



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 18, 2026

## **Youth Entrepreneurial Academy Registration Now Open for Summer 2026**

*Hosted by the NIACC Pappajohn Center with New, Flexible Format*

MASON CITY, IOWA – Registration is now open for the NIACC John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center’s premiere youth program for high school students, the Youth Entrepreneurial Academy (YEA). The Youth Entrepreneurial Academy is a unique opportunity for North Iowa high school students to expand their horizons, discover their personal strengths, and practice real-world skills.

In 2026, YEA will be held as a hybrid-model, two-week experience incorporating two in-person sessions, online classroom, and virtual meetings, designed to work around the lives of today’s busy teens. Students will attend in-person one day per week at the location of their choice. YEA culminates with a Pitch Night Competition on Tuesday June 30, 2026 where every student has the opportunity to win seed money for their business idea.

### **When**

- Monday June 15 – Friday June 26 | 9:30am–3:30pm
- Tuesday June 30 – Pitch Competition | 5:30pm–8:30pm

### **Where**

- Mondays June 15 & 22 – Charles City
- Tuesdays June 16 & 23 – Sheffield
- Wednesdays June 17 & 24 – Northwood
- Thursdays June 18 & 25 – Clear Lake
- Fridays June 19 & 26 – Open office hours and meeting times available

### **Cost: FREE**

Each YEA student receives a \$500 scholarship to NIACC which can be used for summer, online, or full-time classes at NIACC. Up to \$3000 in scholarships are available to students enrolling in the Associate in Applied Science Entrepreneurship & Small Business Management Degree program at NIACC. Students can also compete for \$500 in seed money for their business concept during the YEA pitch competition at the end of the week.

This academy is free to participants thanks to the generous financial support from the John K. and Luise V. Hanson Foundation.

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[www.niacc.edu](http://www.niacc.edu) · [www.twitter.com/myniacc](https://www.twitter.com/myniacc) · Search “NIACC” on Facebook

Registration can be completed via the online application form at [www.pappajohncenter.com/yea](http://www.pappajohncenter.com/yea). Applications are due June 8, 2026 for priority deadline, or until program is full. For more information, contact Raegan Hanson, Youth Entrepreneurship Coordinator, at [raegan.hanson@niacc.edu](mailto:raegan.hanson@niacc.edu).

The NIACC John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center is North Iowa's hub for new business starts, innovation, and rural business success. From Main Street startups to industry leaders, we're building a stronger Iowa through hands-on advising, stakeholder-driven programs, and a commitment to entrepreneurial education, from the classroom to the boardroom. Contact the NIACC Pappajohn Center at 641-422-4111 or [pappajohn@niacc.edu](mailto:pappajohn@niacc.edu). Visit the NIACC Pappajohn Center online at [www.pappajohncenter.com](http://www.pappajohncenter.com).

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