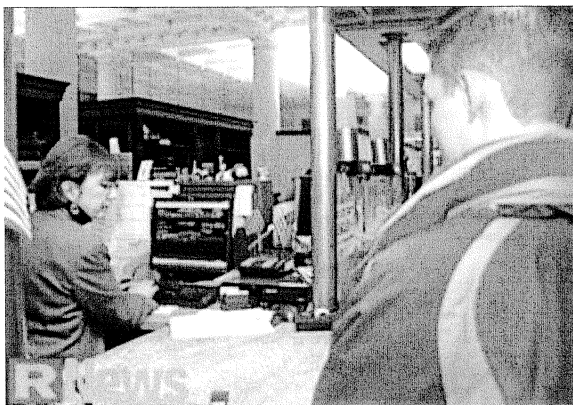


Teen Entrepreneurs Prove Profitable

by Kate Welshofer
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Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks has said that she believes entrepreneurs are the key to the county's future success. The University of Rochester is helping to get the ball rolling with its Young Entrepreneurs Academy. It welcomed its third class this year.



It is also racking up some success stories.

Twenty five middle and high school students visited the Monroe County Clerk's office hoping to make their dreams come true. They are the University of Rochester's Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) Class of 2006.

The students came in with all kinds of ideas including a service to provide teens with information on job and internship opportunities, a greeting card company and a business that would promote student artwork.

The students filed DBA or "doing business as" forms at the clerk's office. It is the first step for anyone who wants to start a business. The students are no exception. It's all part of the academy's focus on real world experience.

"We take the students through the paces of brainstorming an idea, writing a business plan, pitching to investors, getting funding, then launching their venture," said Gayle Jagel. Jagel works with University of Rochester's Office of Special Programs, which runs the academy.

It certainly isn't easy to start a business or to keep one going, but several Young Entrepreneurs Academy graduates have made it work.

Eric Meyer of Geneseo started Spotlight Videography, shooting weddings and corporate videos last year. His latest venture, Young Scholar Adventures, offers educational opportunities for students, including a day camp at SUNY Geneseo. Meyer turns 17 Monday.

"I anticipate continuing these educational programs for as long as I can. So I will just keep on adding companies and growing as fast as I can," Meyer said.

He may have to...to keep up.

Bob Tobin is the "Entrepreneur in Residence" at the U of R. He is also an instructor for YEA! Tobin says the days of working for one company for 30 years are over. Entrepreneurship, he says, is the future.

"Most students at some point in time will have either start their own business, work at a start-up company or even in a larger organization, be entrepreneurial to survive. It's just going to be the job market of the future."

The bottom line is young entrepreneurs grow up.

"The more people we can inspire and engage through entrepreneurial activities and

entrepreneurial education. The better off our county and our region and our state will be," said Jagel.

The YEA! Class of 2005 presents its business plans to investors January 17.



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