

**Entrepreneurs to Share Their Expertise at Event
by Courtney Hunt-Munther, The Eureka Reporter
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Five successful Humboldt County entrepreneurs will share their expertise with students interested in starting a business at the Economic Fuel entrepreneurs forum on Tuesday.

The event, which begins at 6:30 p.m. at the Kate Buchanan Room at Humboldt State University, will feature DANCO construction company owner Dan Johnson, Good Relations boutique owner Melinda Myers, StreamGuys media-streaming guru Jonathan Speaker, Bigfoot Rafting Co. owner Marc Rowley and perpetual entrepreneur and RCI Mortgage owner Tim Lorenzo.

Business owners will have 10 minutes to share how they started their business, challenges they have faced and how they overcame them, as well as other information about beginning a small business. Afterward, forum participants will have about 30 minutes to ask questions.

Economic Fuel: The Humboldt County Student Business Challenge, sponsored by The Eureka Reporter, started holding entrepreneurs forums as a way of connecting new entrepreneurs with entrepreneurs experienced in starting and successfully building businesses on the North Coast.

During Tuesday's event, Johnson will discuss factors that influenced his decision to go into construction, including his desire to support his family in a rural area like Humboldt County. He will also touch on the challenges he has faced as a local business owner.

Like Johnson, Myers will speak to future entrepreneurs at the event about her experience as a local business owner. Myers owns Good Relations, a boutique in Old Town Eureka that she started in 1983 as a home-based pleasure party company, and will discuss the challenges of owning and operating a retail store on the North Coast.

Speaker, a 1995 HSU graduate, will address the difficulties associated with operating a Web-based business from a rural area. His company, StreamGuys, specializes in streaming media to the Internet for companies such as Pfizer Pharmaceutical Co. and Cisco — a business that requires constant access to the Web. On Tuesday, Speaker is expected to touch on the need for a redundant fiber-optic cable

connection linking Humboldt County to the outside world for both personal and business reasons.

The final two forum participants, Rowley and Lorenzo, will speak to audience members about their businesses, the challenges they have faced and how they overcame them.

Economic Fuel is designed to create unprecedented entrepreneurial opportunities for local college students, recent college graduates and community residents with the dispersal of more than \$100,000 in seed money for new Humboldt County businesses.

The mission of the competition is to nurture local economic development by inspiring and supporting the entrepreneurial pursuits of Humboldt County's young adults.