

BIG IDEAS CHALLENGE

Student New Venture Competition

April 14, 2022



MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO
CENTER FOR INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

BIG IDEAS CHALLENGE

Welcome

Emcee: Dr. Shane Bowyer

Director of the Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Asst. Professor of Management

Finalist Presentations

ELEVATUS: Skyler Smith

X-Lease: Sharmake Noor

Lloyd Companies Video

Finalist Presentations

Dialekt: Autumn Ritter

USIL: Omar Elkenawy

Dr. Queen Bee LLC: Sumit Mahajan and Qamrunnisa Fnu

People's Choice Voting

[PollEv.com/bic](https://pollev.com/bic)

Fireside Chat Featuring Logan Sendel

Owner of Lakeshore Potential

2020 Big Ideas Winner

Awards



Big Ideas Challenge Finalists

EVEVATUS

ELEVATUS is a startup manufacturer of height adjustable kitchen island frames. These Frames are modular and support all common appliances, sinks and base cabinets.

Skyler Smith; Twin Cities Integrated Engineering



X-Lease

X-Lease is a housing platform, where students can rent, sublease, and find roommates. Student renters would have the ability to search, filter and find the perfect match. They would then be able to fill out an application and reserve a spot all from their phone.

Sharmake Noor; Finance



Dialekt

Dialekt is an app intended to help speech language pathologists identify dialects in their clients, so as not to misdiagnose any children with speech disorders and subsequently place them in special education when they do not need to be there.

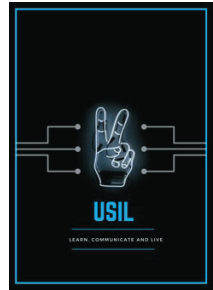
Autumn Ritter; Business Management



USIL

USIL is to design an application connected with a smart glove that alleviates communication of the deaf-mute by reading and converting different sign language signs into their corresponding voice playback.

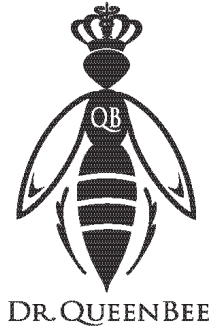
Omar Elkenawy; Computer Engineering



Dr. Queen Bee LLC

Dr. Queen Bee's mission is to inspire healthy living- one individual, one family, one community at a time through our raw honey and herb and spiced honey. Furthermore, we want to create awareness regarding honeybees and our planet.

Sumit Mahajan; Mathematics Grad Student
Qamrunnisa Fnu; MBA Grad Student



Big Ideas Challenge Judges

Andy Wilke

Greater Mankato Growth

Andy Wilke is Director of Business Development and Public Affairs at Greater Mankato Growth, the regional chamber of commerce and economic development organization for greater Mankato with more than 900 members. In this role Andy serves as an advocate for GMG members and the community on issues that help grow the regional economy and contribute to the vitality of the region. Prior to GMG, Andy worked in the retail real estate industry for a decade managing regional shopping centers in Minnesota, Iowa, and Georgia. He also has experience in local and state government with the city of Mankato and Minnesota House of Representatives. Additionally, he and his family opened Toppers Pizza in Mankato in 2007 as just the 17th store in their portfolio which now includes more than 70 locations. Since returning to Mankato in 2016, he served as Chair of Visit Mankato, as a member of the Greater Mankato Growth board of directors, and as Chair of the GMG Public Affairs Committee. Andy is a graduate of Minnesota State University, Mankato having studied Political Science and Business Administration as an undergraduate along with Public Administration and Urban Planning as a graduate student. Andy is married with 2 young children and enjoys running, reading, golfing, and cooking.



Mike Hahn

Small Business Development Center

Michael (Mike) Hahn is a builder of entrepreneurs and communities with an extensive background in small business development and downtown revitalization. He is the founder of an urban Main Street initiative in Waterloo, Iowa. Hahn later joined the staff at the University of Northern Iowa as a Program Manager, overseeing the operations of a business accelerator incubating new businesses within the community. Eventually promoted to Regional Director of the University's Small Business Development Center (SBDC), he managed one of the busiest centers in Iowa serving over 800 businesses annually. Returning to downtown revitalization, Hahn spearheaded efforts in Fargo creating the first self-taxing Business Improvement District (BID) in North Dakota. Currently, he is the Regional Director of the SBDC at Minnesota State University, Mankato. In 2020, the Small Business Administration (SBA) recognized the Mankato SBDC with the Center of Excellence Award.



Big Ideas Challenge Judges

Briana & Mya Williamson

Love My Natural

Momprenuer, Briana, and Kidpreneur, Mya Williamson are two published authors who are booked and busy! They have written and published over 13 different children's books including *The Ballerina Who Lost Her Fro* and *I Love My Natural Hair* to help children across the world feel naturally beautiful. In addition to their growing roster of publications, the two have also founded two natural hair care lines for children, Papaya Baby Naturals and Candy Color Hair Color Wax for Kids. When the two are not serving as the SHE-EO of their own companies, they are busy working together on their nonprofit organization, Love My Natural, a 501c3, not for profit organization where they give back to the community and distribute hundreds of free books to children across the nation each year. With revenue from product sales and the help of additional donations, they share Happy Mail, spreading love, joy and leaving behind the perfect amounts of Brown Girl Magic and use literacy to bridge the gap in families and encourage children to adopt the mindset that Reading is Lit! and Readers are Leaders!



More information on Mya and Briana Williamson can be found on their family business social media pages or YouTube channel. <https://linktr.ee/naturalhairabcs>

Mark Bietz

Fun.com

Mark Bietz currently serves as CMO for Fun.com. During his tenure, Fun.com has grown to \$170M in annual revenues and is the largest online Halloween company in the world. He is an advisor to various D2C consumer brands and mar-tech companies and is a member of the Minnesota State University, Mankato College of Business Advisory Council.



Matt Long

J. Longs for All

Matt Long was born and raised in Mankato, along with being a 2010 graduate of the Business Management program at Minnesota State University, Mankato! (Horns up!) After graduating, Matt was about 97.6% sure of what he wanted to do: Take over his family's popular local retail store, J. Longs. After working full-time for over four years and graduating from Minnesota State Mankato, Matt made the decision to put some "skin in the game" and buy-in to the family business. He was entrusted to manage the staff and store. On top of day-to-day activities, he was also expected to travel a few times a year to clothing shows to ensure Mankato had cool and modern clothing to buy, including everything from suits to socks.



Until the fall of 2019, J. Longs had been known to many in Southern Minnesota and Northern Iowa as a premier men's clothing store. Then, everything changed when women's clothing and gifts were added to J. Longs. As of today, J. Longs now offers powerhouse athleisure brands, such as lululemon, alo, and Vuori. In addition to this, they have expanded their product mix to include candles, chocolates, coffee, and more. Consequently, J. Longs has become a place people enjoy visiting and finding unique items and gifts and is no longer just a "suit store." Matt believes his family's secret to success over all the years is to "treat clients like family and provide an amazing customer experience."



Logan Sendel

Lakeshore Potential

Logan Sendel was raised in Waterville on Lake Tetonka. He graduated from Waterville-Elysian-Morristown High School in 2017 and went on to get a bachelor's degree from Minnesota State University, Mankato in Business Management with a minor in Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

Logan started Lakeshore Potential with his father at a young age. Starting in 2017, he took over as full-time owner and operator. Later in 2020, Logan pitched Lakeshore Potential in the Big Ideas Challenge and won first place.



Thank You Sponsors

The College of Business would like to extend their gratitude to those who have given financial support throughout the year for the Big Ideas Challenge.

Primary Sponsor

Craig & Pat Lloyd, '72 Alumnus,
Founder of Lloyd Companies



Additional Sponsors

BankVista



Jones Metal



MN Valley Business Magazine

High-Tech Sponsor

Daren & Sarah Cotter



Craig & Pat Lloyd Lloyd Companies

After meeting and graduating from Mankato State University, Craig and Pat Lloyd got married and began their journey as entrepreneurs. It was back in 1972 when they moved to Sioux Falls, S.D to manage apartments for Craig's uncle, Bob Lloyd.

Craig and Pat did it all to make ends meet for their growing family. Over the years, their team grew, their dreams evolved, and Lloyd Companies became a full-service construction, development and real estate company. Craig and Pat's humble beginnings, small town hospitality and family values kept them focused, where quality, integrity and relationships matter and most importantly where people are the foundation.



Although Craig and Pat no longer serve in the day-to-day operations of the company, they both serve on the company Board of Directors. It is not always easy for Craig to completely pull away from the work that he loves, but the two of them are enjoying the much-deserved time traveling with good friends, family and most of all, their grandchildren.



Thank You Mentors and the Small Business Development Center

The mentors met with and assisted the finalists with their business plans and pitches. Thank you to the Small Business Development Center for connecting us to all our mentors this year.

Mentors

Bryan Hoffman

Hannah Bretz

Kevin Sanger

Matt Lessard

Paul Vesey

Wes Otto

Special Recognition

The following members of the College of Business team have provided tremendous vision, leadership and support in the development and growth of the Big Ideas Challenge.

Dr. Shane Bowyer; Director of the Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Asst. Professor of Management

Ashley Niss; Marketing & Events Coordinator of the Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Dr. Cheryl Trahms; Associate Professor of Management & Entrepreneurship

Jen Cucurullo; Director of Marketing & Communications

Tom Clement; Asst. Professor of Management





MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Vision

To be the clear business school choice for those who want to engage in real-world learning experiences.

In the College of Business, we dream of providing all of our students and faculty with many kinds of experiences that empower them to develop big ideas and real-world solutions. We aim to provide big experiences to all business students: life-changing classes taught by exceptional faculty, real-world projects in partnership with business, technology access and applications, off-campus opportunities such as internships and study abroad, as well as on-campus activities, events and networking connections. We want students to do important work, meet people, go places and think of themselves in ways they never before thought possible.

The College of Business is so appreciative of all our partners – a committed community of faculty and staff, students and alumni, as well as businesses and benefactors. Thank you all for making a difference to our students, our college and our world.

College of Business Entrepreneurial Initiatives

- Entrepreneurship and Innovation Minor
- United Prairie Bank Integrated Business Experience
- Agribusiness Minor, Ag Today Club and Henze Ag Leadership Series
- Richard & Mary Schmitz Endowment Food Entrepreneurship Lecture
- Entrepreneurship/EnactUS Club
- Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship
 - Big Ideas Challenge
 - Global Entrepreneurship Week
 - Entrepreneurs of Color Celebration
 - Women in Business Leadership Series





MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO

CENTER FOR INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship

All students and community members are welcome!

*Launching the next generation of entrepreneurs, innovators
and dynamic organizations.*

The CIE is for:

- Student entrepreneurs wanting help to develop your business ideas
- Students wanting real world projects for classes or as a bridge to an internship or job
- Businesses wanting to develop innovative solutions to business challenges
- Faculty members looking for projects to enhance research or teaching

Focuses of the CIE:

- Big Ideas Challenge business competition and support for student participation in other competitions
- Nurturing and expanding student entrepreneurship organizations
- Enhancing both academic and continuing innovation and entrepreneurship education
- Global Entrepreneurship Week, 1 Million Cups Mankato, Social Media Breakfast Mankato, Entrepreneurs of Color Celebration, Women in Entrepreneurship and other student-community events.

Cultivating Innovation, Accelerating Entrepreneurship

For more information:

cie@mnsu.edu or 507-389-1018





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