

THE UPSTARTS WIRE



Participants Zach (L) & Pratham (R) practice their pitch presentation

YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP CLINICS (YEC) IS NOW UPSTARTS

We have changed our name to be more relevant and concise. While still maintaining excellent curriculum, we wanted a name that embodies the forward-thinking students who participate and the potential this program has.

UpStarts is designed to equip high school students with entrepreneurial and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics) skills while solving real-world challenges faced by local businesses in the community. The program is committed to addressing economic challenges and rural flight issues by investing in youth and building community resources. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the economic environment of a particular context and creating ties between youth and the places in which they live. To this end, the program partnered with local business owners to increase social connections while developing entrepreneurial and other important skills among youth.

To date, UpStarts has been implemented in numerous sites, participated by over 70 high school students, and who all partnered with local businesses in Nebraska and Wyoming over the past 2 years. This collaborative project is by Surin Kim, Claire Nicholas, and Maria de Guzman who are professors at University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) and specialize in related fields. Additional contributions are made Ashu Guru who as Extension Specialist at UNL

Given recent changes due to COVID-19, UpStarts is developing an 100% online curriculum that we will be useful during the present circumstances and provide a flexible option for later

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SPRING AND SUMMER 2019 PROGRAMS

In Spring of 2019, three teams of high school students from several schools in the Torrington, Wyoming area pitched their project solution to their business clients. Each team partnered with local business owners including Kelley Integrity Safety Solutions, Wyoming Winds Counseling, and Health Thyme. These groups of students in Torrington were facilitated by Payton Rice. Two of the teams created websites to create a better customer experience and reach new customers.

TORRINGTON – SPRING 2019



LINCOLN/OMAHA SUMMER 2019



During the summer of 2019, four strong high school teams from Lincoln and Omaha completed the UpStarts program last August 6th which was held at Turbine Flats in Lincoln. The students partnered with the UNL Marriage and Family Clinic, 4-H Nebraska, Greenstain and Lona Consulting LLC. The teams were facilitated by Nebraska extension educators' Morgan Battes and Euwanda Jennings. The teams solutions ranged from app creating, developing social media and system/client system automation.

Read more about each team's business challenges and solutions at upstartacademy.com/impact

FEATURED STUDENTS

STUDENTS TAN AND AHMED worked with Nebraska 4-H to develop an app to help make searching for signing up for 4-H programming easier. Student Tan shares his experience below about their project and the UpStarts program.



L-R: Ahmed and Tan (Team 4H) with their mentor Vince

Q: What project did you work on? Describe the project, how you approached your challenge, and what your solution was.

T: I worked on the 4-H App development project. During the summer, my partner and I were mentored by Dr. Ashu Guru and Vince Schramer. We rigorously studied the problems of the original 4-H website and sought numerous ways to fix it. Specifically, the of website did not have a user-friendly interface. Some the tools we used were Flutter and Android Studio. Although we weren't able to finish the project in the summer, we were able to formulate a layout.

Q: How did you change during the program?

T: I became aware and able to think of a problem with multiple perspectives. I realized, that when constructing a business model, it's important to think in the eyes of consumers, and in some instances, actually interview them. I become more mature throughout the process and developed my skills when working with adults.

Q: Did you learn any new skills that you think will be useful in the future?

T: I learned a TON of communication skills/strategies that are now applicable to almost any situation.

Q: What was your biggest takeaway from joining UpStarts (formerly YEC)?

T: My biggest takeaway from joining YEC is to think with an open mind. When finding solutions to a problem, it's important to take in multiple factors.

