

Idaho Conference on Refugees Workshop

Optimism & Determination— *Focusing on Refugee Youth Qualities in Developing Tomorrow's Business Leaders*

Presented by Ron Berning, META Program Director ~ February 11, 2010

Young adult entrepreneur guest speakers—

- **Maya Duratovic—*Maya's Hair Salon; Mladi Behar Folk Dance Group***
- **Kudrat Yunuskhadjaev—*Color Me True; Capital City Taxi***
- **Maryam Roshanpanah-Karimi—*Anahita Exquisite Floral Productions***
- **Fardin Paymon—*emerging business owner, coming soon!***

***To view other META client businesses, go to:
<http://www.metaidaho.org/businessdirectory.aspx>***



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MicroEnterprise Training & Assistance



- * Creating opportunities
- * Transforming lives
- * Expanding Markets



Nonprofit program of
Mountain States Group, Inc.
with headquarters in Boise, Idaho.

Mountain States Group, Inc.

- * 30 programs
- * Local, national, and international
- * Helps people improve their lives
- * Promotes healthy communities



Purpose

To provide access to capital and other resources to refugees and other low- to moderate-income entrepreneurs for the purpose of starting, strengthening, or expanding their businesses.

Clients

- * Refugees and other immigrants
- * Women
- * Minorities
- * Other low- to moderate-income entrepreneurs

What is a microenterprise?

Small, locally-
owned business

- * Up to 5 employees
- * Up to \$35,000 in start-up capital needs



Core Services & Products

- * One-on-one business consulting
- * Business plan training
- * Monthly business lunch workshops
- * Microloans





Need for Microenterprise Support Services

- * Refugees and other disadvantaged entrepreneurs are often overlooked by business support services.
- * Microenterprises account for 20.4% of all employment in Idaho.
- * In Ada County alone, over 32,000 microenterprises employ 43,000 people.

Need for Microloans

- * Disadvantaged entrepreneurs have trouble getting business loans.
- * They may borrow from payday and title loan companies.
- * META—filling the gap.





Low-cost to Clients

Building long-term success

- * One-time \$35 participation fee
- * Four-week \$199 business plan training course
- * Loan fee upon approval

Fees prepare clients to “graduate”

- * Personal investment
- * High value for products and services
- * True learning

Primary Client Base

New Americans

- * Language barriers
- * Cultural barriers
- * Stuck in minimum wage jobs



Small business ownership offers refugees and others hope, self-determination, and a way out of this trap.



Economic Independence

Helps the entrepreneur

- * Build net worth, increase household income and self-esteem.

Benefits the community

- * Increased tax base and home ownership
- * Increased economic development
- * Job creation

Successful small businesses are the primary engines of economic development, income growth, and poverty reduction in the U.S.



Accomplishments

Helped nearly 300 business clients in Idaho since October 2002. Recently closed on its 115th loan.

Past 12 mo. performance (FY '09)

- * 25 new start-ups
- * 38 bus. stabilized or expanded
- * 17 loans valued at \$94,400
- * 26 new jobs created



Exploring and Developing New Markets

Conducting needs assessments

- * Advise entrepreneurs of new opportunities

Assessing demand for specialty foods

- * Rural and ethnic
food store opportunities





CONTACT US

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Top Ten Small Business Owners Under 16
Susan Funaro - Sep 2009

If necessity is the mother of invention, she has spawned some very young inventors. The following entrepreneurs took advantage of childhood to solve pint-sized problems and fatten their piggy banks.

Jacob Dunnack developed the *JD Batball* at age six. Jacob was frustrated when he'd remembered his bat but forgotten his ball during a visit to his grandmother's home. To prevent future mishaps, Jacob came up with the idea for a plastic baseball bat with a removable cap for storing balls. Jacob and his parents went to a designer to submit the idea to Toys "R" Us. The toy megastore liked Jacob's idea so much they started carrying the product. Now, that's one idea that definitely turned into a grand slam.

Krysta Morlan's experience with her own cerebral palsy pushed her to invent the portable *Cast Cooler* in tenth grade. Several surgeries had left Krysta trapped in hot, uncomfortable casts. Krysta's solution: the *Cast Cooler*, a battery-powered machine that funnels cool air into a cast via a plastic tube.

And, she has already developed a second invention, although Krysta has yet to even graduate high school. Prompted by months of tedious physical therapy in a swimming pool, Krysta created the *Waterbike*. It is semi-submerged, fin-powered, and has a rudder for steering. This idea definitely didn't sink since the bike can be used for therapy or fun.

K-K Gregory has also sought to make life a little more pleasant. At the ripe age of ten, she invented *Wristies*™ to keep freezing snow out of her coat sleeves. K-K's *Wristies* can be worn under mittens or gloves. Fingers are free and cuffs stay dry. Her samples were such a hit with her Girl Scout Troop that she brought her design to a patent attorney. The result? Nine years in business and going strong.

Adam Cohen is another born problem solver. In the fifth grade, he invented an alarm clock to wake him up with a pre-recorded message. By age twelve, his bedroom had become a laboratory stacked with his award-winning inventions. One invention was a nanoscale patterning technique using an electrochemical scanning tunneling microscope (STM) resulting in an *Electrochemical paintbrush*. Needless to say, Adam was not your average teenager. He became a Harvard student. With over 200 ideas pending, he hasn't slowed down on the inventions.

Richie Stachowski was both a corporate founder and a president by age 13. His product, *Water Talkies*™, reaps about a half-million annually. At age eleven, Richie was snorkeling on a Hawaiian vacation. Frustrated that he couldn't communicate with his dad about undersea discoveries, he came home and designed an underwater megaphone. He used the internet for research, his home pool as a test lab, and \$267 of his savings for startup capital. Richie's company, Short Stack, LLC, negotiated with major retail chains to carry his product. Water

Talkies™ were a hit in the summer of 1997 and have kept people communicating underwater ever since. Who says vacations can't lead to great ideas.

Kelly Reinhart was another kid in need of practical solutions. She designed *Thigh Packs* at age six. The Thigh Pack is a holster for carrying kid's necessities, like portable video games. By age nine, she was chairperson of TPak International, a company with nearly \$1 million in orders. Improvements and patenting followed. Plans have been discussed with Pentagon officials to see if the packs could be used by the military.

Kristin Hrabar was nine years old when she was inspired by necessity to design her *Laserdriver Tools*. She was holding a flashlight for her dad during a routine home repair. Kristin thought it would be easier if the tool had its own light. She then designed the illuminated nut driver for her third grade science fair. Kristin patented her product by her eleventh birthday. Business was already looking bright by the time she turned 12.

Kavita Shukla had two patents (*Smart Lid* and *Fenugreek-treated paper*) and a company of her own by the time she finished high school. At 13, she invented a lab safety device for bottles containing hazardous material. She patented her "Smart Lid," which is still used. Shortly afterwards, Kavita accidentally drank contaminated water on a trip to India to visit her grandmother. Her grandmother's home remedy made from fenugreek seeds prevented Shukla from getting ill. The seeds that saved her inspired Kavita to develop packaging paper treated with fenugreek. The paper's purpose? To preserve and protect food. She is the cofounder and CEO of SAFEH2O.

Elise and Evan Macmillan co-founded and own *The Chocolate Farm*. This custom chocolate company has a twist - a farm animal theme. Elise started making chocolate with her grandmother at age three. She and her brother, Evan, started their own company about six years ago. The siblings are now teen millionaires thanks to the popularity of their cow-shaped chocolate lollipops and other chocolate treats.

Abbey Fleck was eight years old in 1992 when she invented *Makin' Bacon*. This device hangs bacon away from fat while it cooks in the microwave. Abbey's grandfather took out a loan on the family farm so they could produce the 100,000 dishes Wal-Mart required for initial distribution. Now, Abbey and her father co-own A de F, Inc. Each year the company produces and sells about 640,000 Makin' Bacon dishes. Abbey really is "makin' bacon" - her company brings in more than \$1million annually in royalties.

These amazing kids all invented things to express their creativity and solve problems. They all had the support of adults who encouraged and protected their creativity while helping them get access to the adult world. The result? Amazing products that came to life and proved adults don't have a monopoly on great ideas.