

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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***Thornapple-Kellogg High School moving forward with Youth Entrepreneurship Program!***

Middleville – Youth Entrepreneurship is again being offered at the Thornapple-Kellogg High School as part of their commitment to provide students the opportunity to develop their entrepreneurial skill sets. Teacher Rachel Cobb indicated that “through the Generation E curriculum students enhance their skills through problem solving, financial planning, idea development and overall business planning.”

Thirty junior and senior students are enrolled in this trimester’s entrepreneur course and have begun the process of developing their own ideas into business endeavors. “Through the GenE program students not only write a business plan but they develop their product or service through to business launch,” indicated Cobb.

Rachel Cobb was recently certified as a GenE Instructor through the training program offered by the HomeTown Partners Youth Pillar and the Barry County Economic Development Alliance and facilitated by Cheryl Peters, Director of the GenerationE Institute in Battle Creek. Funding for the program was provided by the Barry Community Foundation through a grant for a Countywide Youth Entrepreneurship Program developed by the Economic Development Alliance.

In addition to Rachel Cobb the following individuals were certified as GenE instructors: Kathy Walters-Suratt and Kathy Pennington, both of MSU-Ext; Alan Klein, local resident and community volunteer; and Doris Hale, local resident and educator. These five individuals join seven other local leaders as certified GenE Instructors. As a part of the training program existing business owners, managers and entrepreneurs were brought into the training session to share experiences and expertise. Those community mentors were Fred Jacobs, J-Ad Graphics; Karen Heath, Secondhand Corner; Carlotta Willard, Firstbank; and Andre’ Wiegand, Barry County Chamber and Economic Development Alliance. These and other community leaders will serve as mentors for youth within the classrooms as well.

The HomeTown Youth Pillar and the Barry County Economic Development Alliance will continue to partner to enhance the community support and connectivity of local youth entrepreneurship program in Barry County.

Or more information regarding GenerationE or youth entrepreneurship endeavors in Barry County please contact Valerie Byrnes at 269.945.2454.

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