEC) SERIES

Having completed seven successful seasons of youth engagement, the YEC Series is a series of youth entrepreneurship competitions that encourages and develops the next generation of entrepreneurs and helps communities invest in youth. The goal is to expose Kansas middle school and high school students to entrepreneurship by encouraging them to explore a business idea and get experience planning that business, pitching the idea, and problem solving. The results for the 2019-2020 school year are as follows:

- 44 local competitions representing 43 E-Communities
- 793 students (almost doubled from last year for the second year in a row)
- 64 schools represented
- Several YEC Series events and the KEC State Championship were canceled due to COVID-19

Although what would have been the fourth annual YEC Summit and the state championship Kansas Entrepreneurship Challenge were canceled due to the pandemic, NetWork Kansas partnered with Wichita-based Camp Destination Innovation to host the Kansas Youth Virtual Entrepreneurship Challenge (KYVEC), a statewide K-12 virtual entrepreneurship competition. Beginning in July 2019, NetWork Kansas worked with

Moonbase Labs to develop VentureDash, a one-stop online platform for planning and running an entrepreneurship competition from start to finish. Moonbase completed the platform in early spring and coordinated five beta tests (KYVEC with Camp Destination Innovation, Ford County YEC, Rooks County YEC, Light up the Lake Shore with Rawley Point Economic Advising in WI, and the Cherokee County Virtual Summer Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge), including several virtual competitions such as the Kansas Youth Virtual Entrepreneurship Challenge.

MAKER SPACE BOOT CAMP

Taught at the Fab Lab ICC in Independence, Kansas, Maker Space Boot Camp is a unique program targeted at community leaders interested in building an entrepreneurship-driven makerspace. Workshops are held twice a year, during the fall and spring. During FY 2020, nine participants from the following nine E-Communities attended:

- Altamont
- Bourbon County
- Chase County
- Cherokee County
- Edwards County
- Ford County
- Greeley County
- Liberal
- McPherson County

PILOT PROGRAMS

- Remote Work Certificate Program
- Wheelhouse Incubator
- Leadership Douglas County
- Inner Entrepreneur

IGNISTER

Ignister is a new NetWork Kansas initiative supported by the Kansas Department of Commerce. The program will drive the advancement of the Kansas tech sector through inclusive education, training, and employment resources developed through strategic partnerships. The initiative focuses on developing the technical skills for today's workplace through computer science programs in schools and universities and professional development programs for adults. Ignister cultivates a pipeline of talent critical for Kansas businesses to compete in a tech-dominated environment.

E-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP GROWTH

During FY 2020 we partnered with 64 communities across the state of Kansas. For the 2021 fiscal year, we are pleased to partner with 66 communities. We welcomed two new communities to the partnership this fiscal year and they are doing a great job establishing goals to advance entrepreneurship and participating in entrepreneurship initiatives.

WELCOME E-COMMUNITIES FOR 2021

Mitchell County – This team's dedication to entrepreneurship made them an ideal candidate for the E-Community Partnership. They have already hosted a YEC event and sent participants to Destination Business BootCamp®, leveraging grant funds and showing their dedication. They have a proven track record of teamwork in their county and are a regional leader, which is part of why they were selected for the second CPIN cohort. Mitchell County is an asset to the E-Community Partnership!

Morris County – Under the leadership of a longtime partner of NetWork Kansas, Morris County joined the E-Community Partnership and their leadership team is already pursuing goals to move forward their entrepreneurial vision for the community. They plan to host their first YEC event as part of their focus on youth retention. Morris County is also interested in Destination Business BootCamp®, having already sent an individual business, and completed the Train the Trainer facilitation training. Welcome, Morris County!

"64 E-Communities collectively made great progress on building entrepreneurial ecosystems."

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US GROW THE E-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP. WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH ALL OF YOU THIS COMING YEAR!

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