



Joanne Steele- Keynote Speaker

Title: Owner

Business: Rural Tourism Marketing Group

City & State: Dunsmuir, CA

Joanne Steele, owner of Rural Tourism Marketing Group, has worked for over 15 years helping rural small businesses and rural communities learn effective marketing strategies and community development techniques that utilize local resources. She worked as Director of Tourism for a rural California county for 10 years utilizing a small operating budget to generate over \$4 million equivalent press coverage for rural businesses. She teaches state of the art marketing strategies retooled for the small local business owner. She has worked with rural development organizations in Oregon, Kansas, California and Arkansas and consults through her blog with rural development specialists throughout US, Canada, Great Britain and other international rural destinations. Her current project, "Take Control of Your Internet Marketing" is an internet based training program designed to help rural small business owners and chambers of commerce learn how to utilize and benefit from the revolutionary marketing opportunities created by the internet. Joanne and her husband, Ed, live and work in Dunsmuir, California, where they expect to see two of their four children return to build businesses and raise their families.



Cory Geffre

Title: Author, Speaker & Trainer

Business: Common Success

City & State: Aberdeen, South Dakota

Cory Geffre is passionate about business, life and about helping people unlock their own maximum potential. This passion has lead Cory to pursue his lifelong dream of being an author, speaker and trainer ... he is often called an inspirational educator. Corey was born for business as witnessed with his first venture at age 11, and he had started 6 more by age 20. Today Cory spends his time helping businesses, organizations, healthcare and long term care facilities in the areas of workforce development, management & motivation. Cory's whitepaper called "Work Force Win-Win – Employers Win & Employees Win" is helping employers & employees relate to each other.



Scott Meyer

Title: Founder

Business: 9 Clouds

City & State: Sioux Falls, SD

Scott Meyer is a bro-founder at 9 Clouds, a digital marketing and education firm that helps businesses connect with customers online. As a frequent speaker and teacher, Scott aims to improve the digital literacy of businesses around the world. His online community DigiSandbox.com helps users understand and learn to use social technology, and he provides frequent tutorials and handbooks at 9clouds.com/blog. When he's not teaching, look for Scott to be traveling, especially to Norway, and writing about his adventures at ScottDavidMeyer.com.



John Meyer

Title: Founder

Business: 9 Clouds

City & State: Sioux Falls, SD

John T. Meyer is bro-founder of 9 Clouds and the idea guy of the operation. He started his first business in his college dorm room at the age of 22 and now is on business number six with the recent launch Lemon.ly, a visualization firm that creates understanding through visuals. John is a member of the Young Entrepreneur Council and in 2010 was named to Businessweek's Top 25 Entrepreneurs Under 25. If he's not working on a new business, John is probably complaining about his beloved Minnesota Twins. Connect with him on Twitter [@johntmeyer](https://twitter.com/johntmeyer).

Additional Speakers



Milo Alexander

Title: Director

Organization: Community Economic Development Clinic, Creighton University School of Law

City & State: Omaha, NE

Milo is the Director of the Community Economic Development Clinic at Creighton Law School. The Clinic serves as a law firm for microentrepreneurs and community nonprofit organizations that would otherwise be unable to obtain legal representation. Senior law students working under Milo's supervision prepare the documents necessary to form an LLC, S corporation, or nonprofit corporation as well as various kinds of contracts and applications for IRS recognition as a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt organizations. The Clinic also handles copyright, trademark, and other issues. The Clinic represents clients state-wide and in western Iowa. Milo has been with the Clinic since July 2008 and is also an Assistant Professor at the Law School. Milo also does community education presentations on business and nonprofit topics.



Monica Braun

Title: Director, REAP Women's Business Center

Organization: Center for Rural Affairs-REAP

City & State: Seward, NE

Monica Braun is a native of south central Nebraska. She graduated from Superior High School and attended the University of Nebraska where she received a Bachelor's Degree in Consumer Science. She received her graduate degree from UNL in Education and Family Resource Management with a Minor in Ag Economics. Monica was an Extension Agent with the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service for ten years, serving in Holt County and Douglas County. She was a Training Specialist with the Nebraska Health and Human Services System for 5 years. Currently, Monica lives in Seward, NE and is the Director of the Rural Enterprise Assistance Project (REAP) Women's Business Center with the Center for Rural Affairs. In this position she coordinates the training efforts for REAP with the Business Specialists, works with entrepreneurs, small business owners and REAP association members to enhance their business management skills and access loan funds.



Traci Bruckner

Title: Assistant Director, Rural Policy

Organization: Center for Rural Affairs

City & State: Lyons, NE

Traci Bruckner is the Assistant Director of the Rural Policy Program at the Center for Rural Affairs. Traci worked extensively on the 2008 Farm Bill, guiding advocacy to include beginning farmer and rancher provisions in the bill, as well as conservation and value-added agriculture programs. She has also guided the Center's farm bill program implementation efforts on those programs. She has brought a national voice to beginning farm and ranch issues with her service on USDA's Beginning Farmer Committee. Traci also works closely with other organizations on organic and sustainable agriculture, and speaks frequently to groups across the nation.



David Buchholz

Title: President

Business: David & Associates

City & State: Hastings, NE

Dave Buchholz is founder and president of David & Associates, a marketing communications/brand strategy firm headquartered in Hastings, Nebraska. David & Associates develops marketing, communications and brand strategies for regional and national clients in education, agriculture, biofuels, energy, manufacturing, tourism/economic development and healthcare. The firm has won several awards for its strategic and creative work. Dave served as the public information director for a Nebraska community college and as creative director for a Michigan-based college admissions consulting firm prior to starting his company in 1984. A graduate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Dave was raised on an Ayr, Nebraska farm, where he was responsible for a herd of 54 farm cats. Dave speaks frequently on marketing, branding and communications to groups in rural development, entrepreneurship, tourism, retail and education. Dave and his wife Debra are parents of a son, Djorn. On the weekends, Dave's evil twin plays keyboards in a 5-piece rock band.



Rochelle Edwards

Title: Lead Web Designer

Business: Intellicom

City & State: Kearney, NE

Rochelle Edwards is the Lead Web-Designer at Intellicom. Rochelle works with the client to design the site map and the general architecture of the site. As a project manager, she supervises the graphic design and development of the web-site. Rochelle is then responsible for training the client, making sure that the site is optimized for search engines, and that the client understands how to view their web-site statistics. Her areas of expertise include web design, social media, and search engine optimization. Rochelle has completed social media training sessions at several conferences. Prior to Intellicom, Rochelle worked for the City of Kearney for 7 years and had also done some freelance graphic design and multimedia work. Rochelle has a strong knowledge of Photoshop, InDesign, and Dreamweaver, along with different programming languages. She graduated from the University of Nebraska at Kearney in 2005 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Multimedia with a Minor in Graphic Design. She is currently involved in the American Cancer Society and her local church. Rochelle and her husband, Clayton, reside in Kearney with their daughter, Samantha. When not working, they both enjoy spending time with their family and friends.



Shane Farritor

Title: Professor of Mechanical Engineering

Organization: University of Nebraska - Lincoln

City & State: Lincoln, NE

Shane Farritor is a Professor of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. His research interests include space robotics, surgical robotics, and biomedical sensors. Shane has founded two startup companies based on his research at UNL. Shane co-founded Virtual Incision Corporation with his surgeon colleague Dr. Dmitry Oleynikov at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Virtual Incision is developing miniature robotic devices that are placed inside the body during laparoscopic surgery. Shane's second startup, MRail, is developing a method to improve railroad maintenance by the measurement of vertical rail deflection. Shane is a native Nebraskan and grew up in the small central Nebraska town of Ravenna. His wife is a physician at St. Elizabeth's and they have four children. He received the B.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1992, and the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Mechanical Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, in 1998.



Connie Hancock

Title: Extension Educator

Organization: University of Nebraska Extension

City & State: Lincoln, NE

There is opportunity around every corner and we only need to think about how we can do business differently to reach a new market! Connie Hancock works for the University of NE Extension as Extension Educator. She provides educational programming to communities and businesses in the areas of taking charge of your online presence and utilizing the new tools for marketing. Connie is a member of the UNL Extension Entrepreneurship Action team, and eXtension Entrepreneurs and Their Community.



Chuck Hasebrook

Title: Executive Director

Organization: Center for Rural Affairs

City & State: Lyons, NE

The Center is a nationally recognized research, advocacy and development organization that supports small communities, small business and family farming and ranching. Hasebrook has served 34 years with the Center, winning changes in federal tax, farm, conservation and rural development policy. Hasebrook serves on the University of Nebraska Board of Regents, including two terms as chair, and is current Chair of the Board of the USDA North Central Region Rural Development Center. He previously served on the Nebraska Rural Development Commission, US Department of Agriculture National Commission on Small Farms, USDA Agricultural Science and Technology Review Board and the Board Bread for the World. Hasebrook is a University of Nebraska graduate and a native of Platte Center, Nebraska, where his family has been engaged in farming for more than a century. He lives with his wife Kate and sons Anton and Peter in Lyons.

**Inga Haugen****Title:** Rural Organizing Intern**Organization:** Center for Rural Affairs**City & State:** Lyons, NE

Inga Haugen is currently a Rural Organizing Intern in the Rural Organizing and Outreach Program with the Center for Rural Affairs. She is assisting staff with rural health care and farm bill work. She has been a small business owner since 2008, and a farmer her whole life. While her brothers take their turn running the family farm, she is enjoying learning about advocacy, policy work, grass roots organizing and all it takes to change the legal and policy parameters in which she farms. Haugen is attempting to find a balance where she can continue to own and operate FarmGirl at Large, raising pork, chicken, beef and mushrooms while sharing her passion about farms in general, hers in particular; and finding time to create more sustainable health care and food systems.

**Bob Hobbs****Title:** Chapter Chair**Organization:** SCORE**City & State:** Kearney, NE

Bob Hobbs has served as Chairman of SCORE Chapter 300, for ten years providing business counseling for persons interested in starting a business and business owners who are seeking business assistance from other owners. Chapter 300 provides free counseling in various areas of Nebraska. Additionally, SCORE provides business workshops. Hobbs's background includes mortgage banking, bank marketing, and real estate appraisal. He attended school in York and has a BS degree from UNL with a Business Law major. His 11 years of military service included US Army active duty, Nebraska National Guard and Unit Commander in the Army Reserve. He has been involved in the Chamber of Commerce in Kearney and Lexington where he served as Board President. He and his wife Artie are members of the First United Methodist Church and they have three children. Hobbs is a member of the Masons, Elks and service clubs, Sertoma and Rotary. He is also a Business Development Director at The Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska, Kearney, NE, where he has assisted businesses start up providing many jobs.

**Jay Jenkins****Title:** Extension Educator**Organization:** University of Nebraska-Lincoln**City & State:** Valentine, NE

Jay Jenkins is the UNL Extension Educator in Cherry County. In addition to his work with range livestock producers, he helps rural Nebraskans succeed online. His goal is to provide information and education that helps people reach their goals.

**Kris Jerke****Title:** Vice President**Business:** Platte Valley State Bank & Trust**City & State:** Grand Island, NE

Kris Jerke is a vice president and business banker with Platte Valley State Bank & Trust in Grand Island, NE. He has served in the financial services industry for over 14 years, primarily in the Tri-Cities market. His career experience has helped him to become well-versed on a variety of financing alternatives to better serve his customers. Some of these alternatives include SBA, USDA and NEF. Kris and his wife, Wendy, live near Cairo, NE.

**Annette Junck****Title:** Economic Development Coordinator**Organization:** City of Laurel**City & State:** Laurel, NE

Annette Junck has been the Economic Development Coordinator for Laurel since 1999. It is her job to retain and recruit businesses, promote the community, and to be aware of funding sources for housing, recreation, business and municipalities. Partnerships within and outside of the community have played a key role in many of the projects that have been accomplished. Laurel has received several Economic Development awards from NPPD, was the Governor's Showcase Community in 2006, and became an Economic Development Certified Community in 2010.

**Patt Lentfer****Title:** Executive Director**Organization:** Fillmore County Development Corporation**City & State:** Geneva, NE

Patt Lentfer is the Executive Director of the Fillmore County Development Corporation with her office in Geneva and has worked for the non-profit corporation for 10 years. She graduated from the Economic Development Institute conducted by the University of Oklahoma College of Continuing Education in 2010. Patt not only works with entrepreneurs and small businesses, but she and her husband have a small business in Shickley, NE, Lentfer Irrigation & Mfg, Inc. which involves manufacturing, retail, and service. She has firsthand knowledge of setting up a business, changing markets, and business transition from a buyer's perspective. Prior to working for the Fillmore County Development Corporation Patt was a Gifted Facilitator at Geneva Public Schools.

**Steve Maly****Title:** Activist**Business:** Maly Marketing**City & State:** Lincoln, NE

Steve has been an activist with Maly Marketing for 4 years and has owned his own businesses for over 8 as of January. 70% of the revenue comes from strategic online strategies ranging from social media implementation to website development and from SEO techniques to online marketing training sessions. With 83% of all major buying decisions starting online, they align clients so they are in front of their prospects when they are actively searching for them. After they lay that foundation, they we then examine what they can do offline to drive revenue in the client's business. Steve is the President of the Northview Lincoln Business Association and he also sits on the boards for Kaplan University, SIFE UNL, Alice's Integrity Loan Fund and Foster Executive Writing. He has been married for 3 years and has two beautiful daughters; Alexis who is 12 and Finley who is 5 months.

**Glennis McClure****Title:** Program Manager**Organization:** Nebraska Enterprise Fund**City & State:** Blue Springs, NE

Glennis McClure is the Program Manager for the Nebraska Enterprise Fund (NEF). Prior to NEF, Glennis was the Senior Community Affairs Advisor with the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, Omaha Branch. She has previously served as a business specialist and co-director of the REAP program, taught agri-business at Southeast Community College and earlier in her career as a farm business consultant with the Nebraska Farm Business Association. Both her bachelor's and master's degrees are from UNL. Glennis has served recently as the co-chair of the Nebraska Entrepreneurship Task Force, taken numerous professional training courses in community finance, business retention and transition, and has presented at state and national conferences on business finance and microenterprise development. Glennis resides south of Beatrice on their family farm with her husband Ed. They have 3 grown children with their youngest still in college.

**Kelley Messenger****Title:** Area Specialist**Organization:** USDA Rural Development**City & State:** Kearney, NE

Kelley is an Area Specialist for USDA Rural Development, specializing in Business Programs out of the Kearney Area Office. She has been with the agency for 10 years, working 5 of those years as a student employee while attending the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Upon graduation in May 2006, she started working in the Business Programs Division and became a specialist with the agency in October 2006. She enjoys working with the rural businesses and individuals in the area (covering 29 counties), assisting with rural development in the communities. The programs that she covers are business loans and grants, working with for-profits and non-profits. She also works with an energy program that is for for-profit businesses and ag producers.

**Jenny Nixon****Title:** Extension Educator**Organization:** University of Nebraska – Lincoln Extension (for South Sioux County)**City & State:** Harrison, NE

Jenny Nixon is a UNL Extension Educator for Sioux County. She is passionate about range management in Nebraska and works to promote sustainable range management practices. Jenny also loves to help business owners and entrepreneurs create and maintain a high quality web presence for their business. Keeping up with ever changing technology keeps her on her toes.



Ann Pelster

Title: Web Designer

Business: Intellicom

City & State: Kearney, NE

Ann Pelster is a Web Designer for Intellicom. In this position, Ann is responsible for assisting the Intellicom Web team with day to day activity including creating new web-sites, updating content, working on graphic design, and other web design related tasks. Ann graduated May 2011 from UNK with a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Multimedia and minor in Family Studies. Ann grew up on ranch outside of Bartlett and enjoys reading, horseback riding, sports and anything outdoors.



Eugene Rahn

Organization: Center for Rural Affairs- REAP

City & State: Atkinson, NE

Eugene has been with the Rural Enterprise Assistance Project (REAP) since 1996 working with small business owners in Nebraska. A home office located in Atkinson is the base for serving 16 counties in north central & northeast Nebraska. Eugene has worked at building collaborative lending partnerships with banks, development districts, revolving loan funds and other lenders. To date over 300 REAP and other agency loans have been completed. Additional lending and economic development activities present and past include serving on the Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District Loan Board, member of the Nebraska Economic Development Corporation, Nebraska Enterprise Opportunity Network, and Nebraska Development Network. The Nebraska Enterprise Fund presented Eugene with an Outstanding Service Award for his work with small businesses in 2009. The Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District presented Eugene with their Outstanding Service Award in 2011 For Continuing Support of Community & Economic Development Activities.



Virginia Wolking

Title: Rural Policy Organizer/ Land Link Coordinator

Organization: Center for Rural Affairs

City & State: Lyons, NE

Virginia Wolking is a rural policy organizer/Land Link coordinator at the Center for Rural Affairs in Lyons, Nebraska (population 963) where she works primarily on issues related to health care, renewable energy and beginning farmers in rural areas. She holds a BA in Environmental Science and Sustainable Agriculture from Warren Wilson College in Swannanoa, North Carolina and supervised the draft horse program at the college. Virginia Wolking served as an intern at the White Earth Land Recovery Project, worked on a diversified family farm in northwest Minnesota and researched management of Conservation Reserve Program land in West Polk County, Minnesota. Prior to coming to the Center for Rural Affairs Virginia worked on a cattle ranch in northern Wyoming.

Thank you to these folks for contributing their time, talent and expertise in helping educate, connect and grow entrepreneurs and small businesses across Nebraska, specifically those influencing the economy in rural areas.

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