



NETForce Meeting
Friday, February 21, 2020
Informal Networking – 9:30-10:00 a.m. (CST)
Meeting – 10:00-2:30 p.m. (CST)
UNK
Kearney, NE

Participants: Lisa Tschauner, Sandra Barrera, Griselda Rendon, Maggie Vaughan, Roxann Holliday, Jamie Logue, Jessie Harris, Steve Bors, Marilyn Schlake, Jim Reiff, Gene Knapp, Gregg Christensen, Doris Lux, Shawn Kaskie, April Myers, Aliese Hoffman, Sydney Kobza, Chuck Beck
Guest: Dean Tim Jares from UNK

Online: Tara Nettifee, Linda Hartman

The meeting convened at 10:00 a.m. Marilyn Schlake called the meeting to order.

New Business

- Formation of Nebraska Business Builders – This is a group that is forming with individuals including: Don Maacke, Del Gines, Cathy Lange, Jason Weigle, Harold Sargus, Shawn Kaskie, Jim Jensen and others. It is an informal group and a statewide organization that will focus on advocacy for entrepreneurship. The stage is yet unknown.
- There has been some interest in the Heartland Challenge by the Kaufmann Foundation. Some communities such as Hastings, Ord and Omaha may have submissions. There will be a live Facebook event on the 28th at 10:00 a.m. NETForce can provide support to applicants.
- USDA's RBDG grant is available.
- RCDI grant is available.
- Community College Curriculum has no major revisions or topics.
- What other areas can NETForce help with? It was suggested to contact organizations and entities such as: NEDA, Chambers of Commerce, local schools. Also, if possible NETForce members should consider adding NETForce to their business cards, website and signature lines.
- NETForce will work to refine a position statement that will focus on education, community, advocacy and wanting to partner with new entities.
- Lisa motioned for the creation of a marketing committee to include Maggie, Lisa, Steve and April. They will assess existing marketing collateral; brainstorm new marketing strategy and best practices to share with everyone. Discussion of usage of NETForce social media platforms was reviewed.
- Lisa provided an update on the statewide Big Idea HS competition. NETForce will sponsor with prize money. Preliminary judging will select the top 10 that will be live streamed on April 22nd @

1:00 p.m.; voting will be online and winner will be selected by viewers. Deadline for submission is March 31st.

Old Business

- Summit – We received 10 reviews from new attendees. Attendance was around 90. We have secured November 10th (Tuesday) for the next Summit. The Summit planning committee is scheduled to meet the 1st Tuesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. The committee includes: Sydney, Aliese, Doris, Gregg, Marilyn, Steve & April
 - Should we have specific themes for solicitation?
 - Should it include possible tracts with a focus on such topics as regulations and trends within industries.
 - Should there be a central theme?
 - Who should be considered for keynote – possible option is Jim Pillen
 - Big Idea Talks: Todd Johnson that went through the Builders Challenge

Partner Updates

- Sydney –
 - DECA Judging
Lincoln, Cornhusker Marriott,
March 19-20
Link: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSesMmQKmvGu8xh7Pq8b9D2rWJ6Cn4OeRcBPKqG7lqyLJ3uQQ/viewform>
 - FBLA Judging
Kearney, Younes Conference Center
March 30-April 1
Link: <https://bit.ly/fblajudgeform>
 - Teacher Fall Workshops
(will reach out to group for 45 minute session presentations)
October 21 – ESU 10, 76 Plaza Blvd., Kearney
October 28 – ESU 3, 6949 South 110th St., La Vista
October 29 – ESU 7, 2657 44th Ave., Columbus
- Aliese -
 - Big Idea High School challenge is coming up
 - She is also working on several youth programs for the summer and hoping to take some back on the road again this year.
- April –
 - Completed a very successful QB training in Valentine and looking to partner with MPCC to host other QB trainings.
 - NEF continues to have loan funds available.

- Shawn –
 - SourceLink will be sending update emails to current (University) resource navigator partners. External partners (NETForce members) receive a PSA with a full (5yr) funding goal set for later this year. See attached
 - Instructed “bare bones”-(5) 35m class periods version of Builder Profile assessment and practice case pitching with 10 Broken Bow HS students in cooperation with Custer Co Econ Dev and local CAPABLE (HS Career Readiness program)
 - Google Impact Challenge Grant application for Entrepreneurship Ecosystem program (eCommunities) in Custer, Valley and Cherry Counties submitted-may know of funding in April
 - ESI 4h Middle school Eship Camp offered in Arnold mid-June in partnership w/ local economic development group
 - Considerations for starting and Air(Bnb) program piloted Ravenna this Monday Feb 24, 630-830-attached (DRAFT only, do not share without permission)
 - Submitted abstract to present at National Grocery Summit after working with several rural grocers in Central NE-(Stapleton, Callaway & Ravenna)- *The presentation focuses on a strategic plan model developed for the Stapleton Cooperative Market & Deli in Logan County (population 768). The model included best practices, and ongoing membership goals campaign, which resulted in viability of this key community anchor business. The model is transferrable to any rural grocery store.*
 - There have been communities (6) with transitions in their local Economic Dev (Director/Coordinator) roles with the last few months. New: Loup City, Ravenna, Callaway, St. Paul; Ord just resigned...discontinued in Sargent; Kaskie spends a lot of time helping local boards w/ strategic planning and visioning.

- Doris –
 - partnering with SCORE, Chamber and REAP to do table talks; meet once a month and provide lunch with topic specific.
 - Working with the Chamber who has a destination project grant where 10 businesses will go to Colorado and learn how to develop destination businesses and then Columbus will do a destination workshop.
 - Doris was approved for Verizon Stem middle school grant for 2 more years.

- Gregg –
 - Hoping to establish consulting Gallup Profile 10 coach; is now volunteering for SCORE

- Tara –
 - Kickoff inspiration rally held 02/20/20; March 20th and 23rd will be the builders challenge.
 - Working on creating and fostering the entrepreneurship community in GI and the region.

- Gene –
 - SBA and SCORE are interested in outreach to underserved communities; doing Hispanic outreach with grant that was received for SCORE.

- Jim –
 - October 16th NEF will hold Startup to Success in Omaha to feature roundtable and keynote speaker.
 - OFN is coming to Omaha for regional conference
 - BC Clark has been promoted as director of training and development
 - Soon NEF will be able to pull soft credit pulls

- Chuck Beck –
 - PTAC – March 30th Omaha – Meet the Buyers conference; there will be procurement opportunities
 - July 15th at UNK – University of Nebraska purchasing agencies
 - October 20th Meet the Buyers conference at UNK

- Marilyn –
 - There is a new graduate certificate; Rural Community Economic Prosperity – enrolled at UNL 15 hrs and 3 mandatory core classes and 6 one-hour class
 - CEC Conference in Columbus April 22nd & 23rd \$80; over 30 different sessions over two days

- Steve –
 - SCC Focus Suites remain full and there is a wait list
 - A commercial kitchen is being built and they are trying to launch a kitchen incubator

- Jessie –
 - MarkeTech will be held in April with a variety of different topics. Telling your story will be a focus. There are still sponsorship opportunities for the networking plaza.
 - T3 webinars continue to be very popular

- Maggie –
 - Has a new role in the Small Business Institute for CCC new role
 - Working to rebrand to Entrepreneurship Center
 - Still with ED as Director of Entrepreneurship P/T
 - Hope to pilot future builders with college students this spring with CCC

- Griselda –
 - REAP has an office at College Park – ribbon cutting will be on March 13th
 - There is a new women business director – Jessica Campos
 - There are new regions for REAP with new contacts

- Sandra –
 - CVI Red Willow and Cherry county openings
 - Still working on flood resources
 - Working on a partnership with other organizations for academies
 - Working on a partnership for ecofriendly businesses, Sam's Club, Wal-Mart
 - Curriculum for health entrepreneurs; how to have healthy menu for customers
 - Working with women on mindfulness academy, time management, personal finances, passion of your business

- They have a map to share with new business owners that shows 10 steps to follow to open a business
- Lisa –
 - LoperLinks is live and waiting for students to build profiles
 - Finishing preparation for Big Idea HS
 - Big Idea NP will be held at Godfathers
 - Light It Up awards will be held on April 15th
- Craig –
 - I am covering Southeast Nebraska region as a Loan Specialist for REAP – working with businesses on obtaining loans from \$1,000 up to \$150,000, one-on-one business counseling as well as trainings.
 - Hired new REAP Business Development – Raul Arcos-Hawkins, office out of Grand Island, started in December 2019
 - Hired new Loan Specialist for Central Region – Howard White, office out of Paxton, started in December 2019
 - Kim Preston – Promoted to REAP Director
 - Conducted 57 small business trainings in last quarter (October-December 2019)
 - Megan Gewecke – Stepping Stones Psychological Services in Kearney – she will receive the REAP Women’s Business Center Entrepreneur of the Year award at the Center for Rural Affairs Awards Banquet on March 13.
 - Four Financial Literacy Trainings scheduled, one just took place in Pierce on February 12, another is scheduled in Auburn starting on March 3, one in Spanish scheduled in Columbus starting on May 19 and another in Spanish scheduled in Lexington starting on March 30.
 - Restaurant, Cleaning and construction academies scheduled in the upcoming months. Here is the link to our upcoming trainings: <https://www.cfra.org/reap/events>.

The next meeting will be held on April 17th.

Respectfully submitted,

April Myers, Secretary