



WILLIAMSFIELD YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS



Rural Village economic stability through
school youth

WILLIAMSFIELD YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS



Is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation organized to improve economic opportunities, stability, and development in the rural community of Williamsfield, IL.

Fulfills its mission by providing, promoting, and sponsoring opportunities, apprenticeships, internships, externships, and other activities and efforts for youth in the Williamsfield area.



Charitable work primarily supports educational and experiential programs:

- Through the Williamsfield school system, and
- By acquiring property, goods, and services necessary to support such educational and experiential programs.



WHY WILLIAMFIELD YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS WAS ESTABLISHED



14.3% of the
population lives
in poverty (2017

American Community Survey)



Increasing
poverty – was
7.3% in 2012

(American Community Survey)



30% of
Williamsfield
students eligible
for free or
reduced-price
lunch (2018 Illinois Report Card)

WHY THESE STATISTICS MATTER?



- Williamsfield Data
 - Village of ~600 residents
 - Some businesses, but not many/any new ones opening. Some have closed.
 - Difficult attracting “foot traffic” for substantial retail opportunities



- Economic Situation
 - Can require some students to work to support families
 - Some students have sibling responsibilities while families work
 - Results in difficult decisions – college versus work right after school
 - If no transportation, cannot travel to jobs outside of the area

EXAMPLES OF WILLIAMSFIELD'S MANY STRENGTHS



The Village

- Exceptional community support for student success
- Local talents in many trades and professions
- Area businesses tend to hire locally
- Vacant buildings offer opportunities for business establishment and growth
- Local business development group actively engaged in opportunities
- Generations of family support in the local area



The Students

- Williamsfield schools is home to over 300 students in the 2019-2020 school year
- 92% graduation rate in 4 years, 100% in 5 years*
- 79% enrolled in college within 12 months of graduation in 2018*
- The school actively supports student interests and promotes customized learning
- Means – constant talent pool with diverse interests graduating every year

*Illinois Report Card data



HOW WILLIAMSFIELD YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS FITS IN

Imagine

- Combining the Village infrastructure and strong community support with economic supports for the graduating talent pool

What Could that Look Like?

- Students with skills to start their own business out of school
- Lowered barriers for students to start a business or work
- Immediate job prospects if have apprenticeships/internships while in high school
- Informed students who benefited from career mentoring and bolstered school support



WILLIAMSFIELD YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS STRATEGIES

WILLIAMSFIELD YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS APPROACHES



Approach 1 – School Partnership Over 1 Year Period

- Specific curricular development surrounding skill acquisition prior to graduation.
- Beginning of students' Junior year (grade 11) – or possibly earlier.
 - Interested students prepare a proposal for educational supports through Williamsfield Young Entrepreneurs.
 - The supports would be specific to one or more students' career aspirations immediately after high school:
 - Specific education needed,
 - Other supports (e.g., supplies, tools, space), and
 - Partners needed to work toward the chosen career path.
 - Board members of Williamsfield Young Entrepreneurs deliberate on the proposals and recommend one or more winning applicants to the school. School determines winners before students concludes Junior year.
- Fall of the students' Senior year
 - The school assists the student in following through on the proposal, e.g., helping the student enroll in necessary classes, supporting internships, providing transportation as needed to job sites, and acquiring or accessing the necessary goods, space, and services to support the student.
- In the Spring of the students' Senior year, the student will have acquired the necessary experience and education for employment in the students' field of interest.

WILLIAMSFIELD YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS APPROACHES



Approach 2 – Externship Facility

- Williamsfield Young Entrepreneurs may receive through donations or may acquire property and goods that advance its mission. Examples of why this may be needed:
- Availability of sufficient and suitable space to support training in machinery, particularly large mechanical equipment. Williamsfield, IL is largely a farming community; however, a local facility that offers safety and servicing equipment necessary to train students interested in mechanics is not currently available.
- Another possible educational need would support students interested in a career in woodworking, which also requires space, tools, specialized equipment, and materials for the student to develop his/her skills in the field.
- Other potential areas of facility use would support computer repair, software development, and networking. Students interested in this career path would require access to tools, manuals, coding standards, certification opportunities, cabling, internet access, among other things, to pursue a career in IT.
- Many more possibilities: beauty/salon, locksmithing, landscaping, metalworks, painting, handyman, home decorating, meat processing...

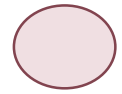
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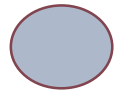
Approach 3 – Career Mentoring

- Would facilitate, through Williamsfield schools, career mentoring to winning applicants.
- Applicants would be provided with an opportunity for a career mentor to help guide the educational process specific to the applicant's career path and educational and experiential prerequisites.
- The career mentor would work directly with the student, the school, and others necessary to advise the student.
- Hope is to provide mentorship before graduation and for a short time after.

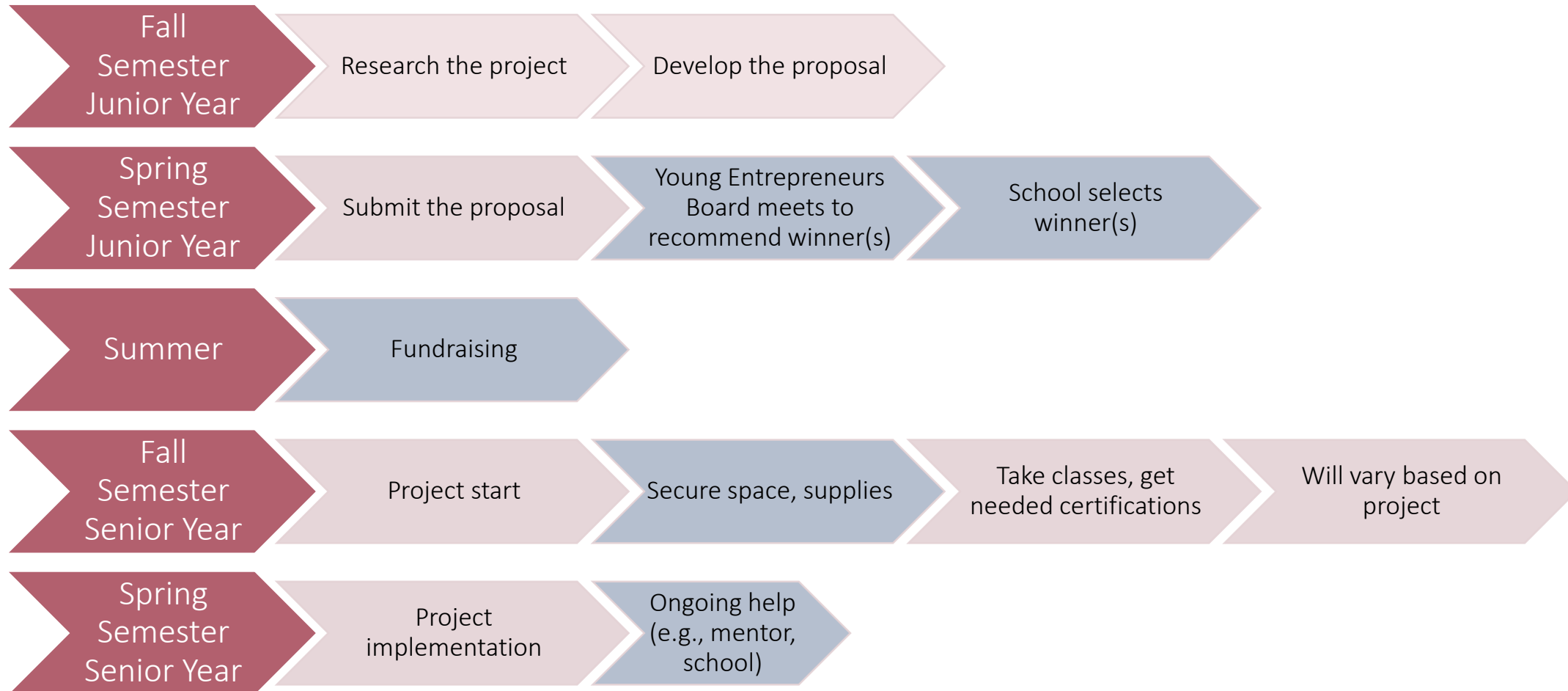
TIMELINE



= Student's work



= Work of the Young Entrepreneurs Board, school, others





TEST CASE: THE WILLIAMSFIELD AREA FOOD PANTRY & RESOURCE CENTER

WILLIAMSFIELD FOOD PANTRY



The Idea

- Researched by a high school student over years
- Student was motivated and educated – knew the community need, statistics, efforts thus far
- Had difficulty finding accessible and affordable space
- Proactively asked for assistance on space and next steps



Supporting the Idea

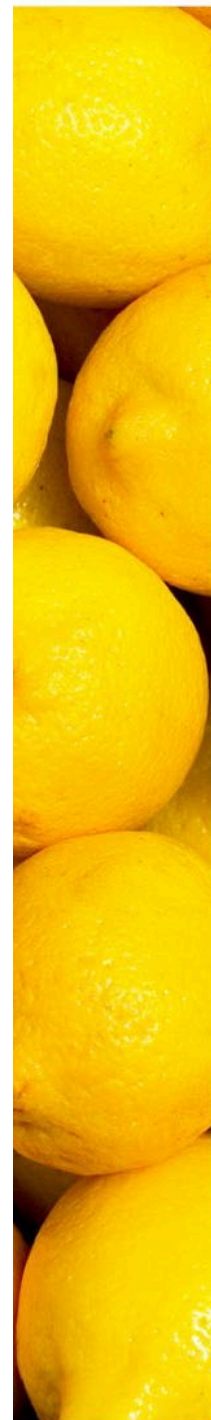
- Incorporated
- Established the 501(c)(3)
- Student prepared drafts of bylaws
- Worked jointly on other federal and State forms
- Purchased an accessible building for the Food Pantry
- “Approved” by food partners
- 8 month process



The Result



- Board of Directors – 4 members
- Food Pantry manager
- Runs the Food Pantry, which is open 2x a week
- Considerable community support
- Partnerships with River Bend Food Bank and Loving Bottoms (diapers)
- www.williamsfieldfoodpantry.org





BOARD OF DIRECTORS, WILLIAMSFIELD YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

General Information



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Currently 5 Board members

- All local to Williamsfield area
- Area businessmen and women
- Diverse experiences
- Age mix
- Can have up to 7 directors
- Role is to direct the non-profit and recommend projects for approval



Work to further the charitable mission of Williamsfield Young Entrepreneurs

- Not compensated
- Screened for conflicts of interest, real or perceived
- May not be donors to the charity
- Their immediate family members may not apply to be a Young Entrepreneur





MEASURING PROGRESS

Williamsfield Young Entrepreneurs will be interested in developing and tracking specific metrics over time to gauge success

SUCCESS METRICS



Short-term

- Feedback from students, parents/guardians, school
- Feedback from mentors
- Follow up with students after graduation
- Area business surveys
- Student interest in the program



Longer-term

- Economic measures
- Employment
- Poverty
- Free/reduced lunches
- Building utilization
- Business opportunities



QUESTIONS & THANK YOU

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www.Williamsfield.org