



# ceu<sup>®</sup> OUR SHARED IMPACT

## A MIXED-METHODS CASE STUDY

This case study highlighted real-world entrepreneurial learning in the rural context. CEO program findings underscore the influence that experiential learning can have on students, adults, and communities.

### SENSE OF BELONGING

76% of CEO alumni feel a stronger connection to their hometowns.

### STRONG COMMUNITIES

91% have built stronger networks through the CEO Program

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83% found the CEO Program more impactful than other K-12 entrepreneurship experiences.

### MINDSET AND SUPPORT

95% believe an entrepreneurial mindset and community support are accessible to all students.

### NETWORK EXPANSION

75% reported that the CEO Program helped them expand their personal and professional networks.

**This is the most unique program I've ever seen.** To watch over the last 8 years the development of these students, and how many of our students are coming back to the community. **Having this mentorship is something that young professionals pay a lot of money for,** and our kids are getting to do it for free.

**Angela Blessing**  
Principal, Kokomo High School  
Kokomo CEO Board Member



In 20+ years in economic development, the chamber of commerce and the economic development corporation, **CEO has been the most beneficial most gratifying program I have been involved with.**

**Ron Arnold**  
Retired Executive Director  
Daviess County Economic  
Development Corporation  
Daviess County IN CEO  
Board Member



CEO really changed my perspective. Coming from a small town, there's that mentality of 'I want to leave...' But the community really took the time to listen to us and invest in us. They gave us tips to help us succeed...**It really opened my eyes. Today, I see a lot of potential here in my community, so I stuck around.**

**Keslie Woodson,**  
Saline County CEO



Help us continue to empower students and strengthen communities through entrepreneurship education. Your support can make a lasting impact.

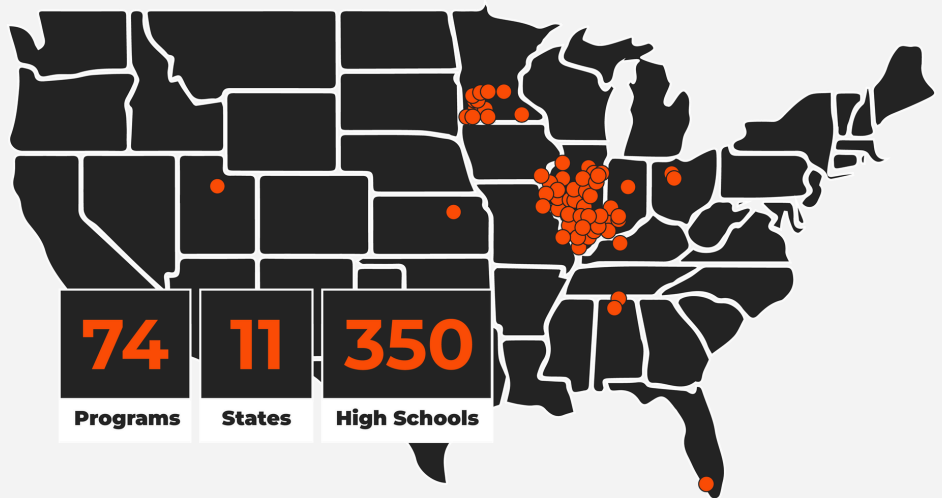
### LEARN MORE:

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CALL 813-575-3627



## CEO HAS GROWN TO 74 PROGRAMS IN 11 STATES ACROSS THE U.S.

We have ambitious plans to continue expanding the program nationwide, with focused energy in the targeted geographies of Minnesota, Indiana, Alabama, Ohio, Michigan, Missouri, Iowa, Kentucky, and Kansas.



As a kid you spend a lot of time in the classroom, and you don't spend as much time in the real world. That's what this program did...it placed us in the real world and prepared us for what we were going to have to do after high school. **It changed the way I look at the world.**

**Aaron Taflinger**  
McDonough County CEO,  
CEO Alum & Business Owner



## Building Strong Communities

This research shows how CEO is a catalyst for economic and social development, by creating networks of support between students, businesses, and community leaders.

This is my 33rd year in education, and I have said this from the start of this program- the CEO program that I believe we're doing here in Southwest Minnesota is **by far the best educational initiative that I've ever been associated with in education for 33 years.**

**Craig Oftedahl,**  
Superintendent & Southwest  
Minnesota CEO Board  
Member



## Cultivating Real-World Skills

The study demonstrates that CEO equips students with leadership, employability skills, and business acumen that prepare them for diverse career paths and instill a lifelong entrepreneurial mindset.

Here is an **established real-world program** with a national reputation that is going to enable your students to create businesses and learn skills that they simply won't learn anywhere else. **It's a bridge between community and education."**

**John Joseph**  
Executive Director, Economic  
Development Center, Decatur  
Morgan AL CEO Board Member



## Fostering Life-Long Networks

Participants experience long-term benefits through networks built in CEO that lead to sustained personal and professional growth

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