ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Somerset-Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce believes that developing entrepreneurial spirit in our local young people is critical. Helping to train future business leaders will ensure that we have a vibrant business community in the Lake Cumberland area for generations to come.

The Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) is an innovative afterschool program that transforms local middle and high school students into real, confident entrepreneurs. Through an 18-week program, students in grades 7-12 generate business ideas, conduct market research, write business plans, pitch to a panel of investors and launch their very own real companies.

From exciting local business guest lecturers to dynamic field trips to local companies, students learn how to develop and run a real enterprise in a fun, projects-based approach.

At the end of the year, students will pitch their business ideas in a "Shark Tank" style presentation and compete for thousands of dollars to help start their businesses.

Over the past twelve years, the Somerset-Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce has handed out over **$101,000** to aspiring entrepreneurs who have graduated from the YEA! Program. The Chamber has also awarded **twelve (12) full scholarships** to winners of this program to Campbellsville University.

The calculated value of those scholarships is more than $1.25-Million Dollars.

About the Academy

The Young Entrepreneurs Academy is an 18-week after school program that takes a group of select, ambitious, and motivated students through the process of launching and running their very own real businesses.

How the Academy Works

This Academy is not like a typical class. Instead, students learn how to launch a business or social movement in a fun way through a local entrepreneur instructor, professional guest speakers, a CEO Roundtable, trips to local innovative companies, and more. From writing your own business plans with your business mentors, to pitching your plans live on a stage to secure real funding, this exciting class has been the best decision many students like you have ever made. At the end of the year, all YEA! Students get their own booth at the Trade Show event to market their new products and services to the community for the first time and make their first sales! And, after graduation, students can continue operating their profitable businesses for years in the future.

Kinds of Students Who Excel in the Academy

Many people often ask, “what kind of students excel in this program?” and “do you have to have business experience?” The answer is no. No business experience is necessary, and a wide variety of students succeed in the YEA! Program. Students who will excel in YEA! often share these qualities:

- **Innovative Thinkers** – They’re full of ideas and like finding creative solutions to problems.
- **Self-Motivated** – They take initiative and don’t wait around for someone else to make things happen.
- **Leaders in the Making** – They may not always be the loudest in the room, but they inspire others and enjoy working in a team.
- **Business-Minded** – They show an early interest in entrepreneurship, whether it’s selling lemonade, reselling sneakers, creating art, or coding apps.

When Class Meets & How to Apply

The Young Entrepreneurs Academy will meet on **Tuesday Evenings** from **4:00 – 7:00 p.m.** at **Somerset Community College (Cooper Building)**. Classes begin in February and end in May. If you’d like to apply, simply complete an application and send it to the Somerset-Pulaski Chamber of Commerce to begin. Space is limited, so please apply early and ensure a strong application.