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NEW CEO PROGRAM SETS OUT TO PREPARE FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS

McDonough County, IL, October 21, 2019- The McDonough County CEO program is new to our area and aims to create entrepreneurial opportunities for high school juniors and seniors. The students hail from Bushnell-Prairie City, Macomb, and West Prairie high schools. CEO is a yearlong class that provides a daily, hands-on learning experience that teaches students how to start and maintain a business.

Throughout the week, students learn from local business owners and community members about owning and operating a business. Hailey Walters, a CEO student from Bushnell-Prairie City said, "I'm really looking forward to building relationships with business owners in the community and creating my own social network."

CEO students have already been provided with many learning experiences in only two months. Some students have even started plans for their future businesses. Macomb student Braxton Lidaywa says, "I plan on growing my shoe reselling business which has high profits, but is also a high overhead business. Finding ways to pull in capital from investors to maximize my earning potential will be a great learning opportunity."

The CEO program is funded by investors who are local business owners and community members. The program is facilitated by Christi Steelman and managed by a volunteer board of directors. Rachel Lenz, board Chair and Executive Director of the Macomb Park District, is very excited about the CEO program. "This program brings a variety of students with such untapped potential together; they have so many different elements they are bringing to the program and it is exciting to see the impact they are having on each other."

In the short time that the McDonough County CEO program has been operational, it has already been a life changing experience for the students. Everyone is excited to see where the infant program will be headed in the coming months and years. Karly Teel, a junior at West Prairie, says, "CEO has been a really good learning experience for me so far. It's taught me how to interact and be patient with the people I'm working with."

The McDonough County CEO Program is creating entrepreneurial opportunities for high schoolers throughout the county. For more information, please contact the CEO chair, Rachel Lenz. Phone: 309-833-4562 Email: r.lenz@macombparks.com Web: www.mcdonoughcountyceo.com



Back Row, L-R: Karly Teel, Kassidy Carson, Makenzie Case, Josh Lockhart, Braxton Lidaywa, Josh Bryan, Asia Pettigrew

Front Row, L-R: Christi Steelman, Jenna Nelson, Jordan Rouse, Nate Clark, Jenna Spangler, Hailey Walters, Peyton Maloney