



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HELP, local schools, and partners offer second cohort of countywide student entrepreneurship program

December 12, 2024 (Warsaw, IN) – [Hoosier Enduring Legacy Program \(HELP\) Kosciusko](#) along with nonprofit [Believe in a Dream, Inc.](#), will host the second cohort of the Kosciusko Student Venture Challenge, an entrepreneurship bootcamp and showcase for local high school students.

This year, students from Lakeland Christian Academy, Tippecanoe Valley, Whitko, Warsaw, and Wawasee High Schools are participating in the program, with four business-building bootcamp sessions already completed.

“We have more than 40 outstanding students participating in the program this year,” said Kosciusko County Community Coordinator Amy Roe. “Our hope is that they walk away from this program with useful tools and resources, hands-on experience, and confidence to further pursue their business idea or start a new venture in the future in Kosciusko County. We hope this makes entrepreneurship seem less scary!”

The need to increase support for youth entrepreneurship was identified through the HELP program. The goal of the program is to grow and strengthen the local entrepreneurial ecosystem by introducing high school students to an entrepreneurial mindset and foundational business principles.

The program includes eight 2-hour experiential business bootcamp sessions with a student showcase and celebration to close the program in mid-April. Highlights from bootcamp sessions include: developing initial business ideas, elevator pitches, prototyping, marketing and lead generation, financial goals, peer-to-peer feedback, and more.

"I am incredibly proud of the growth and impact of the Kosciusko Student Venture Challenge over the past two years," said Aaron Engbrecht, business teacher and work based learning coordinator at Tippecanoe Valley High School. "This entrepreneurial program has expanded significantly, bringing together students from various schools and providing them with invaluable hands-on experience. With the guidance of local business leaders as mentors, our students are not only learning the fundamentals of entrepreneurship but also developing critical skills such as problem-solving, teamwork, and leadership. The transformation we have witnessed in our students is truly inspiring, and I am excited to see how this program will continue to shape the future of young entrepreneurs in our community."



The program is facilitated again by Entrepreneur Coach Steve Franks of Believe in a Dream. Along with coaching from Franks and peer-to-peer feedback, students receive guidance and support at each bootcamp session from volunteer mentors in the community. More than 20 mentors are volunteering in the program this year, with the majority returning from last year.

"I am excited to see our growth in year two," said Franks. "The words to remember are 'more than double.' We have more than doubled the number of schools that are participating, the number of students who are creating businesses, and the number of mentors from the Kosciusko business community! Some students got so much out of year one that they returned to do it again, and nearly all of year one's mentors came back to be joined by more new mentors. Wow!"

Save the date for the Kosciusko Student Venture Challenge showcase and celebration on Thursday, April 17, 2025 at Rodeheaver Auditorium in Winona Lake.

If you're interested in supporting the program financially, as a mentor, or a judge for the student showcase, please contact Amy Roe at aroe@kosciusko.in.gov. For updates on HELP Kosciusko visit www.kcgov.com and follow HELP Kosciusko on [Facebook](#) @HELPKosciusko.

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About the Hoosier Enduring Legacy Program (HELP) in Kosciusko County

The Hoosier Enduring Legacy Program (HELP) from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) supports communities directly by building capacity, creating a peer network system between communities participating in the program, developing a strategic investment plan and providing access to set-aside funding. HELP is rooted in four pathways: advancing e-connectivity, promoting community wellness, enhancing quality of place, and strengthening local economies.

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