



NORTH KANSAS CITY HIGH SCHOOL CAREER PATHWAYS

The entire North Kansas City School District is taking a big leap forward beginning in the fall of 2021. They are launching what is called the Career Pathways Work-Based Learning Continuum. The Freshman class at all four district high schools (North Kansas City, Winnetonka, Oak Park and Staley) will be the first to engage with this new curriculum approach. Over the next three years, the new Freshman class will be added until all four grade levels have transitioned. The Class of 2025 will be the first graduating class engaged with this concept.



Four broad career pathways have been defined. Each eighth-grade student enrolling for high school will need to determine which career pathway holds the most interest. They are *not* being asked to choose a career; just identify an interest.

There are four “Schools” of pathways. Each has a wide range of possible careers.

School of Business, Leadership & Entrepreneurship

- Entrepreneurship
- Business

School of Design, Innovation & Technology

- Technology (includes Manufacturing)
- Construction and Engineering
- Creative Design

School of Health & Wellness

- Health
- Wellness

School of Human Services

- Public Services
- Environmental Science and Sustainability

Courses throughout the four years will be customized to support these various alternatives, integrating the traditional study fields of language, mathematics and science.

You can see more details about how this program will be implemented at North Kansas City High School by going to this link: sites.google.com/view/norhtowntntrue/home?authuser=0

Help from the Business Community is Vital for Success

North Kansas City High School will need your help. There are many ways to help, most of them with minimum effort on your part, and often with a surprising sense of enrichment while doing it. The North Kansas City Business Council will be very active as a partner with North Kansas City High School, informing you of the opportunities. As an example, we offered a webinar with three alternative dates in March to explain more about this program and how you can help.

It is not your money that is needed. It is time and exposure to your business and the professionals in your business that is needed. You can help add that important “learn by doing” component of education. Opportunities can range from a short video that could be used as a “class visit” or “plant tour” to in-person versions of those same opportunities to job-shadowing and internships. Another way is to challenge a team of students with a project that is important for your business, but one you haven’t had the resources to work on. Another way to help is to offer real-life examples to teachers illuminating how classroom instruction or a project is actually used in a career. Or share job descriptions so students, teachers and parents can have a better idea of skills and education needed for different careers.

PROFILES OF TWO NORTH KANSAS CITY ENTREPRENEURS

The two profiles in this newsletter, Andrew Potter (RoKC Climbing Gym) and Adam Roberts (Screenland Armour Theatre), are from a much younger generation than the two profiles in the previous newsletter. Both are in their 30s and have made a big impact on the entertainment offerings of North Kansas City.

Andrew Potter Creator & Owner of RoKC Climbing Gym



Andrew Potter, owner of RoKC Climbing Gym

Andrew says, "I fell in love with rock climbing when I was a kid. Growing up all over the world led to some pretty incredible climbing experiences. It stayed with me and once I decided I didn't want to be in the military for my entire career, I knew creating something like RoKC could be my exit plan."

He lived in a lot of places as a young child until 1998 when the family moved from Germany to Parkville where he went to Park Hill South HS and then University of Central Missouri, where he was in ROTC. He was commissioned in 2009 and did three tours in Afghanistan, one as a Scout Sniper Platoon Leader with the 82nd Airborne and two with the 75th Ranger Regiment.

Andrew realized there was a need for more climbing facilities in Kansas City. He was further inspired to do something about that after climbing at gyms all over the country and seeing the sport beginning to grow. With the help of his brother, Frank, he



established RoKC/North Kansas City at 1501 Howell in April of 2016. They selected North Kansas City because of its great access to the Northland and Kansas City. They knew there might be possibilities with one of the large

warehouse spaces. They recognized North Kansas City as an up-and-coming area and wanted to get in on the ground floor.

RoKC offers rock climbing (day passes and memberships), yoga and fitness classes, personal training, and instructional climbing courses.

But the RoKC story didn't end with just the North Kansas City facility. RoKC has since opened two more facilities: RoKC Underground off 31st and Southwest Trafficway and RoKC Olathe in Olathe, KS.

Andrew's entrepreneurial journey evolved further by co-founding a software company three years ago, creating a product called Approach which is a Client Relationship Management and Point of Sale software focused on the fitness industry with clients in the US, Canada, Australia and Germany.

Andrew's role has changed significantly since the early days of RoKC/North Kansas City when he was there almost all the time hiring, training, guiding customer climbing experiences and supervising employees. Prior to that he invested many months of "sweat equity" doing a lot of the physical work to convert the former manufacturing space into a state-of-the-art climbing facility. Now he has General Managers at each facility so he can use his time focusing on the big picture and managing teams. The company has grown, from one to three locations. He says that "building the right systems and teams so that our company can run as efficiently as possible isn't always easy. Many people in Kansas City aren't necessarily looking



for a career in the climbing industry."

He says he "derives the most personal satisfaction from watching our senior staff grow as leaders to the point that they are capable of making important decisions and managing facilities effectively with very little guidance."

Andrew credits his military experience for learning to be resilient, because as an entrepreneur you

will ALWAYS be facing new challenges. Pre-pandemic, RoKC/North Kansas City had approximately 40 employees. Now they have about 45 across all three locations after reopening.

His advice for others who might want to be entrepreneurs: "If you aren't willing to go all in on something, then it may not be the right venture. Find something that you are going to wake up and love doing every day. It is going to take a lot of work and you won't be motivated if it isn't something you love. Don't confuse loving what you are doing with being easy."



Adam Roberts

North Kansas City Entrepreneur, Resident & City Councilman



Adam Roberts and his business partner Brent Miller have been in the news numerous times during the Covid-19 pandemic because of their resourceful

North Kansas City entrepreneur, resident and City Councilman, Adam Roberts.

efforts to keep the Screenland Armour Theatre alive. The movie theatre industry has been hit harder with restrictions than any other industry. So far, they have been successful enough to survive with creative programming, movie rentals, fund-raising, curbside parklet outdoor service, outdoor movies and careful management of expenses.



Adam has been a business owner in North Kansas City since 2012 when he and Brent took over operations of the Screenland Armour Theatre. Since that time they have exponentially grown that business. When they first took over the theatre it was struggling to find its identity. Adam had been working a corporate job he said "pushing papers in a job that I despised." He had never worked in a movie theatre, but had experience in the restaurant and film industries separately.

His strategy with Screenland Armour was to create a unique voice – to create what he wanted a movie theatre to be. For him, that was the nostalgia of a small theatre with arcade games, unique programming and a retro atmosphere. They changed nearly everything in the building from the wall colors and art

to website and social media offerings. They continue to find ways to improve and offer their growing customer base a unique experience with the utmost love for cinema.

As an emerging entrepreneur, Adam confessed he didn't have a comfortable moment, but he knew he had to step off the ledge that was corporate America. And he knew he didn't want to work for someone else. He learned to take a risk on himself and believe that what he had in his head would resonate with others. Successes and failures have both occurred in the past nine years. He said: "Persevere. Adapt or die. Realize that motivation must come from yourself, not from others."

Adam and Brent grew up in the area, loved North Kansas City and believed in what it could become. The floundering Screenland Armour Theatre offered the opportunity to fulfill their dreams. Since 2012 Adam has had four different businesses in the North Kansas City area and purchased a home here. His commitment to the community and small-town charm led him to be a candidate for City Council. With no opponents on the ballot in his ward, Adam will begin serving on North Kansas City's City Council in April 2021.

Adam says that what gives him the most personal satisfaction is connecting with desires inspired by the community around him and responding with an event, a movie, merchandise or partnership.

Adam did not have a formal education in business. He had a plethora of work experience and a strong work ethic. He also claims "a mountain of interests that I dive deep into that helps curate my voice which eventually leads to our customers in one way or another".

A product of Park Hill High School, Adam was raised with three siblings by a single mother. He discovered his love of all things film at a young age. At age 12 he wrote his first screenplay with pencil and paper. From there he continued his education and curiosity in film which would one day make him one of the youngest exhibitors in the country. He credits his background in film production with helping him be a better businessperson. He says: "It's actually all the same process: you have

an idea; you plan and work it out to the best of your ability; then you go out and look for capital and create the actual product with a group of individuals you assemble. Then the release of that movie is the same as your opening day." Having worked in movies for 10+ years before owning a business indirectly prepared him for taking on the Screenland Armour Theatre challenge.



He states that this last year threw a major wrench into his constant creation of other businesses. But it gave him more time to grow and focus as an individual. All of that has allowed him to fall back in love with the original business almost a decade later and be more inspired than he had been in a long time to deliver the best theatre to Kansas City.

More future businesses are likely with Adam. But the first priority right now is to keep this business as strong as possible and that his employees are still employed. He plans to offer his entrepreneurial experience and passion to create a better, more equal, community in his new role as City Council representative. He also hopes to create a feature film in 2021.

His advice for other would-be entrepreneurs: "Don't hesitate. There are so many great avenues to be explored as both an entrepreneur and a human by taking the leap. You can't let a potential failure outweigh a potential success. And don't get too caught up on your own experience or education. Believe in yourself, in your idea, and that confidence will take you far."



NORTHLAND CAPS INTERNS

Three students from three different Northland High Schools

are serving as Interns through the Northland CAPS program for the North Kansas City Business Council this semester. One part of their duties is enviable: Spend money provided by the North Kansas City Business Council with Visa gift cards at North Kansas City restaurants, interview owners, managers and customers and post comments, photos and videos on social media in support of those restaurants. This is part of the "Our Hearts are Local" marketing campaign by the North Kansas City Business Council in cooperation with the River North Business Alliance and the City of North Kansas City. We are very fortunate to have these mature, intelligent young adults as our Interns this semester.

Beckett Hackney **Junior at Park Hill South High School**

I love to spend time with my friends and family as well as watching and playing sports. After high school I hope to go to Kansas State University and graduate with some type of business degree. Business has always interested me. I have a part-time job as a check-out clerk at the HyVee on 64th St. It has been fun meeting people and seeing how businesses work and I am excited to keep learning throughout the rest of the semester.



Beckett Hackney

Ellie McCroskie **Senior at Staley High School**

I have lived in the Kansas City area ever since my parents brought me home in 2004. I was adopted



Ellie McCroskie

from China when I was 18 months. Some of my favorite activities are photography, baking, traveling, painting, and hanging out with my best friend. I plan on going to Metropolitan Community College under the A+ program (two years of free community college). I'm thinking of

studying to be an ultrasound tech and being a photographer as a side job. After my two years at MCC, I will transfer to a university to get my bachelor's degree. I'm hoping that after I get my certification, to be an ultrasound tech, I can go straight into the work field, continue to get my bachelors, and save my money to travel the world!

Simone Smith **Senior at Park Hill High School**

I will be attending Mount St. Mary's University



Simone Smith

in Emmitsburg, Maryland to achieve my goals of becoming an Art Director in Film or Journalism.

Born and raised in Kansas City, I have two younger brothers. What is important to me is honesty, communication, time and track and field.

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NORTHLAND CAPS INTERNS CONTINUED

I've been competing in track and field for six+ years and will continue to participate in it while in college.

My career plans are to obtain bachelor's and master's degrees in Fine Arts. While in college I plan to try to get an internship to make money and work my way up to becoming an Art Director.

Art Directors are the head/overseers of the Art Department in a project/institution. They are responsible for the overall visual style and messaging in the final product. They decide how the characters, props, and environments are going to

look along with provide a basis for the rest of the art department.

Since my end goal is to become an Art Director it is rather difficult to obtain this title and make a good consistent living. Therefore, as another way to make money, I would have photography as my side job to keep money flowing. Some things I think will help me with the groundwork of becoming an Art Director are being skilled and have a good knowledge of how to work the majority of the Adobe Creative Cloud programs, along with being good at photography and videography.

WOMEN LEADERS IN BUSINESS

March was, among other things, "Women's History Month." Doing a little research we determined there are at least 196 women in North Kansas City who are either the owners of a business or have a key leadership role. This includes leaders at some of the North Kansas City Business Council's largest businesses and non-profit organizations.

- Recently-retired Marilyn Coughlin was Co-Owner and CEO of Mid-America Contractors.
- Julie Edlund is Executive Director of Life Unlimited.
- Mary Janiak is Co-Owner of Accent Controls.
- Carol Meierotto is Co-Founder and Partner at Meierotto Jewelers.
- Jeanette Prenger is Co-Founder, President and CEO of Ecco Select.
- Ora Reynolds is President & CEO of Hunt Midwest Enterprises (developer of Northgate Village).
- Judy Roetheli is Co-Owner of Key Companies (and Greenies before that).
- Recently-retired Peggy Schmitt was President and CEO of North Kansas City Hospital.
- Julie Sola is Senior VP and General Manager of Harrah's Kansas City.
- Kristie Stuewe is President and CEO of First Missouri Bank.
- Kathy Warman is Owner of K Warman Architect + Design.
- Tina Weaver is Executive Director of the North Kansas City YMCA.

NORTH KANSAS CITY BUSINESS COUNCIL

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COMING EVENTS

Check nkcbusinesscouncil.com/events/calendar for details

Monthly Membership Luncheons
(in-person) April 22, May 27 &
June 24

Registration required

Members \$22; Non-Members \$30

Northland Coffee Connect (Zoom)
Every Wednesday morning
8:00 a.m.

First Friday Coffees (in-person)
April 2, May 7, June 4

**Mickey Finn Scholarship
Golf Classic**

Thursday, June 3, 12:30 p.m.
shotgun start

Registration required
opportunities for Hole
Sponsorships for Members

NEW MEMBERS

Donnelly Metals
Ecco Select
Garney Construction
Convergence Partners
Ultimate Services
Blue Oak Technology Solutions
Game of Scones (in The Iron District)



ANNUAL BUSINESS DIRECTORY



Though the deadline is rapidly approaching, advertising opportunities still are available in the Business Council's 2021-22 business directory. If you are interested in having an ad in the directory for greater exposure or as a way to show support for the North Kansas City Business Council, please contact **Chris Teague** at cteague.kc@gmail.com.