WE CREATE
Making KC America’s Most Entrepreneurial City: Year 1
PANADERIA DE LAS AMERICAS

Luis Hernandez
| Kansas City, Missouri | Main Street

Received a microloan of $10,000 to open his bakery on Southwest Boulevard

2014 Greater Kansas City Chamber Diverse-Owned Business of the Year

(See story on page 13/or wecreatekc.com/panaderia)
“My grandfather, J.C. Hall, came to Kansas City with a shoebox full of postcards to start his business because he heard Kansas City had a unique buzz about it. People called it the Kansas City spirit. He was drawn to Kansas City because of the wellspring of ideas that were here. For centuries, Kansas City has unleashed great businesses and I have every confidence that we have the resources, ideas and talent to continue that trend.”

- Donald Hall, Jr.

Kansas City’s own entrepreneurial titans knew this. They knew it when they hopped a train to Kansas City at 19 years old with little more than a dream and two shoeboxes of postcards. They knew it when they huddled around a picnic table at Loose Park and mapped business models on yellow ledger paper. They knew it when they willingly quit their comfortable career track selling mutual funds to start their own money management company. They knew it when they sold pharmaceuticals out of the trunk of their car. They knew it when, with just $5,000 borrowed from their aunt and a well-placed ad in the Kansas City Star, they quadrupled that initial investment within weeks. They knew it when they took over a small family business and grew it into a sparkling empire.

They knew it when they each decided to stand on their own two feet and fashion dreams that would create futures.

The startup stories of Kansas City’s entrepreneurial giants have become the legends we tell to young entrepreneurs when we tuck them into their first fledgling startups. Most of these giants started as the bulk of businesses do: as microenterprises with few resources, often out of their homes (or car trunks) and with little capital or overhead.

They grew, taking their places as Main Street businesses or on the bleeding-edge of innovation. By strategic design or shift of focus, they took on the second stage, rapidly growing their small businesses into multimillion and multibillion dollar corporations that employ hundreds of thousands of Kansas Citians.

And then, standing on the summit of success, they each turned around, opened their hands and shared their insights to shepherd a new generation of entrepreneurs.

In Kansas City, we call it the One Degree of Entrepreneurship. You hear it in story after story of an entrepreneur who was personally mentored by the late Mr. Kauffman or a student who attended a brown bag talk with Cliff Illig. You see it in the startled eyes of a teenage entrepreneur who just a few weeks ago received a business card and “Let’s do lunch” from Henry Bloch. Quite famously and distinctly, these entrepreneurs have created a culture of community and collaboration, where other cities chose cutthroat competition.

But more than that and more importantly, they built bridges.
FAMILY BICYCLES
Theresa M. Van Ackeren
| Kansas City, Missouri | Main Street

Real bikes for real people

Thinking Bigger Media 25 Under 25 Award,
Justine PETERSEN microloan client

PEDAL POWER.
wecreatekc.com/familybicycles
As entrepreneurs, we, too, have bet it all on an idea. We, too, have risked the safe choice for a second chance at a bigger, bolder dream. We have lent our talents to creating America’s Creative Crossroads. We have sung the song of our promise to bring Google Fiber to our neighborhood. We have fought for streetcars and TechStars, for Folk Alliance and Maker Faire, for bistate collaboration and a stronger urban core.

**And like those entrepreneurial giants, we create opportunities. We create jobs, wealth and futures.**

Because we know, despite all that our entrepreneurial heroes have achieved and imparted, it’s not enough to merely stand on the shoulders of giants. To be America’s most entrepreneurial city, we have to do more than peer in awe at the monuments and bridges that came before us.

**And their stories are our own.**

As startups and spinoffs, artists and innovators, bakers and makers—as entrepreneurs—we inspire, invent, invest and advance. And we aspire to be more.

Because we, too, bring the talent, ideas and insights. We tell the story of entrepreneurship. We provide the resources that help entrepreneurs do more, faster. We are the inspiration, the legacy, the legends.

**+ AND WE CREATE KANSAS CITY.**

**IT TAKES ALL TYPES OF ENTREPRENEURS TO SUSTAIN A VIBRANT ECONOMY.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STARTERS</th>
<th>94,948</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taking steps to start a business</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MICROENTERPRISE</th>
<th>136,794</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Require little capital to launch and don’t require a physical location</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>BIG BUSINESS</th>
<th>1,374</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than 100 employees</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>SECOND STAGE</th>
<th>42,151</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have grown past the startup stage and generate millions in revenue</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>MAIN STREET</th>
<th>4,339</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brick-and-mortar store fronts that define our city’s character</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2011 US Census Bureau Data
When you want advice on how to run a successful business, you go to the source: those who’ve done it before. That’s exactly what Gabriel Okafor and Ike Nwabuonwu did when they launched Alpha Energy and Electric (AlphaEE) in 2005. They found the doors were flung wide open for advice and collaboration.

Former residents of the 18th and Vine Incubator, they now pay that generosity forward by mentoring other businesses and lending their skills pro bono to the redevelopment of the Troost Corridor. Last May, AlphaEE was selected as one of 20 U.S. companies to join the U.S. Secretary of Commerce on her trade mission to West Africa.

PLAYING THEIR A-GAME.

wecreatekc.com/alphaee
“Kansas City is rapidly becoming known nationally as a hot bed of entrepreneurial activity as risk takers are finding Kansas City a welcoming and supportive community. Kansas City is building America’s strongest and most comprehensive entrepreneurial ecosystem. Entrepreneurs are helping to develop KC’s new economy.”

-Peter J. deSilva, president and COO, UMB Financial Corporation

Since 2003, the KCSourceLink network has grown by 545%, connecting 225+ business-building resources in our 18-county, bistate region.

HERE’S WHAT JUST A FEW HAVE BEEN UP TO IN THE PAST YEAR.

1. Caffeinate with KC startups on Wednesdays with 1 Million Cups (1MC), now in 50 cities.
2. 1MC satellite live stream (Northland)
   1MC satellite live stream (Independence)
3. 200+ urban core residents received business counseling through the Urban Business Growth Initiative and reported $7MM in increased sales.
4. Pipeline receives $1.435MM grant from the Kauffman Foundation to expand its impact.
5. Connect with women entrepreneurs through Athena League events.
6. Incubators aren’t just for techies. Blue Hills Contractor Incubator provides training to construction contractors.
7. Happy 50th anniversary, SCORE! Check out new classes, some in partnership with Central Exchange.
8. Explore art and connect with artists at InterUrban ArtHouse.
9. Pitch On!, led by chambers in Lee’s Summit and Blue Springs, offered shopping and introductions to investors.
10. Bishop McCann took home the Greater KC Chamber’s Mr. K award.
11. BioKansas connects research, talent, companies and funding in the biosciences.
12. Unleash your inner foodpreneur at the Farm to Table Kitchen.

YOU ARE ONE DEGREE FROM HELP
wecreatekc.com/resource
SwimZip

Betsy Johnson + Berry Wanless
| Prairie Village, Kansas | Microenterprise

Stylish UV 50+ swimwear for children

As seen on and in: ABC’s Shark Tank, NBC’s Today Show, Target, People, Red Tricycle

Swimwear entrepreneurs and siblings, Betsy Johnson and Berry Wanless welcomed the frenzy after their January 2014 appearance on ABC’s Shark Tank like a toddler rushing her first ocean wave: with equals parts awe, anxiety and body-quaking glee.

SwimZip thrived from the sharks’ bite on their line of UV protective swimwear, bringing in 80 percent of the sales they did the previous year in just two days. Betsy credits her shark charmer skills to Youth Entrepreneurs for teaching her how to value, write and pitch a business to potential investors.

HOW DID THEY DO IT?

wecreatekc.com/swimzip
“The Kansas City community has made great strides to create a platform for individuals to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams. That journey will never be easy, but we can help pave the way by exploring the interactive dynamics that matter most at a local level.”

-Wendy Guillies, acting president and CEO, Kauffman Foundation

KANSAS CITY IS A CITY OF ENTREPRENEURS. AND THE WORLD IS TAKING NOTE.

First and Fastest.
KC was the first region to receive wicked fast gigabit Internet with Google Fiber, a coup that led to Kansas City Startup Village, Launch KC and other initiatives to attract and support startups.

Homegrown Flavor.
Three KC chefs were nominated for 2014 James Beard Awards, the highest honor for food professionals:
- Ted Habiger, Room 39
- Howard Hanna, The Rieger Hotel Grill & Exchange
- Nick Wesemann, The American Restaurant
Bluestem and Rye owner Chef Colby Garrelts won in 2013.
WE CREATE: MOMENTUM

EYEVERIFY

Toby Rush
| Kansas City, Kansas | Innovation-Led

Exclusive provider of Eyeprint Verification, a password-free authentication (literally) at a glance

University research turned marketable product, commercially released with Good Technology, Airwatch and NetTeller

The plot may swell with a $6 million investment and a championship belt from a global pitch competition, but the story of EyeVerify began in a lab at UMKC’s School of Computing and Engineering.

With introductions by Whiteboard to Boardroom, serial entrepreneur and Pipeline fellow Toby Rush found Reza Derakhshani and Arun Ross’s patented eye-vein biometrics. From their technology, Toby developed an idea to trade sensitive passwords for more secure authentication that identifies users by scanning the whites of their eyes. With further help from the UMKC Small Business and Technology Development Center and support from Think Big Partners, Mid-America Angels and the Kansas City Startup Village, he shaped that technology into EyeVerify, a revolutionary mobile app and international sensation.

AN EYE FOR AN IDEA.
wecreatekc.com/eyeverify
“Today, we see more entrepreneurs soliciting feedback from the customer base before actual development. We think this is a more innovation-driven approach to building a successful company—figure out a problem in the marketplace and develop a solution that can be used to address it.”

-Herb Sih, managing partner, Think Big Partners
Kevin Fullerton  
Mission, Kansas | Main Street

Branding and communication design

Communications designer, talent scout, mentor, teacher and KC true believer

Call him the evangelist. Owner and principal of Springboard Creative, Kevin Fullerton believes in the creative talent of Kansas City—and believes we should keep it all to ourselves.

Through career preparation organizations like PREP-KC, as an adjunct professor at the Kansas City Art Institute and through his regional leadership in the American Advertising Federation, Kevin preaches Kansas City to high schoolers, college students, fresh creatives and even unbelievers. He welcomes them to one of the largest creative communities in the nation (invoking BBQ as an additional persuasive tactic), and convinces many that Kansas City is where they want to be.
Over the past 10 years, STEM jobs (Science, Technology - highlighted above, Engineering and Math) have grown three times faster than non-STEM jobs, and pay wages close to double the U.S. average. Here in Kansas City, STEM jobs grew 4.7 percent from 2001 to 2012.

CODER DOJO

Kansas City Women in Technology brought the global Coder Dojo program to KC to help teach kids—as young as seven years old—how to code.

BLUE VALLEY CAPS AND NORTHLAND CAPS

High school students work with real businesses across six professional strands: accelerator, bioscience, business, engineering, human services, medicine and healthcare.

KC STEM ALLIANCE

Through programs like Project Lead the Way and FIRST Robotics, the alliance coordinates data collection and facilitates partnerships among schools and businesses.

UMKC BLOCH SCHOOL

The UMKC Bloch School develops managerial talent to help accelerate businesses into scalable, sustainable companies.

UNHIDDEN TALENTS: HOW KC IS BRIDGING THE TALENT GAP

wecreatekc.com/talent

‘‘For Kansas City to continue to thrive we must have a steady stream of talent—driven individuals from STEM disciplines who are the next generation of entrepreneurs. Burns & McDonnell invests in STEM-related activities, such as Battle of the Brains, to help nurture the development of this talent.’’

-Greg Graves, CEO, Burns & McDonnell

Source: Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), 2014
One check does not fit all. Pet therapeutics company Aratana needed $100s of millions to develop medications for cats and dogs before it could bring those products to market. That funding came from a mix of investors—coastal venture capitalists as well as local angel investors from Mid-America Angels and Women’s Capital Connection—who can shoulder big risk for potential big returns.

Not every company needs millions. Sometimes $10,000 can open the doors to dreams as it did with Luis Hernandez. (Pictured inside cover.) He received a $10K microloan with help from the Hispanic Economic Development Corporation to waft the aromas of Central and South American conchas, bolillos, cemitas and pan dulce into the streets of Kansas City.

$10K OR $100MM? FIND OUT HOW THEY FUNDED IT.

wecreatekc.com/aratana
wecreatekc.com/panaderia
“Business financing requires two critical elements: well prepared entrepreneurs and a supply of capital for all stages. From microloans to angel capital, KC is working hard to dramatically increase funding for startup and growth.”

-Sherry Turner, founder, OneKC for Women
Women’s Business Center, Women’s Capital Connection and Women’s Employment Network

EQUITY FUNDED COMPANIES BY STAGE AND LOCATION

$1.2MM IN MICROLOANS FOR MICROENTERPRISES
56% of loans to minority-owned businesses
67% to women-owned businesses
Through KC Regional Microloan Program, created in 2012

HOW DO STARTUPS FIND FUNDING?
56% community members or someone in their personal network
26% mentor
26% accelerator or incubator program
From Pulse of the Prairie, conducted by Silicon Prairie News

$1.5MM INVESTED
By angels in area startups in 2014
By Mid-America Angels and Women’s Capital Connection

GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR INNOVATIVE IDEAS
Missouri Technology Corporation, Kansas Bioscience Authority and the federal SBIR program provide high-risk funds to help promising startups.

MONEY TALKS
wecreatekc.com/capital
WE CREATE KC

WE CREATE: COLLISIONS

SPRINT
| Overland Park, Kansas

Global provider of voice, data and Internet services

Local champion of entrepreneurship

If a crowd is a sign of a good party, then Sprint is raising the roof for KC’s entrepreneurial scene. Roughly 1,500 people packed the Kauffman Performing Arts Center on June 12 to hear from the first mobile health startups to graduate from the Sprint Accelerator, powered by Techstars.

And Sprint has more party favors. Part of the Corporate Startup Collaborative, Sprint has pitched its products and problems to KC innovators, mentored buzzing startups and opened its Crossroads community space, the Sprint Accelerator, to serendipitous collisions. On the ground and in the thick, Sprint is stoking the energy around entrepreneurship in Kansas City.

WHEN SPRINT MET STARTUPS.
wecreatekc.com/sprint
“Our region is doing a tremendous job of focusing attention and efforts on the beginning phase of an entrepreneur’s journey. But it is equally important that we rally around the difficult stages as these entrepreneurs grow. If we want to keep these companies in KC, we need to help during what is often a lonely part of this journey. This is where connection, encouragement and support matter most.”

-Joni Cobb, president and CEO, Pipeline

**Inc. 5000**

Between 2007 and 2013, 132 KC area companies were named to the Inc. 5000 fastest-growing private company list, distributed geographically across the metro.

(Circles denote concentrations of Inc. 5000 companies)

Source: Data compiled by Kauffman Foundation

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**HELZBERG ENTREPRENEURIAL MENTORING PROGRAM**

A premiere mentoring program, HEMP helps Kansas City companies turn into second stage icons.

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**REVERSE PITCH**

KCnext partnered with the Corporate Startup Collaborative to host a Reverse Pitch where large corporations pitched to entrepreneurs for help building products and solving problems.

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**DIGITAL SANDBOX KC**

With support from Hallmark, VML, RareWire, SparkLabKC, Sprint, Missouri Technology Corporation and UMB, Digital Sandbox KC helped raise $7MM for 19 KC early-stage startups.
“I can refer any business to anyone in the KCSourceLink network, and I know that they will light up with enthusiasm and jump in full force to help.”

- John Pajor, KC BizCare

“From second stage businesses to startups, business owners can count on the JCCC KSBDC for realistic, to-the-point counseling and workshops to help them move to the next level of growth.”

- Malinda Bryan-Smith, Kansas Small Business Development Center at Johnson County Community College

“Watching the growth of our entrepreneurial community in Kansas City over the years has been truly gratifying—I’m proud of the work the ECJC has done to provide more opportunities for startups to evolve into high-growth firms, create jobs and spur entrepreneurial economic development in the region.”

- George Hansen, Enterprise Center of Johnson County
Manufacturing
Advanced Manufacturing Institute
Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center
Mid-America Trade Adjustment Assistance Center (TAAC)
Missouri Enterprise - Kansas City

Mentoring
Helzberg Entrepreneurial Mentoring Program (HEMP)
Kauffman Foundation/Khan Academy Entrepreneurship

Networking
1 Million Cups
Asian American Chamber of Commerce of Kansas City
Athena League
Basehor Chamber of Commerce
Belton, MO Chamber of Commerce
Blue Springs Chamber of Commerce
Bonner Springs-Edwardsville Area Chamber
Brookside Business Association
Central Exchange
Downtown Council of Kansas City
Excelsior Springs Area Chamber of Commerce
Gardner Area Chamber of Commerce
Gladstone Area Chamber of Commerce
Grain Valley Chamber of Commerce
Grandview Chamber & Economic Development Council
Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce
Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce & Go Topeka
Harrisonville Area Chamber of Commerce
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Greater Kansas City
Independence Chamber of Commerce
Indo American Chamber of Commerce
Kansas Black Chamber of Commerce
Kansas City Council of Women Business Owners
Kansas City Kansas Area Chamber of Commerce
KCK Women’s Chamber of Commerce
Kearney Chamber of Commerce
Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce
Leawood Chamber of Commerce
Lee’s Summit Chamber of Commerce
Lenexa Chamber of Commerce
Liberty Area Chamber of Commerce
Mid-America Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce
Minaret Business Organization
Missouri Chapter of Women Entrepreneurs of America
Missouri Women’s Council at MO DED

National Association of Women Business Owners
National Native American Chamber of KC Branch
Northeast Johnson County Chamber of Commerce
Northeast Kansas City Chamber of Commerce
Northland Regional Chamber of Commerce
Olathe Chamber of Commerce
Overland Park Chamber of Commerce
Paola Chamber of Commerce
Parkville Area Chamber of Commerce
Platte City Area Chamber of Commerce/EDC
Raytown Area Chamber of Commerce
Riverside Area Chamber of Commerce
Shawnee Chamber of Commerce
Small and Home Business Connection
Smithville Area Chamber of Commerce
South Kansas City Chamber of Commerce
Southtown Council
Spring Hill Chamber of Commerce
St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce
Startup Rewind
Twenty30CEO
UP Global
Waldo Area Business Association
Weston Chamber of Commerce

"KC's entrepreneurial environment is thriving, especially among women. KCSourceLink and Central Exchange are empowering women for success."

- Cici Rojas, The Central Exchange

Procurement
GSA Office of Small Business Utilization
Kansas Procurement Technical Assistance Center
KC Missouri Procurement Technical Assistance Center - Blue Springs, Harrisonville, Kansas City and St. Joseph
Mountain Plains Minority Supplier Development Council
SBA 8(A) Program
Unified Government of Wyandotte County, KCK

Research & Project Work
Blue Valley CAPS
County Economic Research Institute (CERI)
H&R Block Business & Career Ctr/KCMO Public Library
Johnson County Library
Kansas City Kansas Public Library
Mid-America Regional Council
Mid-Continent Public Library
Northland CAPS

Taxes, Permits and Regulations
City of Kansas City, MO - KCBizCare
Kansas Department of Agriculture
Kansas Insurance Department
Missouri Department of Agriculture
Missouri Dept of Economic Development - KC Area
Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Missouri Department of Revenue
Missouri Dept. of Ins., Financial Inst. and Prof. Registration
Missouri Secretary of State, Kansas City Branch Office

Design:
GEOGAL PRAIRIE

We Create Concept + Web:

Photography: Dan Videtich
Copywriting: Sarah Mote
Entrepreneurs across Kansas City create:

- Disruption
- Impact
- Pride
- Possibilities

What do you create?
Tell us at wecreatekc.com