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Issue: July/August 2015

## Kid'Preneurs

By Brielle Gregory and Emily McIntyre

The entrepreneurial bug is biting these four kids young, and they're catching attention for their growing startups.



### Shelby Evans, 12

Company: *Play with Heart Cheer Academy*

Shelby Evans of Emmanuel Christian Academy may be one of the only 12-year-olds upset about being on summer break. Summer break means no school, one of her favorite things.

But this seventh grader has another way to occupy her time this summer — she has run her own cheerleading business, Play with Heart Cheer Academy, for the past three years.

"I really love how it teaches young girls how to be young ladies," Evans says. "It disciplines you."

Evans has always loved cheering as a sport, and decided to use her talent for the sport as the foundation for her business.

### Merielle William, 6

Company: *Squeezy Breezy Lemonade*

Merielle William asked a simple question of each person she met at April's Young Entrepreneur Market at University School in Chagrin Falls.

"I just asked them, 'Would you like some lemonade?'" says the 6-year-old Gilmour Academy student.

After selling 54 cups at \$2 each, Squeezy Breezy Lemonade stand ran out of the sweet concoction, made from fresh-squeezed lemon juice, Minute Maid natural lemonade and fresh mint.

It was the national education program Lemonade Day that initially got her interested in starting the stand, so she attended youth entrepreneurship classes with her parents. Roula Abouissa, Merielle's mother, also helped her daughter understand business concepts such as interest and profit.

"I learned how to use money and how to start a business," says Merielle, who set up her stand again last month at the North Union Famers Market at Shaker

### Marc Frankel, 16, Daniel Andreini, 16, Jacob Fakult, 17

Company: *Vamonos!*

Ever since high school seniors Frankel, Andreini and Fakult hatched their plan for the Vamonos! app eight months ago, they've won every pitch competition they've participated in, (a total of five) and have accumulated \$15,000 in startup money.

They came up with the idea for Vamonos! — which sends out an automatic text letting people know when someone will be arriving to meet them based on radius — while making food runs.

"I love problem-solving and working through an idea, finding out how to make it better," says Andreini. "I love going through the process of creating something that's your own."

The trio hopes to launch the app in late June or early July, and is working all summer to make it possible, going into their new

### Ryan Hyde, 18

Company: *Ignited Innovations*

Ryan Hyde was just a month and a half away from a business idea competition for his entrepreneur class and feeling behind after the four months of progress made by his classmates.

Then an idea came to him, right in his own backyard.

"[At home] we have a fire pit on the ground, but you can't bring it up to the deck," says Hyde, who just graduated from T.W. Harvey High School in Painesville. He and his mother put their heads together and came up with a portable fire pit.

The idea launched his company, Ignited Innovations, and has earned him such accolades as Ernst & Young's Young Entrepreneur of the Year. He's since expanded with two additional products, a candle and a vase.

"I went with my gut," she says. "I stuck with something I was good at."

Evans teaches girls ages 4 to 14 and is planning on expanding her business to include a website where she will teach online cheering tutorials. Continuing her cheering career is not a matter of 'if.'

"I will be cheering through college," she says.

Square. "I learned how to be a successful young entrepreneur."

office space in Beachwood from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the week.

"We're treating it as a full-time job," says Marc Frankel. "If we don't do a good job, we'll get fired."

"My selling numbers haven't been as much as I want them to be so far, but my gross profit by the end of my fiscal year will probably be \$4,000 [or] \$5,000," Hyde says.

He'll enter Bowling Green State University in the fall as an accounting and finance major and will keep growing Ignited Innovations.

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