



# ENGLER FIELD GUIDE

## This is Your Story

### OUR MISSION

Engler exists to embolden our people  
on the courageous pursuit of their  
purpose through the art and practice  
of entrepreneurship.







## Are you Engler material?

**Do you ever wish for the opportunity to build something worthy and wonderful? Do you long for the chance to challenge yourself, find a better way of doing something, or spend your life working as your own boss? Us too. *That's why in Engler, we do things a little differently.***

**Students should expect an experience unlike any other college course or program: no exams, rules, or pre-requisites.** Drop the traditional-style classes, dump the rubrics, and nix the mindless busy-work. Engler encourages you to boldly pursue your purpose through the art and practice of entrepreneurship. Not sure what your purpose is yet? No worries, we'll help you figure it out.

From your very first day in the community, you are treated as a capable, intelligent decision-maker with valuable input and contributions. You're fully accountable for your own story and business venture, and with guidance and coaching along the way, you'll learn entrepreneurship through real successes and failures. The Engler community celebrates and encourages both outcomes equally. This is a question-driven, supportive

environment where learning and improving are the ultimate goals. Most importantly, you will experience entrepreneurship.

Of course, it's not all sunshine and daisies. If you want in on the entrepreneurial adventure, you've got to be willing to put in the work and make some sacrifices. It's difficult, but for true Engler Entrepreneurs, it's worth it.

Our students are independent, ambitious, curious, and confident. They exemplify Engler's values and pursue their purposes with sincerity. Any business schemes designed to just "get rich quick" won't work around here. But if you have a hopeful dissatisfaction with the status quo and are willing to create something incredible through sweat and elbow grease, welcome to Engler.

## What is Engler?



This program is home to University of Nebraska–Lincoln students who dare to forge their own paths. **Our mission is to empower enterprise builders in the courageous pursuit of their purpose.** Engler lives for the students who recognize that college should be more than just homework and grades; if you're not content waiting four years to start building your future and want more than the generic college experience; you're in the right place.

Engler provides experiential, community-based learning to help students build their own enterprise from the ground up. Rather than sitting in lecture halls all day, students engage in entrepreneurship the old-fashioned way: they just start! Our cohort-style model encourages students to get to know each other and build relationships as they work together. We believe there's no better place on campus to meet honest, hardworking future entrepreneurs — just the right spot to meet friends, partners, and even co-founders while you pursue your goals. If you're tired of the sidelines and desire the thrill of the game, join our team.

By intentionally investing in people, we believe they can create vital, successful companies that will ultimately uplift and revitalize communities across Nebraska and the world. Engler's roots are in agriculture, but we welcome all kinds of entrepreneurs and businesses. We care about more than just what an individual or company does; we care about *why* they do it. In this program, people with diverse backgrounds and skillsets collaborate to turn problems into solutions.

Not everyone who walks down the entrepreneurial path chooses to stay on it — and that's okay. We believe that each person has a purpose they are born to fulfill. Whether that calling lies in pushing innovation in your own startup or making an impact in an established company, our program is designed to help you discover, understand and live that purpose.

# Paul Engler's Vision

In 2010, the Paul F. and Virginia J. Engler Foundation made a gift to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln to support agribusiness and establish a student program focused on entrepreneurship. It is his vision that students who graduate from this program will return to their communities inspired to build sustainable businesses; Mr. Engler believes that young people can create a positive lasting impact on this state and the world.

Born in 1929, Paul Engler's entrepreneurial journey started in Bassett, Nebraska. At age 12 he bought a hundred head of cattle on loan while his dad was away on business. His mother told him to expect a licking when his father got home; instead, he got a handshake and his dad told him he was proud of him.

This initial experience hooked Paul on entrepreneurship. He graduated from the University of Nebraska with a degree in agriculture and later moved to Texas, where he



eventually built Cactus Feeders, one of the largest cattle feeding operations in the United States.

Over the years, Paul's contributions have dramatically affected the industry. He developed technologies such as the computerized grain-flaking system, computer-controlled batch and continuous mixing systems, manure handling technologies, methods to suppress dust, and automated cattle-sorting facilities. His story is one of passion, devotion, vision and grit — he's fought and worked for everything he's achieved. Paul not only serves as the founder and chairman of our program, but the model entrepreneur as well.

**Just as Paul found his purpose through entrepreneurship, Engler students learn by doing and leave with the understanding of just how incredible it is to build something of your own.**

When it comes down to it, Paul Engler is you — whether you're a kid from small-town Nebraska or not, Paul's story could be yours. Thanks to his gift to the university, this program can provide learning experiences, scholarships, training modules, internships, and many other opportunities. You'll graduate with more than simply a college education and a piece of paper. Just as Paul found his purpose through entrepreneurship, Engler students learn by doing and leave with the understanding of just how incredible it is to build something of your own.

Paul's story could be yours.

"Me?"

"Yes! You!"

# The Engler Philosophy of Entrepreneurship

**"Entrepreneurship is the ability to be more than just yourself. It's breaking out of the norm and your box and exploring new directions and ideas."**



– LOUISE

Entrepreneurship is not cute. At its core, it means putting your talent to work in pursuit of your purpose. We believe that solving problems and pain points for customers allows you to live out your aspirations and improve the world around you. But it's messy, takes no small amount of hard work, and is not meant for everyone.

This program is designed as more than just a way to decide if an entrepreneurial lifestyle is right for you. Engler encourages you to take steps to grow an idea into a real business that meets a need in the market, all with guidance and peer support along the way. We won't tell you what future you should choose, but we promise to challenge you in seeking the answer.

The Engler philosophy means empowering students to be independent and create something meaningful. It's this desire to be part of something wholly worthwhile that often spurs students on toward their purpose. We believe entrepreneurship can be a vehicle to achieve a mission, like the goals you set for your life and future.

This outlook echoes the American Dream, and it revels in the pride of ownership and the freedom of working for

yourself. We believe entrepreneurship can eliminate the burden of outside expectations and instead allow you to do things that are truly important to you, whatever they may be. Entrepreneurship also serves as a channel to create wealth. Despite a popular misconception, you should not feel bad about making money. Profit is a good thing. Much like our founder, it gives you the means to help people, including yourself, your family, your customers, and the community.

Engler uses an experience-based model to teach entrepreneurship, which means our students experiment, succeed, and even fail in the "real world." We realize coming up short in some form or another is more than just inevitable; it's necessary to advance ideas and develop future solutions. That's why Engler celebrates failure. It seems counterintuitive. Aren't you supposed to succeed? Yes, of course, but failure is unavoidable in both life and entrepreneurship. You've got to embrace it, learn from your mistakes, and move on, all with the support of coaches and friends. It's these learning experiences on which entrepreneurs can build a foundation for future success.

These all sound like high and mighty goals — and they are. But before you can cross any finish line, you've got to start.



# The Engler Community

A **guild** is an association of people in pursuit of a common goal — think of a league of medieval workers or artisans. Craftsmen in a guild know that by **banding together as a group**, each member benefits. By sharing knowledge and best practices, the process of learning a trade becomes more effective or more impactful. Each person focuses on developing their own skills and endeavors, but individuals often team up to brainstorm and work together.

**Engler entrepreneurs use this guild mindset too.** The community you'll encounter here is passionate about pursuing excellence, discovering individual purpose, and supporting each other through the entrepreneurial roller coaster. Spurred on by the energy of the community, Engler members attack problems with a willingness to put in the **grit, sweat, and sacrifice** required to **build something worthwhile**. Entrepreneurship is a hard road, but the guild provides the support to continue by helping each member assume ownership and lessening the challenge of tackling entrepreneurship solo.

Engler is much more than a program on a college campus. It's a community of men and women of all ages and backgrounds—from high schoolers to adults—who believe in **the pursuit of purpose through entrepreneurship**.

You don't need to go through the Engler modules or classes at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln to get involved in this community. You don't need a minor in entrepreneurship, your own business, or even an idea.

**Anyone who seeks to uphold the pursuit of one's purpose through the vehicle of entrepreneurship can choose to be part of this community.**

Some folks say that entrepreneurship is about the latest and greatest cutting-edge developments, that it's limited to West Coast-style tech startups, or that it's only wheeling and dealing to maximize profit and growth at all costs.



## That's not how we see it.

We believe **entrepreneurship is a vehicle** — a tool one can use to achieve a goal, the purpose he or she is striving toward. Entrepreneurship doesn't fit in a box because it can be used to further whatever unique mission the entrepreneur has undertaken.

Engler entrepreneurs work in diverse disciplines and come from a variety of life experiences, but **each person supports the Engler vision**. Some devote their time to small family businesses, others build major enterprises. Some work in big companies to champion a culture of entrepreneurship from within; others are teachers who promote the entrepreneurial mindset in their classrooms. Together this band of travelers share a common journey and encourage one another.

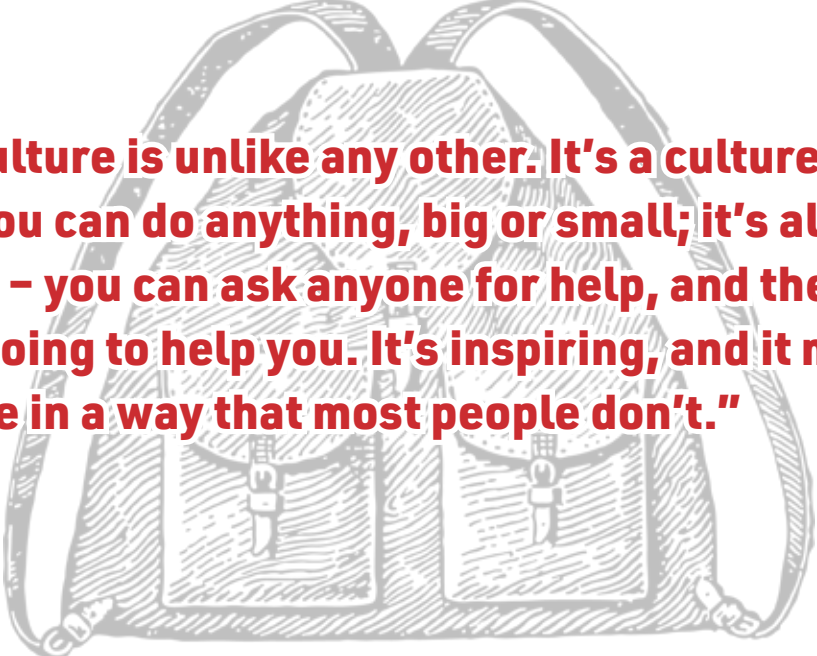
Within the overall Engler community, subgroups exist to **better suit the particular needs and goals** of members. Some programming and events are relevant for everyone—like the annual awards ceremony, The Englers—whereas others are designed to meet the objectives of specific groups, such as the Launch! Program, which is tailored to high school students and teachers.

Engler is **a force for creating powerful entrepreneurship opportunities** in Nebraska and the Midwest, and this is possible because of the commitment and involvement of our members. If you're looking for a collection of **radically determined world-changers**, you've come to the right place. The Engler community exists to empower entrepreneurially minded people to pursue their purpose through the art and practice of entrepreneurship and enterprise building.

**If this community sounds like you...  
it's time to join the team.**



# The Engler Culture



**"The Engler culture is unlike any other. It's a culture that makes you feel like you can do anything, big or small; it's all important. It's like family – you can ask anyone for help, and they will drop what they're doing to help you. It's inspiring, and it makes you think about life in a way that most people don't."**

– KATE

Life can be crazy, especially in college. Throw in building a small business or launching a startup, and things get really wild. **The community you'll encounter in Engler is passionate about pursuing excellence, discovering individual purpose, and supporting each other through the entrepreneurial roller coaster.**


The truth is, sometimes entrepreneurship can be lonely. But this community of mentors and peers understands what you're dealing with and provides encouragement every step of the way, through successes and failures alike.

The Engler community offers budding entrepreneurs a supportive haven where ideas and aspirations can be discussed and cultivated, not immediately rejected as dumb or impractical. **We believe in trying, failing, and trying again;** that's why our students and staff approach seemingly crazy, impossible ideas with the mindset that all progress depends on the irrational idea, an open mind, and a spirit of growth.

Many of our students major in agriculture-related disciplines, but **regardless of your background or interests, Engler welcomes you.** We pride ourselves on an optimistic, energetic environment where students can be themselves; this is a place where future engineers, marketers, scientists, artists, programmers, farmers, and others collaborate to build enterprises, wage war with the status quo, and take the helm. Great ideas form when different perspectives and approaches collide. Whether you're from small-town Nebraska or a big city on the other side of the globe, you can find a home here.

The connections you foster in Engler extend beyond graduation because **this community is built for the long run.** Your peers will continue to challenge, encourage, and support you wherever you go, both now and in the future – it's the Engler way!

# The Engler Pillars

**"They stand for characteristics that truly make a business successful and unique from other companies. By standing in these pillars, you realize business is fun, exciting, and very challenging at the same time."**

– AARON

When Engler was founded, the students and staff members came together to decide what they wanted the culture to become. It took well over a year to fully narrow and refine these six core values. **The Pillars are not just words: they're an invitation to seek something greater along your own journey.**

These six Pillars sum up the Engler mindset, what we stand for, and what we value. Just like entrepreneurs need teamwork and collaboration to reach their goals, each Pillar depends on the others.



# Aspire

It would've been easier and sexier to say "dream," but we didn't. **Aspire** means to believe you can achieve something and to work relentlessly to make it happen. It's backed by sweat, effort, and determination in pursuit of a goal that becomes more than simply an idea, but a reality. Too many people today dream small and have limited expectations of who they can become. Although obstacles and setbacks influence us, ultimately each person must decide for themselves who they will be.

There are no shortcuts — but even if there were, you wouldn't take them. Students who Aspire never settle. They're trailblazers who forge ahead in a quest to find purpose and accomplishment.

**"Sometimes our minds can't quite make clear what our hearts are telling us to go after. Aspire reminds me I'm supposed to dream big and take action on those dreams."**

– SHAYE KOESTER

Shaye Koester joined the Engler community as a freshman in college aspiring to make waves in the beef industry. She realized as an undergrad that beef producers needed to share their stories not only with consumers but also with other ranchers. Knowing she had to take action, Shaye began researching how to create and edit podcasts. That's the difference between dreaming and aspiring – follow through.

Her drive to serve others and leverage the power of storytelling led her to launch a podcast series, Casual Cattle Conversations. From her garage, mudroom, dorm, or anywhere else she found herself, Shaye hosted meaningful conversations about a variety of topics in the beef industry. Her audience grew from a few friends and family members to thousands of people across the world. Casual Cattle Conversations continues to provide community, knowledge, and joy to countless individuals all because Shaye aspired to create something bigger than herself.



# Build

Engler students recognize problems and are inspired to design solutions; they construct, combine, and reassemble opportunities into enterprises — they **Build**. No matter where you are on your entrepreneurial journey, you've got to Build: a network, a company, a set of values, a solution that improves customers' lives.

Builders possess both a vision and backbone to carry it out. This means undertaking a purpose-driven feat to benefit others by creating something bigger, whether it's an idea, a product, a service, or an organization. You don't need to wait for all the answers. You just need to get started.

**"Being in the Engler community challenged me in so many ways. The people around me, students and staff, encouraged me to always build bigger than I thought was possible."**

– TONI RASMUSSEN

Growing up on a family farm, Toni Rasmussen understood from an early age what it means to build. She expanded on her rural work ethic to launch her first entrepreneurial enterprise, Scapegoat Sales, as an eighth grader.

She joined Engler with the hopes of strengthening her goat operation and pursuing her career as an agriculture educator. However, embracing the entrepreneurial mindset led her to one of the most significant building projects of her life - starting an FFA Chapter from the ground up in Wayne, Nebraska. Her devotion to empowering students and finding key partners guided her through uncharted waters. Wayne FFA, which started with 31 members its first year, now has over 60 members and is still growing.

Toni's journey is not typical of an entrepreneur, but there is no doubt she is one. She represents all that the pillar 'Build' encompasses as she strives to design curriculum and experiences that enhance the lives of her customers – students and community members.





# Passion

We’re not talking about unbridled enthusiasm. Paul Engler talked about having a “fire in your belly,” but he didn’t mean a spark that quickly fizzles out. Instead, the fire of entrepreneurship and the desire to create positive change is a slow-burning, continuous longing. **Passion** is the fuel that compels you to your purpose and helps you make decisions for the right reasons.

Engler students are motivated by potential — what you could achieve if you work for it. We seek to live with the same Passion that propelled the explorers, pioneers, builders, and entrepreneurs who have come before us to seek new opportunities despite the risk of failure. Despite the difficulties, challenges, and hardships, they pressed onward... and so do we.



**“Passion is what keeps me going even when I feel overwhelmed. I find passion in purpose, and I use that to guide me through the tough times.”**

– EMILY (LONG) HERBIG

Entrepreneurship did not always appeal to Emily (Long) Herbig. It wasn’t until she joined the Engler community that she recognized entrepreneurship could provide a vehicle to help her live out her passion of serving others. She came up with an idea to start an online clothing boutique as an undergrad student. During her four years in Engler, Emily developed the necessary skills to run a business and even made a business plan for the boutique. She just wasn’t sure when she would launch.

After visiting Silicon Valley entrepreneurs on the Engler Trek her senior year, Emily’s passion was reignited stronger than ever. She launched her business, MyEllement Boutique, two weeks after she graduated from UNL. Her heart for helping women feel in their element and express themselves through fashion shines through every facet of her business from marketing to customer service. Becoming a successful entrepreneur encompasses more than business acumen; it’s about truly caring for your customers and loving what you do.



# Grit

This is not something you can learn from a book — you’ve got to experience something difficult to learn what it means. **Grit** is an unflinching embrace of hard, worthwhile work. It means replacing excuses with relentless effort. When you get beat down, pushed around, or knocked over, you stand up more determined than ever — even when nobody’s watching. When you’re tired, uncomfortable, and worn down, Grit keeps you going.

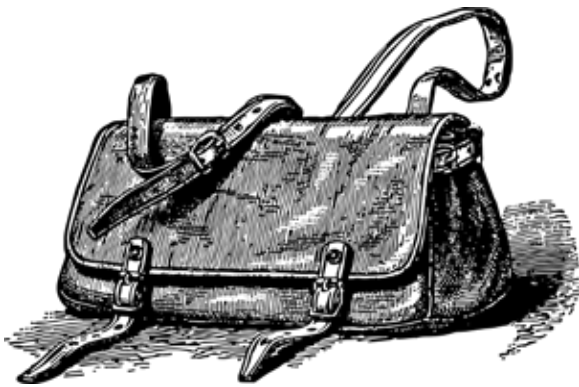
Grit is part of Nebraska; this same fierce persistence is the essence of our state. Our nation was built by pioneers and immigrants who didn’t sit around waiting for accolades. Today’s great farmers and entrepreneurs don’t either.

**“There have definitely been ups and downs, successes and failures, but entrepreneurship is about getting through the rocky moments to make something better for everyone else.”**

– LUKAS FRICKE

As a sixth-generation farmer, Grit is woven into the fabric of Lukas Fricke. In college, the Engler program helped him realize the impact of the agriculture industry, not only in rural Nebraska but across the globe. The crops and livestock his family raised inevitably would end up on the dinner plates of families he would never meet. He was hooked on leveraging his entrepreneurial spirit to improve the lives of others through his calling as an agriculturalist.

After graduating college and returning to his family farm Lukas merged his two passions, livestock and technology, to launch ChorChek. By using cutting-edge blockchain technology, ChorChek streamlines farm operations and data collection to keep digital records secure. Consequently, producers operate more efficiently, and consumers can easily access information on where their food comes from.



Anytime an individual seeks to forge a new trail, obstacles are inevitable. Leaning on his gritty nature, Lukas relentlessly battled for his vision believing it would benefit the lives of countless others. Through his devotion and indomitable spirit, Lukas boldly lives out Grit.

# Courage

If you prefer playing it safe, entrepreneurship is probably not for you. The willingness to move past fear sets true entrepreneurs apart. Stepping beyond doubt requires the faith that, although an outcome may be unknown, the uncertainty is worth the risk.

**Courage** is a deliberate, necessary choice to overcome barriers and refuse to accept limits. It’s a decision we must make not just once, but continuously. Courage does not mean taking a blind, uncalculated leap and hoping things will magically turn out for the best. Likewise, doing something you know will work (or worse, doing nothing at all) is not how Engler operates — Courage never stops, and neither do we.

**“Engler has taught me it’s possible to build anywhere. I truly believe wherever I’m planted I can find a way to create value and live a life I love.”**

– HALEY (HARTHOORN) MILES



Haley (Harthoorn) Miles understood what fueled her ‘fire in the belly’ from an early age - rural communities. Through joining Engler, Haley strengthened her entrepreneurial mindset and confidence to create value from anywhere. She began her career working in the corporate world.

After returning to her hometown of Ainsworth, Nebraska, Haley started her own business, Sandhills Blue Photography. Frustrated by working in corporate, Haley was hungry for a way out. Despite having limited experience behind the camera and plenty of competition, she believed in her niche. Convinced that she could serve and document small town love stories like no one else, Haley dove headfirst to make her own way. Within 11 months of first picking up her camera, she went full-time with Sandhills Blue. By the end of her first full year of business, she had matched her previous salary.

Courage is not the absence of fear, but the willingness to start before you feel ready. Haley embodies Courage by not letting the fear of failure stifle her conviction to start now and follow her calling as an entrepreneur.



# Partner

Hollywood gets it wrong: entrepreneurship is not a lone wolf game. There’s no “white knight” mystique, no solo hero who doesn’t need anyone. This mindset is missing the critical understanding and intention that we go farther together. Seasoned entrepreneurs understand that nothing gets accomplished without teamwork — you simply can’t do it alone.

**Partner** means to conquer together. That’s why we’re committed to acting with integrity and bettering the Engler community through lifelong relationships and partnerships. The decision to work with others toward positive outcomes lies at the heart of being a Partner; co-founders and friends complement your skill sets and extend your capacity to solve problems.

**“In Engler I found a group of people that pushed me to look at the world differently. I was able to see more opportunities and challenge assumptions that led me to discover innovative solutions.”**

– JORDYN (LECHTENBERG) BADER

Jordyn (Lechtenberg) Bader was in the first graduating class of Engler entrepreneurs. From the beginning of her involvement with the program, she has dedicated time and effort to developing partnerships that embolden people to pursue their purpose through entrepreneurship.

She saw a need for Engler alumni to stay connected with the community, especially those who launched companies after graduating. In the spirit of a true servant leader, Jordyn spearheaded the Engler alumni cohorts. These gatherings generated consistent opportunities for Englers

to gather and share the realities of entrepreneurship outside of the college experience. Pursuing her own entrepreneurial endeavors, she partnered with other entrepreneurs to found Marble Technologies, an agri-food technology startup that automates labor-intensive meat processing tasks.

Anyone who interacts with Jordyn understands the care and intention she puts into each conversation. She sees potential in others before they see it in themselves. That is what it means to live out the principles of partnership.



**It’s true: entrepreneurship offers no guarantee of success. In fact, failure and sacrifice are the only certainties. The Engler mindset echoes through these principles and offers an essential truth to live by – each Pillar invites you to embrace what is difficult and strive all the more to pursue something great and worthwhile.**





# What can you expect from Engler?

**"Engler is a program that gives you the opportunity to create what you want with the knowledge you have and are gaining while still in school. It gives you a great opportunity compared to only getting a degree and job searching after graduation."**

– DAN

Like a baby bird learning to fly, you can say goodbye to your comfort zone. Engler challenges students to leave the familiar and instead venture into the unknown.

Chances are your education has been a series of classroom experiences — mostly watching and listening, like a spectator at a sporting event. We believe it's time you shrug aside nerves and take to the field. Entrepreneurship is a grand experiment. It's tangible, messy, and best experienced when your feet leave the starting blocks and you actually begin. **Learning by doing is not always easy or comfortable, but you figure out how to overcome failure, be persistent, think on your feet... and you'll be changed in the process.**

Students have the chance to build a professional network, share in a one-of-a-kind community, and build enriching relationships. Entrepreneurial development happens in real time — sometimes at warp speed — as you remain an active participant in the entire process. We appreciate theory, but we learn first by doing, then pick up theory along the way.

Engler entrepreneurs graduate better equipped to give and receive constructive criticism, understand their own strengths



and shortcomings, and be determined, creative leaders in their families and communities. Whether or not you start a business while in college, **your Engler experience will equip you with the skills and know-how to build something meaningful — something that made you laugh and cry, but in the end something you can call your own.**

# Minors

Engler offers students two options to receive the Engler Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Minor. **The 18-hour minor is ideal for freshmen and sophomores, whereas the 12-hour minor is more suited for students who join Engler later in their college careers.** If you finish all three stages of entrepreneurship training through Engler, you can complete the requirements for the 18-hour minor without additional coursework. Engler also offers an 18-hour Leadership and Entrepreneurship Joint Minor for students interested in social entrepreneurship or leadership theory. For more information, visit our website or ask a staff member about specific questions.



**"Entrepreneurship is the pursuit of the extraordinary. Entrepreneurs work to get better and better literally every day."**

– EMILY



# Cohorts

Sitting in the crowded rows of a lecture hall might prepare students well for some industries or careers, but entrepreneurship is not one of them. Engler uses a cohort model, which means small groups of students learn together in an atmosphere that promotes honesty and feedback. This close-knit environment strengthens trust between members — an essential element of our culture. A collaborative climate like ours lends itself naturally to teamwork and positivity, and **the support doesn't just suddenly end after graduation.** We encourage alumni to continue to stay involved in our community and take advantage of opportunities to learn, network, and grow. You're an Engler for life!





# Rendezvous

(ren·dez·vous)

**A rendezvous is a meeting between two or more parties at a specific time and place.** Pronounced “rawn-day-voo”, this word comes from the French for “appointment” and can mean one or multiple meetings without changing the spelling. Historically in the United States, a rendezvous referred to yearly gatherings of trappers, mountain men, and native peoples to trade furs and other goods. These meetings became a hub for tradesmen and craftsmen to buy and sell pelts and share news from the wilderness, especially in the mid-1800s.

This origin inspired what we call events in the Engler community. Engler provides a number of activities for our students: community rallies, quick pitch competitions, service opportunities, business plan contests, and even internships within our program. But more than mere “events,” we recognize these opportunities as rendezvous – a gathering of different people coming together at certain points to celebrate, trade, and learn. Engler rendezvous give students a chance to **practice skills vital for entrepreneurship**, like building relationships with peers and industry professionals.

## Ascential 40

This community focused **40-minute** lunch takes place twice a month in our space. Ascential 40s are coordinated and facilitated by the Engler Culture Team, a dedicated group of students whose mission is to **Feed, Inform, Connect and Inspire** our community. Outside of learning about the latest news and events, these lunches invite you to create deeper relationships with other students and challenge your creativity all in less than an hour.

## Fireside

**The Fireside** is an evening of **round table conversations** with entrepreneurs from various fields and disciplines. This rendezvous is an excellent way to see how up-and-coming businesses operate and to **connect with local business leaders**. We encourage you to follow up with these entrepreneurs and continue to build professional connections.



## Women’s Initiative

The **Women’s Initiative** focuses on providing personal and professional development opportunities while building a dynamic community of female founders. Activities include **“Be Bold,”** an annual weekend retreat where students travel to a specific Nebraska community and are paired with area female business mentors, and **“Brave Conversations over Coffee,”** a weekly gathering designed to intentionally reflect on questions that foster confidence and authentic conversation.



## Men’s Initiative

The purpose of the **Men’s Initiative** is to provide men of the Engler Program with opportunities to grow and improve as entrepreneurs. We build a **brotherhood of men** living full, joyful lives with a solid moral compass and the confidence to make wise, value-driven decisions. Through weekly gatherings and intentionally crafted fellowship opportunities, the men of Engler come together to support one another in all facets of personal and professional development.

## The Englers

**The Englers** is our version of the Oscars, but it is much more than an awards ceremony. It is a dynamic night full of joy, laughter, and gratitude that brings our entire community together. We highlight scholarship winners, exceptional community members, and other academic or service-based achievements. **The Engler Start-up Bullpen** is also hosted in culmination with The Englers to feature student businesses.

During the awards ceremony, we recognize those who have completed Build and Entrepreneur Camps, as well as students that uniquely embody each pillar. You may be surprised when you see the ‘trophy’ for each award. Indeed, some of the mementos we give to honorees include personalized bricks, hammers, boxing gloves, and much



more. Our Alumni Association also takes part in announcing new executive team members, business launches, yearly updates and special awards for Business of the Year and Alumni Champion.

Chances are you will never attend another event quite like it, and that seems fitting because we believe you’ll never find another culture quite like ours.

## Engler Treks

**The Engler Trek** is our end-of-year finale: **a multi-day trip** to a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem like Amarillo, Chicago, or Silicon Valley. We pack the schedule with visits to businesses, farms, factories, innovation hubs, and more. Of course, it’s not all work and no play — **we make time for some fun too**, like a Cubs baseball game at Wrigley Field or visiting the Golden Gate Bridge, depending on the destination. Without doubt, this is one of the most beloved experiences Engler offers its students.



## Nebraska Trek

The **Nebraska Trek** is a yearly excursion that highlights leading rural-based businesses right here in The Good Life. Each spring, we travel to one region of the state to learn from high-caliber entrepreneurs disrupting the status quo in our own backyard. Students are able to network with business owners that understand what it takes to build a profitable company in a rural community. We have toured businesses across all different industries including dairy farms, coffee shops, hotels, and everything in between. The Nebraska Trek is a must for anyone looking to launch a business in the rural Midwest.



# The Engler Camps



**“Do not come to the end of your life and wonder what could have been. Instead, be fulfilled in the knowledge that you truly lived. You tackled big challenges and measured yourself against something grand and wonderful.”**

– TOM, ENGLER DIRECTOR

Building a business is like ascending a mountain. **Just as climbers ascend in stages to gradually adapt to higher elevations, Engler students progress through levels of entrepreneurial development: Build Camp and Entrepreneur Camp.** Both phases offer their own opportunities and challenges. As students gain practical experience in entrepreneurship and advance through the Camps, they also strengthen relationships with other members of the cohort and business leaders in the community.

Every movement on the mountain, even retracing steps, helps you grow in skill, confidence, and teamwork. Each Camp is a celebration not only of the climb, but of those who climb with us and support us along the way.

## Build Camp

Build Camp focuses on establishing the foundation of your business idea. Starting any enterprise is a big risk; the goal here is to lower the risks involved in creating a business. By the end of this Camp, you will have de-risked the business and launched your product or service. Ultimately, problem and solution validation, customer discovery, and testing assumptions ensures the best chance of success for your business.

Many entrepreneurs mistakenly try to establish something of value with a “build first, test later” mindset. Too often this results in spending lots of time and money on a product



**"I want to be an entrepreneur because there's no rubric or rules for it; you can color outside the lines of a typical life. If we spend so much of our lives working, it might as well be toward our goals and dreams and not someone else's."**

– KATE

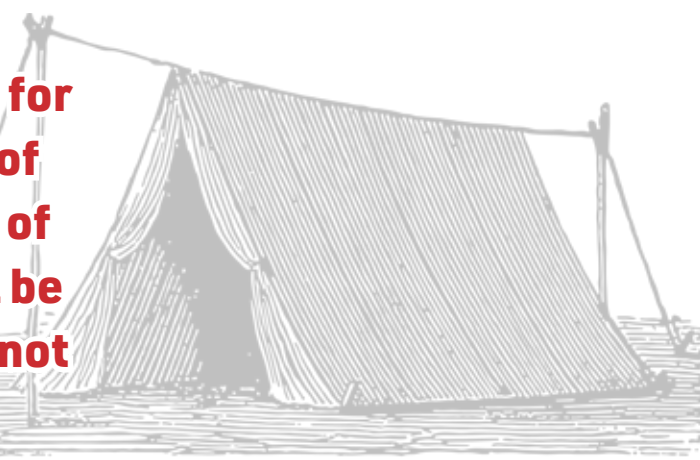
that no one really needs or wants. That's why we encourage students to get their hands dirty during the first four-week training session and validate key assumptions with real people who experience the problem. Once you've fully validated a problem and solution, you continue to the next step: testing the solution by talking with potential customers over the second four-week period.

Over these eight weeks, you'll receive one-on-one coaching from Engler staff and have the opportunity to use co-working space in our building.

## Entrepreneur Camp

Entrepreneur Camp is for entrepreneurs who are currently launching or have already launched their business. It's designed to teach students or alumni how to operate and grow their enterprises. We also connect entrepreneurs to other resources, such as outside funding sources, office space, accounting services, and legal expertise.

In this Camp, you continue to sell a product or service, complete a business plan, and pitch to local investors, as well as secure any other necessary funding. This stage is about being an entrepreneur first and student second. That doesn't mean you should neglect your studies, but the immersion this level requires takes a significant time commitment. Coaching, co-working space, and other resources are available as long as you're actively running the business.



Ultimately, Entrepreneur Camp is the culmination of your Engler experience: launching and managing your own business. It's something to truly be proud of — after all the interviews, research, prototypes... you've started your own business. And that's just the beginning.

If you hope to someday enjoy the independence and pride that come from running your own business, you need a solid grasp of the realities of entrepreneurship. That's why Build Camp and Entrepreneur Camp give students as much exposure as possible to the truth of how to start and run a business.

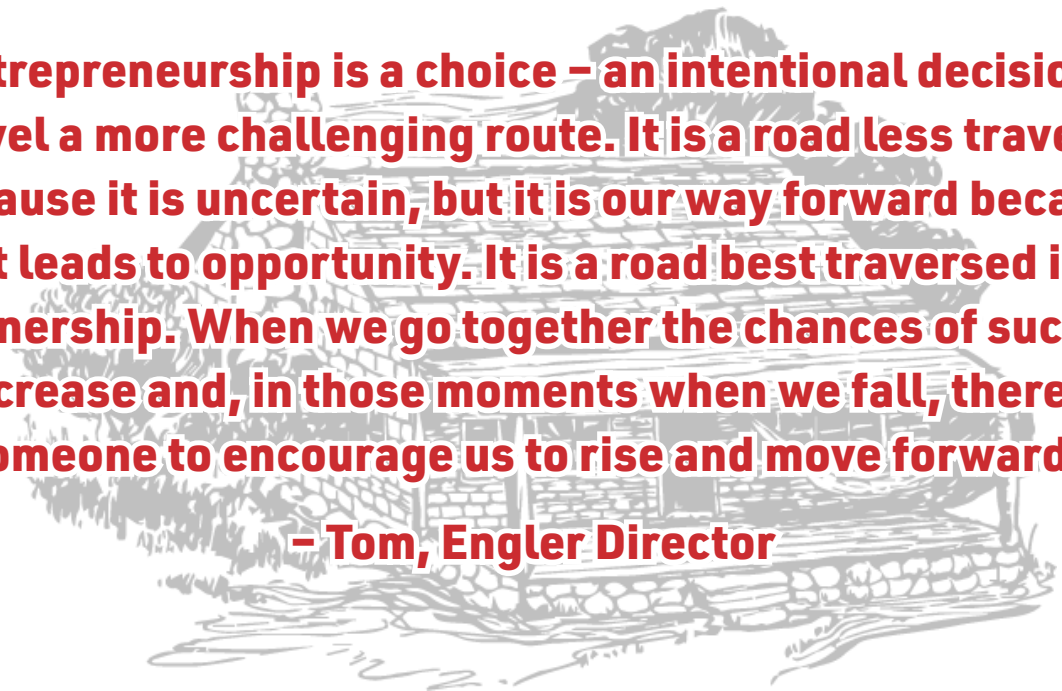
In doing so, Engler aids students in creating a lasting impact on Nebraska and its future. But rather than attempt this goal through small, incremental changes, we've intentionally chosen to build the Camps from the perspective of a swashbuckler — a heroic idealist who is daring enough to embrace the adventure and risk associated with a great undertaking.



## The Letter of Intent

**"Entrepreneurship is a choice – an intentional decision to travel a more challenging route. It is a road less traveled because it is uncertain, but it is our way forward because it leads to opportunity. It is a road best traversed in partnership. When we go together the chances of success increase and, in those moments when we fall, there is someone to encourage us to rise and move forward."**

**– Tom, Engler Director**



It can be easy to get lost or go in circles while you're working toward your goals; this is especially true on the twisting, turning path of entrepreneurship. Though this road can sometimes be lonely, **there are companions to be found on the journey.**

If you're looking for someone with whom to navigate the highs and lows of entrepreneurship, this is your opportunity. The Letter of Intent ceremony welcomes students into a **community of fellow travelers** — the Engler community. This ceremony recognizes an intentional moment – a moment of commitment shared with other like-minded people to embrace the entrepreneurial journey and to mark the first step onto that path.

Just as an athlete signs a document stating his or her commitment to join a team, entrepreneurially minded people may be invited to **formally commit** to the mission and pillars upon which the Engler community was founded.

**This pledge is two-fold:**

- 1. It is a commitment to the pursuit of one's purpose through the art and practice of entrepreneurship.**
- 2. It is a commitment to be an active, engaged member of the Engler community.**

When someone believes they are ready to make this step, they experience Engler's **Letter of Intent ceremony.**

This is not a mere membership ceremony or a box to be checked. It's not an honor, privilege, or something to put on a resume. Instead, the Letter of Intent ceremony is the **demarcation of a beginning.** It's the day a person acknowledges his or her intention to be involved in, learn from, and contribute to a community that shares the idea of entrepreneurship as a vehicle to pursue one's purpose.

Someone signing his or her Letter of Intent means, “I’m officially all in. I want to do this.” And the Engler community responds, “We’re with you, and we support you.”

Aspiring entrepreneurs choose to sign a Letter of Intent after they’re familiar with Engler, its community, and its values; they’ve dipped their toes in the water and are **ready to jump in**. When or if people make this decision varies. Some make the commitment during Entrepreneurship 101 or shortly afterward; others wait until later in their undergraduate career or choose not to make the pledge at all — and that’s okay. **Entrepreneurship and the Engler ideals do not appeal to everyone**. This community might not be what you’re looking for, and you can choose not to opt in. If the idea of Engler doesn’t stir your heart, it’s best for you and for this community to continue searching for what does.

If purpose-driven entrepreneurship and its values do strike a chord deep within you, you can decide to keep moving forward. The Letter of Intent ceremony **celebrates the moment a person crosses the line** — they’ve bought into

the culture and the mission. They’re ready to make the leap. This is not a decision to make out of obligation or to fit in. It’s a benchmark that has been given a ceremonial context to help people **commemorate their deliberate and thoughtful choice**: to assume responsibility for their future, to champion their own goals, and to fully embrace the Engler community.

Although entrepreneurship is a wild, confusing ride, it can be a tool to **create the life you desire and fulfill the purpose to which you are called**. Within a community of fellow travelers, we believe the road is less daunting and the challenges less formidable.

**Are you willing to join?**



# Sweep the Shed

AS ENGLER COMMUNITY MEMBERS, WE ARE...

**NEVER TOO BIG**  
TO DO THE SMALL THINGS

**CONTINUOUSLY LIVING**  
OUR PILLARS

**DOING THE RIGHT THING**  
EVEN WHEN NO ONE IS WATCHING



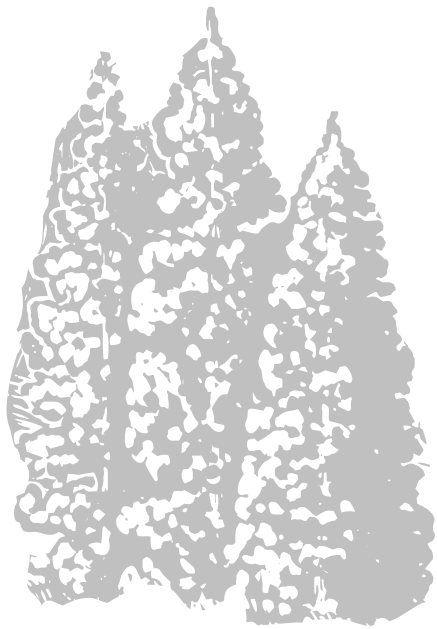


# The Engler Bell

Bells ring for lots of reasons – the start of a new day, to bring an activity to a close, as an invitation, and in moments of celebration. The Engler Bell that hangs on the wall between the living room and kitchen is an active symbol that invites members of the Engler community to acknowledge impactful moments for individuals, teams, and our community.

The bell may be rung in celebration – for example, birthdays, engagements, completion of projects, making the first sale, finding a new customer, pivoting, launching, exiting, succeeding, and failing. The bell may also be rung to honor another member of the community.

**When you ring the bell – please share your reason by writing it in the bell book along with the date and your signature. This book will become a shared history of the remarkable moments of our community.**



# The Engler Anvil

The anvil is the most recognized tool of the blacksmith – those who create something new through the raw power of shaping and transforming one thing into another. The root meaning of the word anvil is roughly translated as ‘to build’ or ‘to create’. The term ‘on the anvil’ means to be in a state of discussion, formation, or preparation; formative but immature or unready state. Over the centuries, the anvil has become a symbol of **strength, bravery, and virtue**. The anvil is steadfast, it endures, and it does not break under the pressure.

**Thus it is appropriate the anvil stands in the Entrepreneurial Studio as a reminder of the work to be done, a symbol of the work required to shape a new thing, and an inspiration to builders and creators.**

This anvil is a gift from Engler alumnus Jared Knobbe who describes the anvil as the path to creating a solid foundation – the hard work that must be done early in the process if a new idea or product is to have lasting value.





# The Engler Logo

Our flame E immediately identifies the entrepreneur sporting it as a member of our community. Every person in Engler is totally different from the next, but each is part of a dedicated group that believes in a shared mindset and mission.

Our emblem is a badge of honor and pride that bands members of the Engler community together. It serves as a rally flag for purpose-driven entrepreneurs who hope to build sustainable enterprises in the Midwest and promotes gritty, meaningful entrepreneurship in communities all over the world. There are three main components of the Engler emblem: the flame, the letter “e”, and the slight angle of the “e”.



## THE FLAME

In 2010, the Paul F. and Virginia J. Engler Foundation made a gift to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln to establish a program for entrepreneurship education. Mr. Engler sought to encourage young people to pursue entrepreneurship, particularly those who possess an ever-present, burning desire to build something: “You’ve got to have a fire in your belly.” The flame represents the type of people we want involved in the Engler community — folks who possess a pioneering spirit and the grit, passion, and determination to pursue their purpose.

## THE LETTER “E”

Besides standing for “Engler”, the letter “e” signifies “entrepreneurship”. We believe entrepreneurship is not only a vehicle to pursue one’s purpose, but is also a powerful force to create a positive, lasting impact on communities. The ability of entrepreneurship and the free market to sustainably solve some of the world’s biggest issues is unparalleled. As such, the belief we have in the power and values of purpose-driven entrepreneurship will always be the core of our program.

## THE ENGLER ANGLE

It is the least readily apparent of the three symbols within our logo, but the slight tilt of the “e” was no accident. This angle emphasizes that Engler does things a little differently. We’re not trying to be the Navy — we’re more like a pirate ship. Our crew of misfits and dreamers doesn’t expect people to all be the same... each of us is a bit wonky and imperfect in our own way. The slant of the “e” reminds us that to be an entrepreneur is to reject the status quo and choose the road less traveled.

# MY JOURNEY





Why am I choosing entrepreneurship?

What is my purpose?



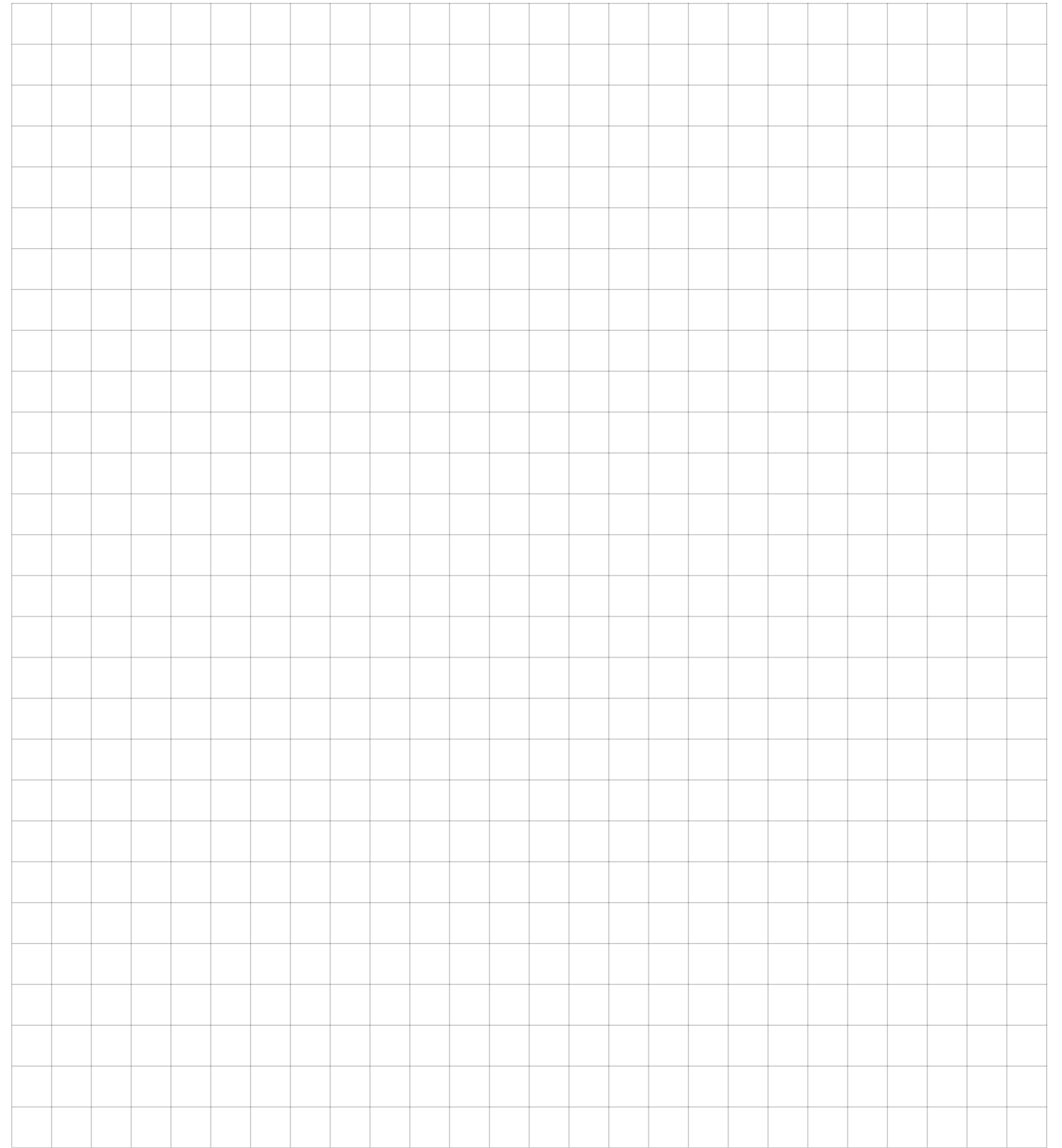
What are my values?

Who is in my inner circle?

# My Greatest Failure









Connect with us!



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ENGLER JOURNEY  
PODCAST



ENGLER PROGRAM



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