

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 16, 2024

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ELLSWORTH COUNTY YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP CHALLENGE ANNOUNCES RESULTS

Ellsworth, KS - The entrepreneurial spirit is alive and thriving in Ellsworth County! Following the success of Grow Ellsworth County's third annual Youth Entrepreneurship "Shark Tank" Challenge, we're thrilled to announce the outstanding results from the Kansas Entrepreneurship Challenge (KEC) State Competition.

Josie Kueser, the state qualifier representing Ellsworth County with her venture, Elkhorn Silver, showcased exceptional talent and innovation at the KEC on Tuesday, April 16. Josie secured a top-tier position, earning a commendable cash prize of \$2500 as an "Exemplary Existing Business."

Josie, the founder and owner of Elkhorn Silver, impressed judges with her comprehensive business plan and polished presentation skills. Competing at Kansas State University, she navigated through three mock boardroom presentations and delivered a captivating tradeshow presentation.

The KEC, a state-sanctioned event sponsored by Kansas State University, Kansas State Research & Extension, and Network Kansas, provides a platform for local winners to shine on a broader stage. Josie's journey to success began with her first-place win of \$1500 at the local Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge, provided by Grow Ellsworth County, in partnership with Network Kansas, local business mentors, and USD 327.

Stacie Schmidt, local YEC event coordinator and Executive Director of Grow Ellsworth County, remarked, "The YEC program perfectly aligns with economic development's mission, nurturing the skills and competencies of our future business leaders. Josie's dedication and achievement reflect the incredible talent within our community. She represented Ellsworth County with distinction."

Josie's experience at the KEC has not only enriched her entrepreneurial journey but has also provided invaluable opportunities for business development, networking, and learning. With a cash prize totaling \$4000 and newfound inspiration, Josie is poised for continued success.

The Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge is an annual opportunity open to students in grades 7-12 residing in Ellsworth County, made possible through Grow Ellsworth County's partnership with Network Kansas.

For more information, please contact Stacie Schmidt at 785-472-9204 or ewcountyeconomicdevelopment@gmail.com. For additional details about Network Kansas or the E-Community Partnership, visit www.networkkansas.com. Ellsworth County Economic Development became an E-Community in 2019 through a competitive bid process.