

## NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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As Nebraska and the nation embark on creating a dynamic economy for the 21st century, research and global trends strongly indicate the importance of innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship as keys to our future. The distribution of Nebraska's population across a large geographic area poses unique challenges, but every challenge offers opportunities.

Entrepreneurship has been identified as an important career pathway for citizens of all ages, but especially for our youth. Entrepreneurial literacy has also been identified as a 21st century skill in various groundbreaking reports. The Nebraska 4-H EntrepreneurShip Investigation (ESI) curriculum spotlights both.

Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial literacy enhance opportunities and the economic viability of our communities whether they are rural or urban. Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education are critical to growing our economy, retaining and attracting back our young people, as well as creating a "line of succession" for current businesses. Because of this, the Nebraska Department of Education began partnering with other state agencies, public and private postsecondary institutions, and the business community to focus on entrepreneurship through the Nebraska Entrepreneurship Task Force (NET-Force) in 2005. Assisting in the creation of relevant and engaging curricula at all levels is a major goal of the task force.

Entrepreneurship education can and should be viewed as a lifelong learning process. The Lifelong Learning Model created by the Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education is based on the belief that entrepreneurs go through stages in their learning and earning lives. This model and the national content standards for entrepreneurship education have been the basis of curriculum development in our state, including the work of Nebraska 4-H. These standards have been cross-walked to the Nebraska STARS (academic) standards and are referenced in each unit in the EntrepreneurShip Investigation (ESI) curriculum.

Since Nebraska 4-H included the Nebraska Department of Education in their efforts to create entrepreneurship curriculum that could be used by local leaders and schools, I have been excited by their focus and energy. They have engaged state and local leaders to develop a strategic plan, the first stage of which was the development of an entrepreneurship curriculum for youth at the middle-school age level. It focuses on combining strong content with youth-oriented, fun activities. The components of the curriculum add great value to instructional techniques not only for Nebraska educators and 4-H leaders, but also for their counterparts nationwide. ESI also serves as a wonderful way for youth to explore their communities and gain an appreciation for their rich history and to learn more about local and area entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurship can be defined as "making a product, service, or idea better." That certainly holds true for the Nebraska 4-H ESI curriculum. ESI and the planned elementary and high school level companion curricula are unique efforts and ones which promise to pay dividends for communities and schools that utilize them.

Sincerely

Gregg Christensen

Entrepreneurship and Career Education Specialist

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The Venetian Costume Shoppe Fine Historic Recreations of Every Era Seamstress Kelsey Quandt

Dear EntrepreneurShip Investigators,

Hi! My name is Kelsey Quandt. At the present time, I am 18 years old and a freshman in college. I am also owner and operator of a business called The Venetian Costume Shoppe. I have owned my business for the past four years. I created my business after completing a Civil War dress (with hoopskirts!) for a 4-H project. Up to that time, I had never really considered sewing as a business option, but as I completed my project, I realized that sewing was both something I enjoyed and could do well. Soon, I was creating my idea for The Venetian Costume Shoppe, a company that would specialize in historical clothing. Over the years, I have improved my skills with detailed 4-H projects and learned marketing strategies that have helped me sell my clothing items in museum gift shops. In the future, I hope to extend my business to make costumes for major Hollywood productions.

Many of you have been involved with EntrepreneurShip Investigation for some time now. In Unit 1 of ESI, you were able to discover what it means to be an entrepreneur. In Unit 2, you learned about qualities entrepreneurs must possess to achieve success. Now, in Unit 3, it's finally time to discover and focus on your own business idea.

Throughout Unit 3, as you enter items in your Investigator's Notebook, you will gradually build your business plan. Finally, after you have completed all activities in this unit, you will take what you've entered in the business plan and polish it so that you will be able to take your plan to others who might be able to help you get your business rolling!

You are about to embark on an exciting adventure, discovering a business that is right for you. Lots of things must be taken into consideration as you think about the possibility of starting a successful business. In the first section, "Concept Development," you will brainstorm to come up with several ideas to consider. Then, you'll need to use good decision-making skills to decide which of your ideas would make the right business for you. The "Resourcing" section will help you decide how you could go into business, what type of ownership you should consider for your business, how to finance your business, and how to determine what kind of team you'll need to make your new business succeed. Finally, the "Start Up" section (the largest section of Unit 3) will help you think about all the details you'll need to get your business up and running successfully from customer service, marketing, pricing and selling your product or service to business record keeping.

I hope that you enjoy this unit and that after you become an ESI Case Investigator, you will become an entrepreneur and start a new business. For me, creating a business that I love has been fun, exciting and a great way to help finance my college education.

Have fun on your investigation!

Lelsey L. Quandt



## Welcome!

You are about to enter the exciting world of ESI (EntrepreneurShip Investigation)! Enjoy investigating the endless possibilities of your future as an entrepreneur. What is your passion? Where would you live? What would you do? Where do you start? Follow the clues.

You are currently looking at the third of a series of manuals. **Unit 3, ESI: Your Business Inspection.**Your final project will be a completed business plan. This manual is divided into three parts: 1) <u>Concept Development</u>. What are the possibilities? 2) <u>Resourcing</u>. You will find the resources, build your team and develop a business plan. 3) <u>Start-Up</u>. Investigate customer service, marketing and business development. If you find this experience interesting and would like to learn more, I would encourage you to check the following additional units. Take advantage of all three units and make your dream a reality.

Unit 1, ESI: Discover the E-Scene, is designed to help you learn what it means to be an entrepreneur.

**Unit 2, ESI:** The **Case of Me** is designed to develop basic skills needed to succeed in the professional and business world. These skills are necessary for you to succeed in any professional career. They are, however, especially important for entrepreneurs.

Our CD-ROM and Web site are tools that you can use to enhance your learning experiences.

**CD-ROM.** The electronic Investigator's Notebook will allow you to automatically link your activities to build a business plan. You can also learn about e-commerce and other related activities by using the resources available on the CD-ROM.

**Web site,** http://4h.unl.edu/esi. Look at "No Place Like Home," a cost-of-living index. See what jobs pay in various geographic areas, compared with the same jobs in your hometown. Listen to young entrepreneurs through podcasts, link to related Web sites and take advantage of cool games related to entrepreneurship.

Have fun. Enjoy Your Business Inspection.

Sincerely, Catricia Faircheld

Patricia J. Fairchild, Ed.D. Associate Professor

4-H Curriculum Design and

Youth Entrepreneur Specialist

Know how. Know now.



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