



No More Empty Pots

Education. Stewardship. Sustainability.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

No More Empty Pots Launches Fourth Entrepreneurship Invitational, Supported by Wells Fargo

Omaha, Neb. | June 25, 2019 – No More Empty Pots and Wells Fargo have partnered to offer the Fourth Entrepreneurship Invitational for food-focused entrepreneurs interested in starting and growing businesses in the shared use kitchen at the No More Empty Pots' Food Hub.

The informational session for the Fourth Entrepreneurship Invitational will be held Saturday, July 13, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the No More Empty Pots Collaborative Community Centered Food Hub, 8501 N. 30th St., in the Florence neighborhood of North Omaha. During the session, Wells Fargo representatives will guide entrepreneurs through the stages of preparation and pitching for the competition. Throughout the process, Wells Fargo team members will help entrepreneurs develop successful business plans and presentations to earn seed money to develop their business ideas.

In 2018, ten entrepreneurs pitched their businesses. After three rounds of successive pitches, Hector and Carolina Trujillo of Pan y Leche earned the top seed money of \$750 for their business. Nick Miller of the Chicken Coupe and Edward Lazaro of Tayo were awarded \$500 and \$250 respectively, for their outstanding business pitches.

“Supporting small business is one of the most important things we do at Wells Fargo, and adding philanthropy and volunteerism to that work is something we’re very passionate about,” said Cristina Castro-Matukewicz, community affairs manager for Wells Fargo. “We’re proud of our strong collaboration with No More Empty Pots and ongoing involvement with the invitational. Our team members love participating in this project, providing their expertise and serving as contest judges year over year.”

No More Empty Pots Food Hub is based on a system of interdependent activities that deliver positive outcomes in job training, workforce readiness, food waste reduction,

healthy food access in underserved areas, income generation and business development. The Food Hub programs support youth and adults in cultivating educational and career pathways. The programs are designed to take participant strengths and talents and further develop their skills needed to succeed in the workplace, grow small businesses and become self-sufficient — leading to economic resilience.

With the opening of the Food Hub, No More Empty Pots is building on the success of proven models. The shared-use commercial kitchen available for rent, by the hour, is similar to [LaCocina](#), an incubator program in San Francisco also supported by Wells Fargo. Currently, 15 food entrepreneurs are renting the space to start and grow unique businesses that serve the Omaha area.

In the summer of 2017 in the food hub, NMEP launched the Culinary Workforce Training Program; a 15-week culinary workforce development training program modeled after DC Central Kitchen (www.dccentralkitchen.org) and LA Kitchen (www.thelakitchen.org).

The Food Hub, opening in August 2019, features additional components. Cups Café at Florence will provide customer service and barista training areas and a place for entrepreneurs to test products before launching to a larger market. Local foods systems ventures need expertise like marketing, logistics and accounting support to grow and scale. The on-site business incubator along with technical assistance provided through community collaborations will support these emerging small businesses and further leverage the expertise and resources of the local startup ecosystem.

The Collaborative Community Centered Food Hub construction and startup costs are a \$4 million community investment with a projection to generate nearly 90 percent of the funds needed to operate the food hub within five years of the hub being operational. The food hub will capitalize on the over \$4 billion fresh food expenditures in Nebraska, recirculating those food dollars locally. At just 10 percent of these purchases from local farmers, Nebraskans could support a \$400 million annually recurring market.

Wells Fargo has been a tremendous champion for food focused small businesses. In the fourth year of the Entrepreneurship Invitational, we are excited about the possibilities for entrepreneur success with coaching and guidance from Wells Fargo Green Team. Each year brings another round of winning pitches.” said Nancy Williams, President and CEO of No More Empty Pots.

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About No More Empty Pots

No More Empty Pots (NMEP) is a 501c3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to connect individuals and groups to improve self-sufficiency, regional food security and economic resilience of urban and rural communities through advocacy and action.

NMEP's vision is to support communities in becoming self-sufficient, and food secure through collaboration and adherence to our core values of education, stewardship, and sustainability. Our biggest project is the Collaborative Community Centered Food Hub where we provide jobs and training operating a shared use commercial kitchen and culinary workforce training program. NMEP serves youth to seniors in educational, hands-on experiential learning. Cups Café is a neighborhood café committed to helping the community become self-sufficient and food secure. It is a social enterprise program area, where we engage community and support emerging small-scale food entrepreneurs. To learn more about No More Empty Pots, visit www.nmepomaha.org or email info@nmepomaha.org.

About Wells Fargo

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