

ENCOURAGING YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

Williston Basin RC&D

On April 21, 2009, Williston State College hosted the Region I “Marketplace for Kids” educational event attended by over 1,100. Developed as an outreach program from “Marketplace of Ideas” in 1995, the “Marketplace for Kids” program targets 4th – 6th grade students interested in entrepreneurship, inventions and innovations, and economic development. Each community / region in the state has its own volunteer advisory leadership team to work on details, coordination, local support, publicity, and involvement. The co-chairs of each advisory leadership team serve on the statewide advisory leadership team to maintain continuity in the program.



RC&D Coordinator Jeff Roel speaking to students on Patents, Trademarks, and Copyrights.

The first “Marketplace for Kids” Education Day was held in Jamestown in 1995 with 150 participants and is now held statewide. A “Marketplace for Kids” Education Day offers students an opportunity to display their inventions, creative problem-solving ideas, develop business ventures and provide volunteerism to other students, teachers, parents, and others. It also offers students the chance to share ideas, enhance personal development, and build friendships. Short, hands-on classes are designed to help students explore career fields, develop self-employment skills, explore new technology and explore entrepreneurship. In

addition to classes, a computer lab is available where students can learn the latest technology, print their own business cards, and develop a website. Students are also encouraged to present and showcase their projects. Student inventors, creators and entrepreneurs spend part of the day at their projects to discuss them with other students and interested visitors. This year in Williston there were 228 students with projects.

In addition to Education Days, “Marketplace for Kids” offers a learning guide to assist teachers, parents, and youth leaders in preparing their youth for Education Days. The learning guides are filled with lessons plans in areas such as creative problem solving, student operated businesses, organizing a cooperative, using our natural resources,

etc. Junior and Senior High School

students are the largest group of volunteers at this event. They serve as presenters, room monitors, ushers, guides, and assist with both set up and dismantling at Education Day.

Total approximate cost to conduct the Region I “Marketplace for Kids” program was \$27,670. Multiple partners both locally and statewide assisted with the cost of this program by providing financial and/or in-kind donations. The Williston Basin RC&D supported “Marketplace for Kids” with a partial grant to assist with costs associated for its 2009 Region I program. The Williston Basin RC&D Council is proud to support this worthy event that fosters entrepreneurship in North Dakota youth that could one day lead to new innovations, inventions and businesses. Questions on this program can be directed to Marilyn Kipp, Executive Director for “Marketplace for Kids” 701-663-0150.