Growing Entrepreneurial Communities Summit
2016 Conference

Kansas City, MO
May 4-5, 2016

Presented By:
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NetWork Kansas
NetWork Kansas

Kansas Landscape


• Kansas Center for Entrepreneurship Established (May 2005)

• Key Collaborators
  o Kansas Department of Commerce
  o Kansas Small Business Development Center
  o Fort Hays State University
  o Board of Directors
NetWork Kansas

Shift Toward Community Engagement and Empowerment

“We think that one thing that makes NetWork Kansas unique and more impactful is that in 2007 they committed to a ground game, or the E-Communities strategy. We feel that this was critical.”

- Don Macke, Co-Founder of the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, Lincoln, NE
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Entrepreneurship (E-) Communities

• Launched Fall 2007
• Competitive process (multiple mtgs, written app, in-person interview)
• Community definition (town, cluster of towns, county)
  o Typically begins with city/county ED Director
• Creation of locally controlled loan fund (60/40 match with funding partner)
• Loan funds are the “Trojan Horse”
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Entrepreneurship (E-) Communities

• Ask #1: Create a local leadership team

• Ask #2: Create a financial review board

• Ask #3: Partner with an administrative support organization

• Ask #4: Via Entrepreneurship Tax Credits, establish locally-controlled loan fund (NetWork Kansas-owned)
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Entrepreneurship (E-) Communities: 55 in 2016
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Entrepreneurship (E-) Communities

• 55 locally-controlled loan funds
• $60K - $225K in each
• $7.7M loaned to 289 businesses (as of 3/31/16)
  o 18% of total loan package
  o Leveraged $35.5M other capital
  o 53% in towns with population <5K
  o 50% startups, 35% expansions
  o 32% retail, 19% restaurant, 6% mfg, 44% service
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Entrepreneurship (E-) Communities

- Loan funds are the “Trojan Horse”
  - Seat at table for leadership team meetings
  - Deep dive about how to create an entrepreneurial environment and strategic focus
  - Board Certified Programs
    - Ice House
    - Growing Rural Businesses
    - Destination BootCamp
    - Economic Gardening
    - Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge
    - Continuing to grow...
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Entrepreneurship (E-) Communities

• Is Your Community Ready to Build an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem?
  o Is your community ready to be an E-Community?
  o Make progress in a partnership with us
    • Multiple viewpoints
  o Assess vs. Build
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Entrepreneurship (E-) Communities

• Is Your Community Ready to Build an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem?
  o Geographical Readiness
    • City-wide, county-wide, cluster of communities
    • Evaluate the collaboration and cooperation, relevant to the population.
    • Is this a suitable situation compatible with impacting the entrepreneurial environment positively?
    • We assess, don’t build
Is Your Community Ready to Build an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem?

- Leadership Team Readiness
  - Representation from public/private, existing team vs. newly created
    - Public (SBDC, Chamber, CDC, Rural Energy, Electric and Telco, Economic Development)
    - Private (Banks, entrepreneurs, accountant)
  - Commit to monthly/regular meetings to discuss entrepreneurial environment and vision
  - We assess as well as build
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Entrepreneurship (E-) Communities

• Is Your Community Ready to Build an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem?
  o Point Person Readiness?
    • Demonstrates a willingness to act as leader
    • Engaged with local, regional and state resources
    • Utilization of other NetWork Kansas programs
    • Paid position in economic development or chamber
    • We assess as well as build
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Entrepreneurship (E-) Communities

• Is Your Community Ready to Build an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem?
  o Community Readiness
    • Leadership capacity
      o Public Square, Kansas Leadership Center, etc.
      o City/County leadership programs
    • Youth engagement
      o K-12 entrepreneurial programs
      o E-Fairs
      o Mentoring, job shadowing
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Entrepreneurship (E-) Communities

• Is Your Community Ready to Build an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem?
  o Community Readiness
    • Entrepreneurial Environment
      o Business incubator or makerspace
      o Assessment of strengths and weaknesses with regard to supporting entrepreneurs
    • Connectivity to Resources
      o Process to assist entrepreneurs with assistance or coaching
      o We assess as well as build
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