

Authentic Learning, Real-life Application



Consider participating in the Rural-Urban Student Entrepreneur Exchange

Photo: Chloe Nostrant, Exchange participant, Judith Gap Wind Farm

1MT ONEMONTANA

Spark A Montana Student's Entrepreneur Endeavor

What inspired you when you were a student? Participating in the Rural-Urban Student Entrepreneur Exchange Program inspires students to think about their futures while they learn about and develop personal business ideas and career choices.

Schools tell us their One Montana Entrepreneur Exchange experience "exceeds" in-class learning.

By participating, students experience hands-on, what it takes to become a successful entrepreneur in rural and urban

"The program is about entrepreneurship but it's beyond profit and loss- It helps clarify and bring this to life."

- Participating Teacher

communities across Montana.

Your participation could

- offer students real-life experiences that can enhance classroom instruction and spark authentic application of their learning;
- provide the spark that sets a student on an exciting and rewarding career path.;
- ensure our young people are introduced to pathways to stay or return to Montana and lead a prosperous future.

"Seeing how passionate these business owners are really encourages me to start my own business and see that though it is hard work, it can be done."

- Student Participant

Since 2012, the One Montana Rural-Urban Student and Entrepreneur Exchange have engaged over 250 students in Entrepreneur Education and cultural exchanges and the program continues to grow. Over 70 businesses throughout Montana have been involved as hosts and mentors; dozens of foundations and businesses have sponsored the program. **Small business and entrepreneurs are crucial to Montana's economy. Please join us to nurture the next generation of entrepreneurs and connect our rural and urban enterprises.**

The Student Entrepreneur Exchange

- Integrates meaningful real-life learning into classroom curriculum.
- Inspires new pathways for student's futures.
- Builds understanding and networks throughout Montana's rural and urban communities.
- Provides realistic insights into entrepreneurship and facilitates inspiring business mentorships.
- Creates the next generation of business owners and leaders.

"[The Exchange] gave a face and a name to people who are successful entrepreneurs. It was wonderful to meet real people like that and not just learn about them."
- Student Participant



Great Falls students present their White Sulphur Springs student partners a gift- a banner made at their in-school Lynx Graffix business.

What does an Exchange entail?

The Exchange is in its 4th year and continues to expand to new rural and urban communities across Montana. Students find inspiration in their business site visits, each other and each other's community. Teachers appreciate the real-life learning opportunity and application.

Your student group. The participating class or group often, but not always, has a CTE focus (business, marketing, career, VoAg, FCS, economics), and consists of 8-25 high school-aged students.

The Exchange. A 2-day visit in each community (either Fall or Spring) includes:

- 1.) One day of business site visits (approximately 8 total), initial team and leadership building exercises. Visits include an on-site tour, often with business owners to learn about the industry, business history, personal stories, challenges, successes and innovative solutions employed to keep ahead of competition and meet market demands. Students develop and ask questions about various aspects of business start-up and ownership.
- 2.) Half-day shadowing peers in their partner school and classes.

Program application. Students are expected to reflect on, share and apply their learning throughout the program. They create and share a final presentation which highlights their learning, identifies a need (or market niche) to address as a business or project, and develops steps and strategies for addressing this need in the form of a modified business plan and pitch. Many use their Exchange experience as an opportunity to test drive and/or launch a new business or project (in-school and otherwise). Some use the Program as an opportunity to evaluate current school entrepreneur endeavors.

The Exchange inspires and provides the support to transform learning into real-life actions!



A key element of the Entrepreneur Exchange is the "hands-on" experience. Students better understand practical and necessary steps essential to start and run a business and to be a marketable employee.

How do I participate?

Join us and spark youth-driven business enterprises throughout Montana.

Rural-Urban Student Entrepreneur Exchange

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"It was a lot of fun getting to interact with kids from different environments than us. All of the businesses had interesting stories and it was neat to see how passionate their founders are about the sustainability of their business." – Participating Student

"The program greatly improved [my students] public speaking and community awareness within their own community and rural community partner." – Participating Teacher

OUR MISSION at ONE MONTANA: Bring rural and urban interests together to ensure a resilient and prosperous Montana.