ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS ACCELERATOR
North Central Wisconsin’s virtual branch office for talent development.
Why does The Branch Exist?

- Wisconsin: 140,700 business establishments employing more than 2.3 million people
- Wisconsin has been a net exporter of individuals ages 22 to 29 years old
- In NTC’s district:
  - Declining High School graduate population: 16% decline since 2010
  - Increase of population of those over 55: 18% increase since 2010
- Entrepreneurism: stimulates economy through investment and employment

NEED TO KEEP TALENT LOCAL
Partnership

• Local employer, Church Mutual Insurance Company, led the initiative by introducing the concept and providing start-up capital to create this entrepreneurial talent retention initiative.

• Employer role

• Chamber role

• College role
  • Leadership
  • Programing
Our Vision

Attract, develop, and retain the brightest minds in the region with an opportunity to get firmly planted in our region’s growing economy.

Our Mission

Produce qualified candidates to feed the workforce pipeline, retain talent, and define the entrepreneurial culture in the Central Wisconsin Region.
The Branch: Introduction Video
PARTNERING COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES
How Does The Branch™ Work?

• Strategically design cross-functional student teams

• Connect students with seasoned entrepreneurs & corporate executives

• Solve real-world business problems and make real-world impact

• Help students gain skills that increase their post-graduation opportunities
BRIDGING THE GAP

- Allows students and businesses to explore innovation in a supportive low-risk environment
- Serves as a source of talent for area businesses looking to hire emerging thinkers
- Plays a pivotal role in economic development and job creation in North Central Wisconsin
What Should Students Expect?

- Participation in real-world challenges
- Opportunity to showcase your talents
- A chance to lead innovation in central Wisconsin
- Connection with engaged employers
- Possible Internship Credit
- Collaboration with students from across central Wisconsin
Why Should Businesses Get Involved?

• Gain access to premier local talent
• Immerse young professionals in your businesses’ culture and mission
• The Branch offers professional development opportunity to young leaders and middle managers through their participation as mentors
• Contribute to the recruitment, development and retention of talent for central Wisconsin
• Opportunity to vet potential interns
Program Detail

• 10 week program that teaches collaboration, communication, critical thinking and creativity through the exercise of entrepreneurship.

• Cohorts run every spring & fall
  • Fall 2016 Cohort
    • Innovation Project from Church Mutual Insurance Company
    • 7 participants from Northcentral Technical College & UW Stevens Point
    • 1 Volunteer Coach from Fairway Independent Mortgage
  • Spring 2017 Cohort
    • Innovation Projects from AROW Global & River Valley Bank
    • 8 participants from Nicolet College, Northcentral Technical College, UW Marathon County, and UW Stevens Point
    • 2 Volunteer Coaches from Church Mutual Insurance Company & Northcentral Technical College
Summer/Fall 2016 Branch Team

Mentor Testimonial
Spring 2017 Branch Teams

Watch student testimonials:

THE BRANCH™
ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS ACCELERATOR
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Summer 2017 Branch Academy Team

Student Testimonial

Sarah LaBorde
Student, Stratford High School
Partners in this Collaborative Initiative

Wausau Region Chamber of Commerce
Time To Grow

Northcentral Technical College

Church Mutual Insurance Company

The Branch is also supported by

Arrow Global

River Valley

Westphal Staffing

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Outcomes of this collaboration

- Total cohorts: 5 as of Fall 2017
- Total number of participants: 27 students (not including Fall 2017)
- Survey
  - After The Branch Experience, has your perspective changed regarding the local job market?
  - Upon completing your time at the Branch, which of the following did you gain..
  - Through your experience at the Branch, did you earn credit at your educational institution?
Survey Results

• 20 out of 27 participants responded, 74% response rate

• Question 1
  • After The Branch Experience, has your perspective changed regarding the local job market?
    • 10 responded as Strongly Agree
    • 9 responded Somewhat Agree
    • 1 responded Neither Agree nor Disagree
Survey Results Continued

- Question 2
  - Upon completing your time at the Branch, which of the following did you gain:
    - Job Leads: 11
    - Job Interviews: 4
    - Job Offer: 1
    - Pay Increase: 1
    - Paid Internship: 2
    - Professional Mentor: 11
    - Larger Professional Network: 13
    - Other
      - Leadership skills and Resume Builder
Survey Results Continued

• Question 3
  • Through your experience at the Branch, did you earn credit at your educational institution?
    • Yes: 16
    • No: 4
Additional Growth Opportunities

• Branch Academies (High School Focus)
• Student entrepreneurship projects
  • Provide a platform for student entrepreneurs to develop “their” product and marketing plan
Sustainability

• Funding
Questions?

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