

Lemonade Day to help encourage

# Youth in business



John Cross

Volunteers from Verizon Wireless fill backpacks with materials to help students create their own lemonade stands. The backpacks will be available at a handful of area locations prior to June 5, the official Lemonade Day, in which hundreds of students will showcase their own entrepreneurial ventures.

By Tanner Kent

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Attention all burgeoning entrepreneurs: Your day is coming. June 5 has been declared Lemonade Day in cities across Blue Earth County, which paves the way for hundreds of elementary students to erect lemonade stands on that day as a way to learn more about finance and entrepreneurship.

The initiative is sponsored by Greater Mankato Growth and the Greater Mankato Regional Economic Development Alliance, as well as Verizon Wireless and a handful of community partners.

Starting today, students can register and pick up backpacks full of starting materials at several area locations.

## Greater Mankato Growth: 'We want students to explore entrepreneurship'

The backpacks contain starting guides for both entrepreneurs and parent, and includes information on everything from choosing a site and determining costs to luring investors and setting aside profits for charity.

Then on June 5, students will put their business acumen to the test, along with thousands of others students participating in similar events across the country.

"We want students to explore entrepreneurship and gain an understanding of what owning a business is all about," Jonathan Zierdt, president of Greater Mankato Growth, said during a news conference Monday at Bethany Lutheran College.

But young business owners won't have to do it alone.

Home Depot is hosting a how-to class on building a lemonade stand; Bethany Lutheran College is hosting a course on putting together a business plan; and Mankato Area Community Education and Recreation is hosting a class on how to make tasty lemonade and how to blend ingredients for other flavors.

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And for additional motivation, students can participate in a variety of lemonade contests: Hy-Vee is hosting a best-tasting contest; Home Depot is having a contest for best stand; Junior Achievement is sponsoring a contest for best business plan; and students can also submit their results from June 5 to the national organization for the most success-

ful and most charitable contests.

Information backpacks can be picked up at the Blue Earth County Library, Home Depot, the Greater Mankato Visitor and Community Information Center at the River Hills Mall, the Mankato YMCA and the Lake Crystal Area Recreation Center.

*For more information, visit [www.mankato.lemonade.org](http://www.mankato.lemonade.org).*