

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Grand Challenges

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Grand Challenge: Community Vitality

Title: Young Innovators Market Contest

Why is this issue important?

Most local entrepreneurial ecosystem opportunities are for adults. The goal of this competition was to expose our Shawnee County middle school and high school students to entrepreneurship. Creating an interest level in youth for business ownership can help them see a path to building their own business in our community.

How did Extension address this issue?

Shawnee County Extension with help from Go Topeka and Shawnee Startups hosted the inaugural Young Innovators Market Contest on July 12th. Youth were judged on the following criteria:

- Booth Display
- How youth Engaged with Public
- Pricing
- Ability to complete a sale
- Knowledgeable about their business and product

Prior to the contest the Extension office also hosted a learning session to teach youth about best practices running a market booth. We had guest speakers Nick Xidis from Hazel Hill Chocolate and Mary Tyler from Breadbasket Farmers market talk to the youth.

What was the impact?

Seven youth from across Shawnee County participated in the contest. Their products included art, jewelry, car freshies, bouquets and pottery. The contest was held in conjunction with a Friday Flick movie night at Evergy plaza. All of the youth made sales as they competed for prize money.

Our top three scoring booths were:

- 1st Place booth Alayna's Jewelry
- 2nd Place booth Katie's Car Freshies
- 3rd Place booth Crackpot Ceramics

