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Background on Program

The Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) is a year-long program that teaches middle and high school students how to start and run their own REAL businesses. YEA! was developed at the University of Rochester in 2004 with the support of a grant from the Kauffman Foundation. The Warren County Chamber is excited to be introducing YEA! to the Warren County Community!

YEA! guides high school students through the process of starting and running a legitimate business or social movement over the course of a full academic year. YEA! has graduated almost 600 students over the past 7 years, who have started almost 450 businesses and social movements! YEA! graduates started as students, and left the program as CEOs of their own companies!

Over the course of the program, students:

- Brainstorm business ideas
- Write a business plan
- Interact with business professionals
- Pitch their business plan to potential “investors” (think Shark Tank meets the Apprentice meets American Idol)
- Obtain funding
- Legally register their businesses
- Participate in a Trade Show
- Actually launch their own businesses or social movements

Why Apply?

This program offers students the chance to:

- Develop the skills necessary to launch their own business or social movement (hands-on entrepreneurial experience!)
- Learn about real businesses - why they succeed or fail.
- Hear from local entrepreneurs.
- Launch their own business or social movement!
- Become more confident in their ideas and their abilities.

Organization of Program

YEA! classes will meet January - May, daily from 9:30am – 11:00am. Applications will be accepted from students in grades 9-12.

There are no classes during regular school holidays and recesses. Students are taught by an instructor, but are exposed to guest lecturers, successful entrepreneurs and business mentors. The class goes on field trips to a variety of local businesses. Finally, the students participate in three major events throughout the year: the Investor Panel, Trade Show and a formal graduation ceremony.

Student Selection Process

To apply for YEA!, students must:

- Fill out the YEA! application
- Complete the essay and the short answer questions
- Submit their transcripts
- Submit a letter of recommendation

Once the completed application packet is received, students will be asked to come in for an interview. Acceptance in the program is based on all aspects of an application, as well as the personal interview. Prior experience with business is not required!

How Business Professionals Can Get Involved

Through their interactions with business professionals during the year, YEA! students gain some of the most important knowledge and experience they need to succeed. Local professionals volunteer their time and expertise as guest speakers, mentors, investors, graphic designers, field trip hosts, business plan reviewers, and much more. The time YEA! students spend with adults who encourage their futures is invaluable, and participants often report getting even more out of their participation than they put in to it!

If you are interested in becoming involved with YEA! as a guest speaker, fieldtrip host, or volunteer, contact O.B. McCorkle at 706-465-9604 or chamber@warrencountyga.com

**For more information, call 706-465-9604
or email chamber@warrencountyga.com**