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## I. Executive Summary

The planning for this event was spread over a long period of time, and involved a lot of brainstorming and bouncing ideas off of each other. Over time, as we thought about it more and more, we came back to our original idea of inviting local entrepreneurs to Corner Canyon High School to speak about their experiences, their businesses, their successes, and their failures. It was important for us to raise awareness on the importance of entrepreneurship because it teaches many invaluable skills. Critical thinking and problem solving are among these skills. They are skills that cannot be taught in the traditional classroom environment, and must actually be experienced to be learned in the fullest extent.

From the beginning, we wanted to make sure that there was an emphasis on failure. Being a fundamental part of entrepreneurialism, failure provides opportunities for everyone involved to learn from the situation as a whole. Even though success is obviously the most desired outcome, as Will Rogers said, “The man who never makes a mistake must get tired of doing nothing.”

From early on in the process, we cooperated closely with Corner Canyon High School’s administration. Our principal, Mary Bailey, was very supportive of our efforts and allowed us to use the atrium at our school to host the event. This was very appreciated, since it made it so that we did not have to find another location in our community, possibly with costs associated, to hold our event.

We decided that we should each invite 2-3 entrepreneurs in order for the event to go smoothly. This way, the speakers would end up speaking for about 45 minutes to an hour. This ended up being perfectly accurate, and made the event not too long, and not too short. Each entrepreneur came in and, as planned, told their story. We ended up having five, which was the perfect amount for our goals.

Before the entrepreneur night took place, we made the PowerPoint that we used to guide the event and signs that we hung up to help people get to the atrium quickly and efficiently. The PowerPoint was quite simple, and solely consisted of the names of the speakers and some bullet points that we used to open and close the event. Since we introduced each entrepreneur, we were able to control the flow of the event quite well.

We also advertised to the school’s faculty, student body, and parents. We did this in the form of sending an email to all of these people. In order to incentivize people to attend the event, we coordinated with the school’s attendance office, and were able to get our event approved to give students attendance school credit. This has proven successful in the past, for a range of events, and it was the single strongest motivator in our event to have sufficient attendees.



## II. Introduction

### A. Entrepreneurism in Utah

Corner Canyon High School is situated in Draper, Utah. This is an area with an intense entrepreneurial background. According to Forbes Magazine, Utah raised more money from venture capital funding than New York<sup>i</sup>. Utah companies raised more than \$800 million dollars from venture capital in 2014. This is due primarily to the conservative and pro-business nature of politics in Utah.

Not only does Utah have extremely fertile ground for entrepreneurs looking to get funding, but also, it is a hotspot for large technology companies to have offices. *Adobe, Microsoft, eBay, and Goldman Sachs* all have corporate offices located in Utah. All of those companies also happen to be Fortune 500 companies. The mere fact that all of those companies have large corporate offices in Utah shows that Utah's entrepreneurial atmosphere is strong and reliable.

In addition to having the support of large corporations, Utah also is the home to many successful businesses. Among these are *Vivint, Omniture, and Ancestry.com*. *Vivint* sold the solar technology part of its company to SunEdison in 2015 for an astounding \$2.2 billion<sup>ii</sup>. *Omniture* was purchased by Adobe for \$1.8 billion in 2009. *Ancestry.com* is considered to be the #1 source for online genealogy worldwide.



## Why Utah?

According to USA Today, there are 3 major reasons for Utah's immense entrepreneurial capabilities<sup>iii</sup>. They are low tax rates, affordable real estate, and fantastic infrastructure. In addition to these benefits, Utah also has a higher supply of venture capital funding available.

Utah has tax rates that are lower than most of the country. According to Wallet Hub, Utah ranks number 14 on states with the lowest tax rates<sup>iv</sup>. According to that same report, Utah's tax rates are 11% lower than the national average. This allows a business to function more efficiently and yields a slight overall higher chance of the business being successful. This is because lower taxes mean fewer expenses for the business. Fewer expenses for the business means that more profit can be pumped back into the business, and more money can be invested into the business itself, rather than spending all profit on fees and taxes.

In addition to low tax rates, Utah also has extremely affordable real estate. This is critical to a business's success because real estate is a cost that nearly every business has to encounter. Cheap real estate helps tremendously in a startup business. It allows a business to function properly without the need for extensive devotion to real estate costs, and because of this dramatic reduction in costs compared to other states, makes it easier for new entrepreneurs to find people who are willing to invest and help them start their own brand-new company.



### III. Management of Activities Targeted at Outside

#### Audience

The goal of our entrepreneurial night at Corner Canyon High School is to raise awareness about entrepreneurship. Since entrepreneurship can benefit nearly all types of people, we will be advertising to students, faculty, and parents. For students, entrepreneurship teaches invaluable skills, like critical thinking and resilience. These are skills that cannot be taught in the traditional educational environment.

For teachers and faculty, entrepreneurship also teaches essential life skills. As well as teaching priceless skills for adults, adult entrepreneurs also have a higher average salary, according to a 2009 study by the Institute for Study of Labor<sup>v</sup>. The common perception is that entrepreneurs are nearly destined to fail. This study, however, proved the opposite to be true. It found that the mean income for entrepreneurs is almost 50% greater than that of traditional employees.

These skills taught by entrepreneurship, like critical thinking, are hugely desired by employers and other workplace professionals in nearly every profession, according to CQ Researcher<sup>vi</sup>. Why then would they not be taught in traditional schools? The answer is simple: the traditional education system makes it extremely difficult to teach these skills, due to the way that it is structured.



## A. Purpose of Activities

The purpose of our entrepreneurial night at Corner Canyon High School is to raise awareness of the viability of starting your own business. While starting a business can be a serious challenge, it's very important to both local and global communities. Almost anyone can start his or her own business. According to the Kauffman Foundation for Entrepreneurship, less than one percent of entrepreneurs came from extremely wealthy or extremely impoverished backgrounds<sup>vii</sup>. This demonstrates that one doesn't need to be fabulously wealthy in order to run a successful business -- anyone can try their hand.

Our activity will include entrepreneurs from the local area that will be speaking. Owners of various businesses will come to tell their story, for example, why they decided to start a business, what they like about it, etcetera. The goal of this is to inspire students at Corner Canyon High School to consider starting their own businesses, and perhaps start the next big revolutionary company.

Not only will it be a resource for students, but it will also be a resource for parents and other adults as well. Since the event will be open to all, people of all ages may attend and take advantage of the learning opportunity that night. This is important, since, according to the Kauffman Foundation, both the average and median age of entrepreneurs when they started their current company is 40. This can show two things:



it's never too late to start another business, and starting more than one as time goes on is quite common amongst entrepreneurs.

In order to advertise the event, we will be in contact with the student government at Corner Canyon High School, since they are in charge of announcements. In addition to announcements, we will print out paper fliers with the details of the event and put them up around the school and in local businesses. This will provide a good reach for a school event, and should bring in a good amount of people. It can also provide businesses who can't send anyone to speak an opportunity to help spread awareness and contribute.

## B. Planning and Organization of Activities

Many people have been involved in the planning for this event. We came up with the idea of bringing entrepreneurs to Corner Canyon High School to speak. This is the most important part of the event and will take about forty-five minutes. After the speeches and presentations given by the entrepreneurs in the auditorium, we will be speaking to the attendees about our own experiences regarding entrepreneurship.

In order for this event to be successful, it would need to have sufficient attendees. Between 15 and 30 people would be optimal. This is the perfect balance between having too many people (where the atmosphere is loud and unfocused) and having too small of an audience (where it is awkwardly silent).



In order to promote the event, we did a number of things. First, we announced the event at every DECA meeting preceding it. We also inserted a text snippet to the daily announcements at school. After that, we coordinated with our school principal to send an email to all students, faculty, and parents that explained the event. The text in the email, as well as the text read on the daily announcements was:

*Corner Canyon DECA is hosting an entrepreneur night next Tuesday, February 9th, at 7 pm, in the Atrium. If you attend, you will get an attendance school credit. Bring a parent and you get two! Be sure to take advantage of this amazing opportunity to learn more about starting your own business!*

We planned to have between 4 and 7 people come to speak about entrepreneurship from the local community. The speakers were people that have in some way a) experienced entrepreneurship in their local communities, and b) were comfortable speaking about their successes and failures.

The first criterion for speaker selection was that they had to have experienced entrepreneurship in their local communities in some way. This could be from curating an idea and starting a company, opening a business, or something else relating to entrepreneurship, like having a career at a large corporation. This gives a speaker range of persistent local small business owners up to successful owners of larger companies





and kept the speaker selection local to inspire a sense of community as the speakers told their stories.

The second criterion for selection of speakers is that they must be comfortable speaking about their successes *and* failures. This is because failure is one of the most important aspects of entrepreneurialism<sup>viii</sup>. Failure is critical to the success of a business. Entrepreneurialism is extremely difficult to teach in a classroom type setting. This is because, in order to learn how to be a successful entrepreneur, you have to experience and recognize failure, and learn from those mistakes. Without failure, entrepreneurialism falls apart.

#### A. Implementation of Activities

After we gathered speakers, we needed to have a place to hold the event. It needed to be big enough to not feel cramped, but small enough to feel local and direct. Since our school has a wide variety of room sizes, we decided to host it there. The 3 main room sizes in our school are classroom, auditorium, and atrium. The classroom holds approximately 30 people, which could work for our event, but it would be a bit tight. The auditorium fits a large number of people, upwards of 750. This would be too big for our event since we were expecting under 50 people to attend in total. The atrium, however, was the perfect size for our event. Its capacity is approximately 50-60 people.

We decided to host our event in the atrium. This is not only because it was the near-perfect size for our event, but also because it was relatively easy to locate in the school.



Our school is rather complicated to navigate for people entering it for the first time, but since the atrium is located close to the main entrance at the front of the school, only a few signs were required to guide attendees to the correct room. These signs were each titled "Corner Canyon DECA's Entrepreneur Night," and had arrows guiding guests to the atrium.



## IV. Evaluation and Recommendations

The criteria for the success of our event were to have at least 20 attendees, and to have at least 4 people come and speak. We exceeded both of these goals, eventually reaching 30 attendees and 5 speakers. Although our goals were met, there was still much that could be improved on if this project were to be repeated in the future by our chapter.

### A. Evaluation of Campaign Targeted at The Outside Audience

Our two goals for this event were to have at least 20 attendees, and also to have at least 4 people come and speak. We met both of these goals. We had approximately 30 attendees and 5 speakers, plus the two of us speaking. The attendees included students from Corner Canyon High School, their parents, their friends, and faculty from Corner Canyon High School. The speakers were local entrepreneurs, coming mainly from the area of Draper, Utah.

In order to motivate students to attend our entrepreneur night, we coordinated with school administration to allow students to receive an attendance credit, in case the students missed a class. This proved to be a very successful motivator. Many students at Corner Canyon High School occasionally are tardy to classes, or even absent (which is, of course, true of most high schools). This is a violation of Corner Canyon High School's attendance policy, and it can bring a student's grade in the said class to "No-Grade". A



“No-Grade” causes the students to receive no credit for that class, which could cause the student not to graduate.

We had 5 local entrepreneurs come to speak. They ranged from CEO’s of local businesses to serial entrepreneurs. Each entrepreneur spoke for approximately 10-15 minutes, making the event a total of about 1 hour and 15 minutes long. They talked about their own personal successes and failures. Each entrepreneur that came to speak at the event is outlined below.

### Marion Norton

*“Entrepreneurship is not something you can teach in a classroom.”*



Marion Norton is the owner and operator of Golden Spoon Frozen Yogurt in Draper Utah. In 2013, Norton bought the ownership rights to Golden Spoon Frozen Yogurt in the State of Utah. She used this acquisition to reopen the Draper location. Since doing so, the business has turned a sharp profit and is well renowned in the Salt Lake City area.

Her experience with entrepreneurship began when she was a little girl living in Irvine, California. Her father bought a convenience store/gas station, and she was very involved in that process. She discussed many of the important skills that her father taught her. Among these skills are hard work, and no fear. Hard work is important



because it is the foundation of the back end of any business. Everything in a business depends on the resilience and hard work of the employees.

Avoiding and conquering fear also directly ties into this. In order to expand a business, risks must be taken. Although a business may be successful and take no risks, the business will not grow if no risks are taken.

### Ray Paul Greenwood

*“To be successful, a business must expect and adapt to change in the market.”*



Ray Paul Greenwood is the owner and operator of Layton Roofing, which is the oldest roofing company in Utah. He has managed it for upwards of 15 years, and is a staple to the local

small business community in Utah. His speech consisted of emphasizing the importance of adaptation, and why quality is more important than quantity.

Greenwood used several real-world examples to illustrate the importance of adaptation. The most prominent and recurring example was the rise and fall of Blockbuster. As video became increasingly digital rather than the traditional optical disk format, Blockbuster failed to adapt. They did not cater to the digital-craving market, instead holding onto the concept of the optical disk. This led to the ultimate downfall and eventual bankruptcy of the company in 2010<sup>ix</sup>.



## Cory Linton

*“Working for a big company is an invaluable experience.”*



Cory Linton helped to start a local business, School Improvement Network, as well as having a substantial career at Microsoft. He discussed in great detail how his experience working at Microsoft

taught him many invaluable entrepreneurial skills. One such experience was when Linton was presenting Tablet PC to a government audience with the founder of Microsoft, Bill Gates, speaking. The software running the presentation crashed on stage in front of the audience.

Linton had to improvise. He did not know what to do. Clearly, it was not supposed to crash. Cory Linton and Bill Gates both knew this. Linton chose to try and inject humor into the situation, to ease the tension. The audience laughed, and soon after the issue was fixed, and the presentation proceeded as expected. Linton learned that in business, and especially the tech world, unexpected things are always happening, and in order to overcome these things, one must just improvise and hope for the best.



He learned that humor worked in that situation, and usually was a good temporary solution to tough situations.

### Blanch Linton

*“Creating a mission is critical in starting and running a successful business.”*

Blanch Linton was a founder of School Improvement Network. She heavily



emphasized the importance of consistence in starting a business. An example of consistence in a business is having a company mission. The company mission needs to be used when recruiting new employees, and

needs to be constantly reinforced among the employees. Doing this makes sure all employees have a similar end goal for the company, and understand the needs and wants of the company.

Linton discussed how she applied this concept in her own business. She discussed how whenever a new employee is hired, they must agree to the company's mission statement and commit to always follow it. If they don't accept it and completely agree with it, they are not hired. Linton believes that a large part of the success of the company can be attributed to this.



## Rob Gallup

*“Any entrepreneur must prepare for intense stress, failure, and pressure”*



Rob Gallup is a serial entrepreneur. He has started and sold multiple successful businesses and continues to start and sell businesses even today. He heavily emphasized the side of entrepreneurship that is not talked about openly

very often: the stress. He went on to explain how in 2012, one of his former businesses (that he recently sold) was raided by the FBI for fraud. Although he was not indicted, he was involved in the investigation. Although this may be an extreme case, it illustrates very well how stressful entrepreneurship can be at times.

Gallup also discusses how it is important to manage emotions efficiently in a business, and how one should not just hold emotions in. Doing this allows them to build up, and eventually explode. He discussed how in the beginning of his career, he didn't want to burden others with his business stress, so he just kept to himself. He then went on to explain that when he realized that was not working, he talked to his spouse about his stress, and had a happier overall disposition.





## B. Recommendations for Additional New Activities for Future Campaigns

If we were to do this project again, there are some key changes we would make. We would begin advertising earlier, have more variety in our advertisements, and ask a wider range of entrepreneurs to visit. While the event went well as it was organized this time, these changes would make it even better.

Beginning advertising earlier would bring a veritable smorgasbord of benefits with it. Not only would it give people more time to see the advertisements before the event had already passed, but it would also give us more time to think about what we want our advertisements to say and look like. More time for people to see means more people will come, instead of seeing the advertisements too late to attend.

A wider variety of advertisements would also interest, coincidentally, a wider variety of people. Advertisements with different color schemes, different sizes, and particularly in different locations would draw in more people of different backgrounds. Having more people attend, while we did meet our goal, could open up the possibility of more questions being asked by the audience, which can help fuel a discussion that isn't solely led by the presenters themselves.

Having a wider variety of entrepreneurs in attendance would also help engage the audience more. Since Cory and Blanch both came from the same company, while their experiences were different, they both tied back into the same larger experience of



their entrepreneurialism. Ideally, this would be remedied by having each entrepreneur come from a different company. Since all of the other speakers were from different companies, this did not end up being a big problem. Another way to address this could be placing them apart from each other in the speaker lineup. That way, the audience could differentiate between their stories much more easily.

Had we thought of all of these changes before starting our project, we could have made our endeavor an even greater success than it already was. Starting our advertisements earlier, modifying the advertisements to attract a wider variety of people, and inviting more entrepreneurs from different areas to interest more people would have been in our best interest.



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