# A BIG BOOK of CHAMBER IDEAS

SPECIAL EDITION

## 5 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FOR HIGH SCHOOL & COLLEGE STUDENTS

GROWTHZONE

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## 5 Professional Development Programs for High School & College Students

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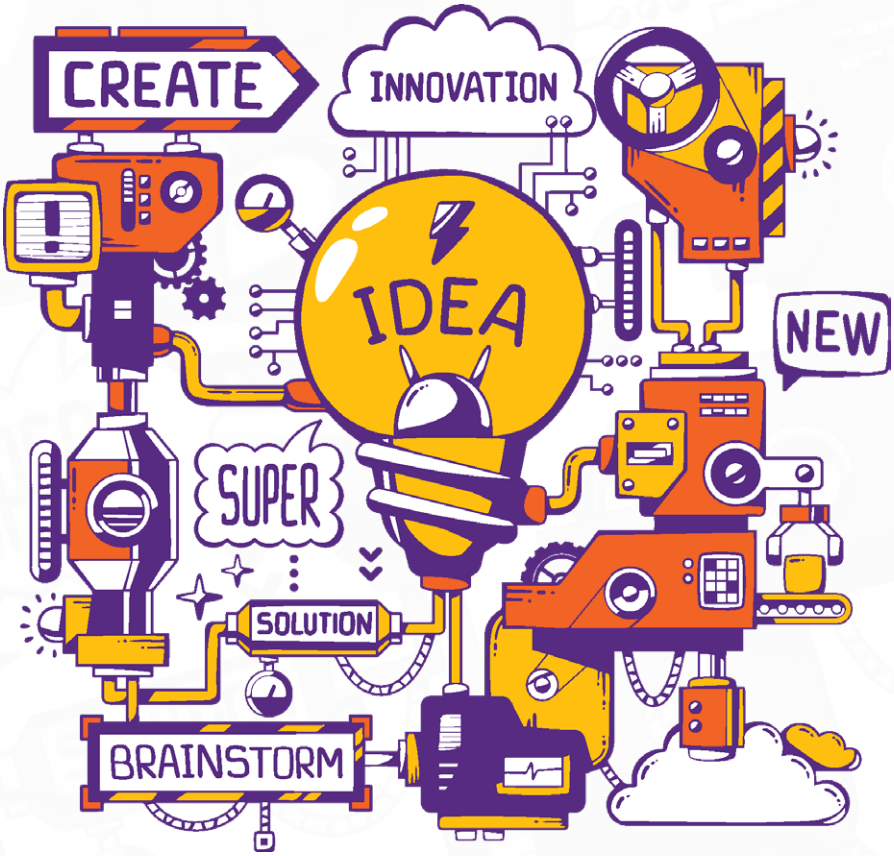
# INTRODUCTION

Over the past years, hundreds of chambers of commerce worldwide have participated in our Chambers of Innovation Competition. The result? A library of unique programs and event ideas that rivals no other.




The events of the past few years led us to forgo the annual competition and publish a series of niche-specific micro e-books instead. Each book highlights never-before-published innovative, replicable ideas in a particular sector relevant to chambers.

This volume showcases five student development events and programs which aim to provide a launchpad for post-secondary success. In general, the programs focus on entrepreneurship and professional best practices.

**CHAMBER:**
**Burnaby Board of Trade**

**WEBSITE:**
**bbot.ca**

**PROGRAM SITE:**
**www.accessprogram.ca**

**LOCATION:**
**Burnaby, BC**

# ACCESS STUDENT CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The Burnaby economy's long-term success depends on the integration of post-secondary students into the Burnaby workforce.

The Burnaby Board of Trade Access Student Career Development Program (aka Access) supports that effort, providing post-secondary students access to work experience, professional mentorship, skills training, inspiration, and connection. Showcasing workshops, seminars, and industry panels, the program helps develop leadership skills and community building.

Matched with a mentor, each participant gains valuable insight and builds a relationship, while the mentor receives the opportunity to assess and nurture top talent. Access Program workshops offer skills-specific resources which cover leadership, building networks and community, creating professional resumes, and sector-specific insights.

Participants also attend BBOT events, workshops, and seminars (currently hosted online), helping them build a professional network and familiarizing them with potential career paths.

Upon program completion, participants receive:

- Burnaby Board of Trade one-year membership
- A Certificate of Completion
- A Letter of Reference from BBOT's President and CEO

Students completing the program AND participating in the Case Competition earn a Special Distinction with additional exclusive benefits, including:

- An enhanced reference letter
- Eligibility to chair an Access committee as an alumnus

The 7-month dynamic program is flexible to meet the demands of a busy student schedule. It is sponsored by higher education institutions and a variety of companies.

**CHAMBER:**
Greater Irvine Chamber Economic Development

**WEBSITE:**
www.irvinechambereconomicdevelopment.com

**PROGRAM SITE:**
www.greaterirvinechamber.com/career-edge

**LOCATION:**
Irvine, CA

# CAREER EDGE

As part of its mission to bridge the workforce skills gap, the Greater Irvine Chamber Economic Development Department offers Career Edge, a soft skills training program for students enrolled in any college or university located in the greater Irvine area. This program helps to ensure local businesses have a pipeline of qualified candidates who meet the needs of the 21st Century workplace.

In collaboration with Irvine Valley College, UCI Division of Continuing Education, and Webster University, the Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce provides college-level students access to a series of hands-on, five-hour workshops taught by active college and university professors.

The series focuses on best business practices. Each session covers different topics, including effective business communications across generational, gender, or age and cultural differences, successful business etiquette, and appropriate workplace behaviors.

Participants are trained in critical thinking and problem-solving techniques and how to use the art of listening to build opportunities and consensus. Participants explore multiple communication channels and the latest technology platforms.

Students in the program polish their communication skills and further develop the power of clearly expressing themselves, resulting in an increased confidence level and impressive skill set. All workshops are free to registrants.

The Career Edge program positively impacts the local workforce pipeline, increasing the number of qualified prospects with distinctive skills entering the job market.

**This program helps to ensure local businesses have a pipeline of qualified candidates who meet the needs of the 21st Century workplace.**

**CHAMBER:**
**Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry | Tennessee Manufacturers Association**

**WEBSITE:**
**www.tnchamber.org**

**PROGRAM SITE:**
**www.tennesseescholars.org**

**LOCATION:**
**Nashville, TN**

# TENNESSEE SCHOLARS

Tennessee Scholars has a clear and focused mission: to increase the percentage of Tennessee high school graduates prepared for post-secondary education, the workforce, or the military.

Students in the top quarter of the class are typically motivated to excel in college and careers; they are already taking an advanced course of study or will do so with little prompting.

The middle 50% of the class comprises students who are not yet considering higher education goals, advanced technical, or skilled careers. These students are more likely to lack direction and follow the path of least resistance, but they possess average or better capabilities to respond to guidance and incentives.

These are the students the Tennessee Scholar program wants to reach. A workforce development program, it rewards and incentivizes students who graduate high school with the required courses and additional expectations such as 95% attendance, 80 hours of volunteer service, no out-of-school suspensions, maintaining a C average, etc.

**The program has motivated more than 35,000 students to graduate with skills for success.**

The program places heavy emphasis on encouraging students to prepare early. By motivating them to stretch their academic muscles during high school, the program ensures that they will have the skills and knowledge for post-graduation success.

Students earning the Tennessee Scholar Honor receive special recognition at graduation, are eligible for various scholarships, receive preferential hiring status, and more.

Local business leaders volunteer to visit the schools during the students' 8th, 10th, and 11th-grade years.

Combined with education professionals' guidance, the program has motivated more than 35,000 students to graduate with the academics and skills required for success.

The Scholars program is administered by the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry and the Tennessee Manufacturers Association and is funded and supported by partners in each community across the state.

**CHAMBER:**
South Dakota Chamber of Commerce & Industry

**WEBSITE:**
www.sdchamber.biz

**PROGRAM SITE:**
www.yba-sd.org

**LOCATION:**
Pierre, SD

# SOUTH DAKOTA YOUTH BUSINESS ADVENTURE

South Dakota Youth Business Adventure (YBA) is a week-long summer program planned and implemented by South Dakota businesses. It serves to help South Dakota high school students and teachers better understand the American private enterprise system and how companies operate within it.

The YBA program is sponsored by the South Dakota Chamber of Commerce & Industry. It has been held annually since 1980, and over 6,500 students and 500 educators have participated.

Students who have completed 10th or 11th grade are eligible to apply. Their schools must endorse applicants to ensure they are responsible and interested in planning for a business future. Educators (teachers, principals, and counselors) are also invited to attend YBA.

Participants are assigned to a group of 11-13 students and guided through the week by a business executive. Learning experiences typically include competitive games, speakers, panel discussions, films, on-site tours of local businesses, group skits, and other activities.

YBA isn't all work. It's a co-ed program with various recreational and social activities such as a dance, bowling, and swimming. There are many opportunities to meet and make new friends from across the state.

Participants pay $250 for the program, while food, lodging, materials, and activity expenses are funded through a South Dakota business contribution of $550. Financial aid is available.

Since 1980, over
**6,500**
students have participated.

**CHAMBER:**
Swift Current and District Chamber of Commerce

**WEBSITE:**
www.swiftcurrentchamber.ca

**PROGRAM SITE:**
www.swiftcurrentchamber.ca/pages/SignatureEvents

**LOCATION:**
Swift Current, SK

# BUSINESS CONNECT BANQUET

The Swift Current and District Chamber of Commerce recognizes that fostering a sense of business community with area students is essential, as today's youth will be tomorrow's community leaders.

The Business Connect Banquet, a Chamber initiative, serves to connect area business leaders with young entrepreneurs from the local high school and community college. It provides an opportunity for those with interest in business and entrepreneurship to learn about the various career paths followed by business owners and managers.

During the event, three students and three businesspeople are seated at a table for a four-course meal. Each table focuses on a different industry niche. The students change tables after each course, allowing them to interact with as many people as possible.

Discussions are focused on helping students develop career paths. The goal is to give advice and share tips on things students may not have considered. The conversation allows for broad dialogue on various industries and exploring the different roles within an organization.

The discussions also serve to help students hone their interview skills. By putting them in networking situations, they are forced to think on their feet when answering questions about themselves.

Business leaders participate in the event to share their knowledge and help students succeed, yet they often gain knowledge themselves, walking away with new ideas and different perspectives provided by the younger generation.

**The event concludes with the awarding of a $500 scholarship to one student from each institution.**

The event concludes with the awarding of a $500.00 scholarship to one student from each institution.

The event's success is representative of the Swift Current business community's commitment to intergenerational leadership succession.

# ABOUT GROWTHZONE

At GrowthZone, *Your Mission is Our Mission*. As a leading provider of association and chamber management software, we do more than deliver technology - we serve as your trusted technology partner and an extension of your staff. Our team works alongside you to simplify operations, strengthen engagement, and help your organization deliver exceptional value to the members and communities you serve.

Trusted by thousands of organizations, including many of the most influential associations and chambers in the industry, GrowthZone is the partner of choice for organizations seeking mission-aligned solutions, exceptional value, and measurable results.

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