

*Together, Shaping the Future*



## As the garden grows... so does the gardener.

As you stroll along the brick pathway of Natural Plus Nursery, you are engulfed in a world of pure beauty. Vibrant flowers, rows and rows of gorgeous green plants and trees create an ambiance like none other. After the assault on your senses outside, step into the rustic building that houses planters, lawn ornaments, and other gardening décor. Your mind will begin to flash images of how amazing the merchandise will look within your own lawn and landscaping.

Thirty-nine years ago, Dave and Linda Hopper had a dream; a dream of beautiful plants, bountiful trees, and flourishing flowers. That dream became a reality when they opened Natural Plus Nursery just outside of Clear Lake.

Thirty-five years later, Dave and Linda decided to hang up their gardening gloves for good. They placed the nursery on the market and waited patiently for the right buyer to come along. That wait continued for almost two years with no offers. In the meantime their son, Dave, and his wife, Mary, began discussing their future and what they

wanted out of their new life together. Buying Natural Plus Nursery seemed to be a good fit – and so began their journey of becoming business owners.

Dave grew up working in the industry for his parents. He spent many hours in the summers during college amongst the plants and trees. For Mary, however, this was a whole new experience. They began cleaning up the nursery to make it their own and embraced a ‘learn as we go’ attitude. Each year they grow in their knowledge, with the help of a loyal employee who has been with Natural Plus for thirty plus years. And, Dave and Linda are never far away to lend a helping hand or supportive advice.

The scariest part for both Dave and Mary, was giving up the day job. To lose the steady paycheck, the benefits, it’s a big step for any young couple just starting out. But looking back, the Hopper’s are glad they took that step; to them, it was worth the risk.

When reality sank in that they were really going to buy Natural Plus, they decided it was time to pursue some advice from the professionals.

“We had no idea what it meant to own or buy a business,” Dave said. “So we reached out to the NIACC Pappajohn Center for help.” The Hopper’s took the Launch and Grow business class, a ten week course offered to individuals interested in starting their own business. There, they learned the ins and outs of being a business owner. They gained



*Left to right: Dave, Holtan, and Mary*

knowledge on how to build their own business dream team; from finding an accountant to a lawyer, all things they’d never considered. And now, even after four years of owning the nursery, Dave and Mary are still able to seek guidance when they need it.

The Pappajohn Center taught them the ‘behind the scenes’ aspect of running a business. Besides building the team, the Launch and Grow class was a plethora of knowledge about networking with community members and other businesses, and how to analyze the overall business’s success. Without them, the Hopper’s said they would have been completely lost. Thanks to NIACC and the Pappajohn Center, they were able to find their way.

For trees, shrubs, perennials, yard decorations, bulk mulch and rock, and more... stop out to Natural Plus Nursery and see the beauty for yourself. They are open Monday through Friday from 8am-5pm. Saturday from 8am-2pm.  
[www.NaturalPlusNursery.com](http://www.NaturalPlusNursery.com)

To learn more about the next Launch and Grow workshop, which will begin in September, visit [www.niacc.edu/pappajohn/](http://www.niacc.edu/pappajohn/)

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# Director's Notes

## A Successful Fiscal Year

This past 2016-17 fiscal year of the NIACC Pappajohn Center has been an exciting and busy one. It kicked off with the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Centers, where we hosted a gala event in Des Moines. The event highlighted John and Mary Pappajohn, thanking them for their visionary leadership and all they have done for entrepreneurship in the state of Iowa.



**Tim Putnam**  
Director John Pappajohn  
Entrepreneurial Center

The Center saw an increase of students taking entrepreneurial classes either as part of our concurrent offering in the high schools, online or on the NIACC campus. A record high of 278 students enrolled in one or more of the entrepreneurial classes offered. Due to the generosity of John and Mary, we also awarded \$10,000 in entrepreneurial scholarships to NIACC students.

For the 5th straight year the Pappajohn Center has seen an uptick in new business starts with the NIACC Pappajohn Center and the America's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) assisting in 30 new business starts. This has created 123 new jobs in the North Iowa Region.

While we are best known for assisting new business start-ups, we also provide a variety of services to existing businesses including providing input for business plans, cash flow analysis, access to capital, or buying and selling a business. In all, the Pappajohn Center and SBDC assisted 309 unique business with a variety for services while helping to raise over \$11 million dollars for start-up and business growth capital.

In our annual survey of business success ratings (percentage of business that remained in operation through their first five years) of the business who used the services of the Pappajohn Center and Americas SBDC, we saw 73% success rate up from 2011-2016. This is an increase of 6% over previous year in business sustainability. The state of Iowa's business success rating is 53% and nationally the rate is 49%.



**#WeNeedMore Girls in STEM:** This summer NIACC partnered with Verizon Innovative Learning to bring a new program to North Iowa. The Verizon Innovative Learning Camp at NIACC provided 50 young girls (grades 6-8) with an immersive experience exploring STEM (science, technology, engineering and math). The program included coding, 3D printing, and virtual reality. Kelley O'Rourke taught the students to work in teams to create a business based on social entrepreneurship. By merging these disciplines, campers experienced a common theme of STEM and the entrepreneurial mindset: innovative problem solving. Participating in the camp may be the experience that propels girls in North Iowa towards a career in STEM and fostering our next generation of entrepreneurs. The program lead for this was NIACC instructor Heather Rissler.

**NIAAC PAPAJOHN CENTER, SBDC, & BUSINESS ACCELERATOR**  
JULY 2016 - JUNE 2017  
YEAR-TO-DATE BUSINESS STATISTICS  
TOTAL CAPITAL (LOANS + EQUITY) = \$11,100,086

	JULY 2016 JUNE 2017	SINCE 1997
NEW BUSINESS STARTS	30	565
NEW JOBS CREATED	123	1,841
ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS	4,429	55,363



**Dan Winegarden**  
Director Accelerator &  
Incubator Services

## Repeatable Tools, Building for the Future

1. **Innovation.** If you don't think of innovation as requiring a system, you should. Innovation shouldn't be left to chance inspiration. The better your business is at change the more successful it will be in a rapidly changing world.

### ***Innovation -- The Essential Strategy In A Changing World***

Tuesday, October 10, 2017 at 8:30 am, we're conducting a half-day program on the tools of innovation. Our co-sponsor is BrownWinick, a specialist law firm in Intellectual Property, tax, compliance, and deals. BrownWinick works with local counsel, in-house or in-community when highly specialized issues arise. Host and co-sponsor is Sukup Manufacturing Co. at their new conference center in Sheffield, IA.

Speakers include leading area executives with concrete examples and tools from their firms that are transferrable to your startup or existing company pursuing interstate or international commerce. They include, MetalCraft (Steve A. Doerfler), NutriQuest (Steve Weiss), Sukup Manufacturing Co. (Steve Sukup and Emily Schmitt), Stellar Industries (Matt Schroeder).

If you're a high-potential start-up, or an existing company selling out-of-state, or a financial advisor to these, you must be at this can't miss event. Seating is limited to 75. Registration is \$50 and includes the concluding luncheon. Register online at: <https://iowainnovationroadshow.eventbrite.com>

2. **Business Planning.** We're standardizing our business planning tools with some tailoring to the experience of the client user.
  - a. **LivePlan** – for less experienced users LivePlan.com asks the questions and provides examples to walk through building a financial plan with all the basics. It doesn't give users direct access to the spreadsheets. If you know basic accounting and how the questions impact cash flow, profit and loss, or the balance sheet you can manipulate the "what-ifs." But it works even if clients don't know accounting. This tool is available at a discount for clients of the North Iowa SBDC and is a cloud-based software-as-a-service (SaaS) tool.
  - b. **FinModel4.exe** – For more advanced clients we use the same basic cash flow pro forma tool as the John Pappajohn Iowa Entrepreneurial Venture Competition. It's a free downloadable Microsoft Excel template created by a colleague and friend from Des Moines, Michael Colwell with SquareOne who currently runs the International Insurance Accelerator. It's both more detailed and more flexible in expert hands. There is a low-cost Amazon e-book to explain how to use the template, but it requires existing expertise in Excel.
3. **Benchmarking.** We're now using **IndustriousCFO** through America's SBDC for benchmarking data by industry and region. This allows you to know what success looks like. Am I above or below average in cost of goods sold? In cost of sales? In any of the basic metrics of financial performance? This is the start of knowing what needs changing.
4. **Cash Flow.** The Winnebago Industries turnaround and the rescue of Harley-Davidson have a common foundation in a local legend, Ron Haugen. As Winnebago CEO, Ron built a cash flow projection tool to both manage cash through an economic crash and to lead the team to own the numbers and lead change. It worked again as an advisor to the team taking Harley private. Ron built it into a tool for small and midsize business enterprises (so-called SMBEs) to use – **ThreePage.** We're now using **ThreePage** to help especially small manufacturers understand, forecast, and manage the numbers that matter. Unlike traditional accounting tools that are backwards looking, **ThreePage** looks ahead with the numbers businesses know. No waiting on accounting to catch-up. And unlike some other tools, **ThreePage** makes team members own their share of the numbers. We've seen dramatic results when applied. It helps get management out of the owner's head and emphasizes communication and leadership by the team. In many cases, clients need to first get a handle on cash flow before being able to undertake new projects or financing. **ThreePage** works.



**Pictured from left to right:** Back Row - Tommy Elias, Falyn Knecht, Daniel Wilbur, Hunter Noordhoek, Alyssa Thoreson, Madalyn Schott, GT Howd, Madison Daniels, Samuel Arickx, Holden Nyhus Front Row- Corey Behrens, Jim Elias, Samantha Schupanitz, Ravyn Knecht, Abigail Thomas, Bekka Reams, Carissa Blake, Sadie Arickx, Kelley Crane, Alyssa Tegtmeier



**Pictured from left to right:** Ravyn Knecht, Daniel Wilbur, Madison Daniels, Alyssa Tegtmeier, Sadie Arickx



## NIACC John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center Hosts Youth Entrepreneurial Academy

The North Iowa Area Community College John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center (NIACC JPEC) conducted the Youth Entrepreneurial Academy on June 19-23. The academy is offered annually and free to all high school students interested in entrepreneurship. Participants receive a \$500 NIACC scholarship sponsored by John Pappajohn. This year's academy included 15 participating high school students. The aspiring entrepreneurs completed the academy which is held as a day camp from 8:30am-4:30pm. The NIACC JPEC's Youth Entrepreneurial Academy has now developed over the course of five years.

Students were given the opportunity to stay in NIACC's student housing, and several students elected to do so. Students not staying in the student housing received gas cards to help cover the week's travel from their homes to NIACC. Additionally, five students received a \$500 seed money award for the businesses they developed during the week. The participants and schools represented were:

Sadie Arickx	Rockford Senior High
Samuel Arickx	Rockford Senior High
Carissa Blake	St. Ansgar High School
Madison Daniels	West Hancock High School
Tommy Elias	Muscatine High School
GT (Gregory Taylor) Howd	Kell High School (Cobb County, Georgia)
Ravyn Knecht	Charles City High School
Falyn Knecht	Charles City High School
Hunter Noordhoek	Homeschool (Osage)
Bekka Reams	St. Ansgar High School
Madalyn Schott	Forest City High School
Alyssa Tegtmeier	West Hancock High School
Alyssa Thoreson	Forest City High School
Abigail Thomas	Central Springs High School
Daniel Wilbur	Homeschool (St. Ansgar)

Throughout the entire week, the young entrepreneurs worked diligently to progress a business model canvas. Students had the opportunity to network with local entrepreneurs, develop leadership skills, and gain fundamental skills required when starting a business.

Friday, June 23, the final day of the academy the students pitched their business ideas by submitting an executive summary that included a company description, financial plans, and business model key measures that included startup costs and sales projections.

The Academy's mentors included: Jim Elias, Muscatine Community College (facilitator); Holden Nyhus, Scout Pro; Kelley O'Rourke; NIACC Pappajohn Center; Corey Behrens, (YEA Alumni) University of Northern Iowa student and owner of Simplistic Views; Samantha Schupanitz, (YEA Alumni) NIACC student and owner of Sami's Sock Monkeys; Carsen Johnson, (YEA Alumni) Mason City High School student and owner of Lawn 911;

Guest speakers for the week included:

Tyler Anderson - Roller City, Tropical Snow, Escape Room. (Being an Entrepreneur)
Brad and Angie Barber - Cabin Coffee Franchise (Customer Service)
Shannon Latham - Latham Hi-Tech Seeds and Enchanted Acres (Social Media Marketing)

The students presented their businesses to a panel of five judges: Tyler Anderson, Roller City, Tropical Snow, Escape Room; Hunter Callanan, North Iowa Corridor; Pat Goedken, Clear Lake Bank & Trust; Ed Schick, Retired International Businessman; Dan Winegarden, Director of the JPEC Incubator/Accelerator.

Danielle Goll, owner of North Iowa Designs, was the keynote speaker.

The judges chose five businesses to win an additional **\$500** seed money award. The winners were:

**Sadie Arickx--The Company Company:** The Company Company is a service based business focused on providing companionship for residents at nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Sadie goes to nursing and assisted living homes around the Mason City and Nora Springs area, visiting the people who live

there for a certain amount of time each week, spending time with them, playing board games, and watching movies.

**Madison Daniels--Designed to Sell:** Designed to Sell is a house flipping business where she takes the worst house in the most upscale neighborhood and fixes them up to make it a forever home for future families.

**Ravyn Knecht--Knechtions:** Knechtions, is a local business in small-town Charles City. Her company primarily sells industrial products including benches and tables. She also has a passion for creating home décor, such as signs and wall hangings. Knechtions focuses on customer service and creating products designed specifically for each customer.

**Alyssa Tegtmeier--Share the Light Activity and Event Center:** The Share the Light Activity & Event Center (SLAEC) is a Christian business that will eventually offer multiple services for entertainment such as concerts, public speaking events, service projects, day camps, youth groups, trips, game nights, and picnics. It will also have a small book and apparel shop and cafe. She plans to start off with simply providing a day camp to kids of various ages and a few year-round youth groups that would be held in various churches. As business grows, Alyssa plans to buy a building (with an auditorium and a few smaller rooms) and offer more activities and events.

**Daniel Wilbur--North Iowa Diesel Repair:** North Iowa Diesel Repair is a small local diesel repair shop located outside of St. Ansgar IA. Daniel services and repairs all makes and models of diesel engines, from diesel cars to four-wheel drive tractors. His goal is to provide quality work at an affordable price to my customers and keep their equipment up and running with as little downtime as possible. He plans to attend the NIACC Diesel tech program to further his skills and become certified.

# STEM Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics



#STEM



STEM Group Photo



STEM Group & Chase Crane, Counselor



STEM Group & Sami Schupanitz, Counselor

This summer, Verizon Innovative Learning launched its first program addressing the need for more girls, especially those in rural America, to be prepared for the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) careers of the future. The three-week summer camp took place at NIACC, one of five community colleges piloting the program in rural areas across the country in partnership with the National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship (NACCE).

The program introduced 50 middle school girls from throughout North Iowa to the fundamentals of augmented reality, coding, 3D design, entrepreneurship and design thinking principles, as well as to female mentors, who are themselves professionals in STEM fields. Leveraging an augmented reality interface and app, students created a culminating project that identifies – and solves – a community problem that aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

According to research, 86 percent of engineers and 74 percent of computer professionals are men, and the percentage of women in STEM careers has not improved since 2001. NIACC President Steve Schulz says, "Our hope is that by participating in this camp, girls will become interested in and excited about STEM careers. When that happens, all of North Iowa benefits."

Kelley O'Rourke, NIACC Pappajohn Center School Partnership Entrepreneurial Coordinator, facilitated entrepreneurial curriculum throughout the three weeks. Scholars learned about social purpose, developed business concepts, designed logos and business cards. On the final day, the Scholars presented their business plans to family, friends and NIACC staff. "These young ladies inspired me with their commitment to this camp and their passion for learning," commented O'Rourke.

Following the summer program, which ran July 10 – July 28, students will continue to participate in monthly learning activities, both in-person and virtually, to build upon what they've learned and complete their final augmented reality projects with NIACC.

## Free Start Smart Workshops for 2017

September 13	10-Noon	IowaWorks600 S. Pierce Mason City	November 8	6-8 pm	NIACC Pappajohn Center 117
September 20	6-8 pm	NIACC Pappajohn Center 117	November 29	6-8 pm	NIACC Pappajohn Center 117
October 11	6-8 pm	NIACC Pappajohn Center 117	December 6	10-Noon	IowaWorks 600 S. Pierce Mason City
October 25	6-8 pm	NIACC Pappajohn Center 117	December 13	6-8 pm	NIACC Pappajohn Center 117

This two hour workshop is designed for anyone who is considering starting a business or expanding their current business. Participants will learn how to create a business plan, do market research, consider different types of business ownership and learn how to register a business. There is no cost to attend. Registration is required, please call NIACC: 641-422-4342.



JOHN PAPPAJOHN ENTREPRENEURIAL CENTER  
North Iowa Area Community College  
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Visit us online @  
[www.niacc.edu/pappajohn](http://www.niacc.edu/pappajohn)

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ANSWER: Scroll to the bottom of the page & click on the PAPPAJOHN CENTER logo



## NIACC JPEC STAFF

Tim Putnam  
John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center Director  
Brook S. Boehmler  
Small Business Development Center Director  
Daniel Pitts Winegarden  
Acceleration & Incubation Services Director  
Kelley O'Rourke  
School Partnership Entrepreneurial Coordinator  
Mary Spitz  
Administrative Assistant – NIACC JPEC & SBDC

## NIACC JPEC ADVISORY BOARD

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