

Recap of the East Town Business Partnership Business Forum
Learning from Perennial Disruption Navigators: A Start Up and Entrepreneurial Community
Round Table

https://zoom.us/rec/share/V49y1O6lry3QHGAYvO2r7nnIasA3UCodxnZTxoiev3K_irprTWRbsFKnj_01eVhF.wmOZ-5WGtHa35z4s, Passcode: Pl2&^oqH)

Thursday, October 22, 2020, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Via Zoom Conference

I. Welcome and Announcements

After President Carina Aleckson apologized to everyone for any confusion about the Zoom link, she thanked them for their patience and welcomed them to the ETBP business forum. One of the things she misses about our real-life meetings is the networking aspect and getting to go around and shake hands and have some informal conversions. They're still trying to figure out how to replicate that piece, but you can use the chat feature to drop in your name and email address to greet each other. She thanked each one of us who carved out space in our busy day to be with them today.

Executive Director Dan Collison expressed gratitude for everyone being thoughtful and working through the shifting and changing part of our reality. He's thrilled to have Jacquie Berglund, CEO of Finnegans (<https://finnegans.org/jacquie-berglunds-bio/>), leading today's roundtable with the amazing presenters, but first a couple announcements:

- Take a minute to drop something into chat to greet each other because he really misses when we were together, we usually had a 30-minute period in advance of the forum for networking and exchanging business cards. Now we don't have the time or ability to pull that off successfully. Please know you're valued and that at some point we'll be back together again.
- He's grateful for all members of the ETBP who support us on multiple levels and tiers from residential to our highest platinum sponsors. We're an inclusive organization and the forums are free. When we have gathered it was just to pay for the food, so we really want to keep everyone engaged and always feeling invited. For those able to contribute, this has been a difficult year to pay for membership. We're hugely optimized and virtually have no overhead. We have wonderful staff, Executive Coordinator Christie Rock, and an amazing Board, so everyone contributing helps make this to be a truly relevant and effective organization.
- He thanked the following platinum members whose \$2,000 sponsorship helps put fuel in our tank for our small but highly effective budget tank every year:
 - American Academy of Neurology
 - Catholic Charities
 - CenterPoint Energy
 - Hennepin Healthcare
 - House of Charity
 - Kraus-Anderson
 - Minnesota Vikings
 - Padilla
 - Sherman Associates
 - Sherwin Williams
 - Thrivent Financial
 - U.S. Bank
 - Wells Fargo
- The next business forum on *Supporting and Rebuilding Hospitality Related Businesses During a Pandemic* will feature ETBP Board member Cyndy Harrison, owner of Sawatdee (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/cyndy-harrison-b1a8b54/>), the first Thai restaurant in the five-state area. It will be on Thursday, November 19th, 11 a.m. (<https://easttownmpls.org/etbp-business-forum-scheduled-for-november->

[19-at-11-a-m-via-zoom/](#)).

- As part of the Minneapolis Downtown Council's *Listening to Our Leaders of Color* series, there'll be a *Cultural Change in the Workplace* webinar moderated by Dan Collison on Wednesday, November 18th (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/event/cultural-change-in-the-workplace/>). Since the killing of George Floyd and all that has spurred, as MDC's Director of Downtown Partnerships, they invited him to curate multiple webinars in this series, and this is the third. They began with a high-level overview of where they wanted to go over the year, and in September they discussed cultural competency (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/event/the-journey-of-cultural-competency/>).
- For more information about our remaining free 2020-2021 Business Forum Series, visit <https://easttownmpls.org/2020-2021-business-forum-series/> and stay engaged.
- For more information about our neighborhood associations within the East Town district:
 - Visit <http://www.thedmna.org/> for the Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association Board and Land Use Committee meeting dates. Their annual meeting will be on Tuesday, October 27th where there will be a huge focus on public safety (<https://www.thedmna.org/please-register-for-the-dmna-virtual-2020-annual-meeting-on-october-27/>) which is at a crux point of being redefined and all Minneapolis voices need to be heard.
 - Visit <https://www.elliottpark.org/> for Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc., Board and Building, Land Use and Housing (BLUH) meeting dates.
- For more information about virtual Coffee with Ward 3 Council Member Steve Fletcher, visit <https://www.facebook.com/pg/MinneapolisWard3/events/>. They are now on Thursdays at 5:00 p.m. and can be accessed on Microsoft Teams or by phone at 612-276-6670.
- The Mill City Farmers Market continues Saturdays through October 31st under COVID-19 safety measures and preordering availability (<https://millcityfarmersmarket.org/covid-19-and-mcfm/>).
- For help in navigating City Hall with your business questions, visit the Minneapolis Business Portal at <https://business.minneapolismn.gov/> which is designed to connect entrepreneurs and small business owners to the information and resources needed to plan, launch and grow a business. You can also visit the Small Business Team at <http://www2.minneapolismn.gov/cped/ba/SmallBusinessTeam/index.htm>.

II. ***Learning from Perennial Disruption Navigators:***

A Start Up and Entrepreneurial Community Round Table

Collison explained why today's topic seemed appropriate for this moment. As he's gotten to know entrepreneurs, and he's been accused by Berglund of being a serial entrepreneur, you have to be a leader with poise and wisdom to live in that space because it's constantly facing disruption, and Berglund is one of those people. The ETBP has in its strategic plan to lift social enterprise as a form of business; thanks to Berglund for being a leading voice in that space and for leading this forum.

Berglund thanked Collison for his accolades, he and Hantge for organizing this forum and selecting this topic which is near and dear to her, and the attendees for wanting to learn more about the entrepreneurial journey. In her introduction, she gave an overview of Finnegans and FINNOvation Lab (<https://www.finn-lab.com/>), both of which opened on the Kraus-Anderson block in 2018. She's a veteran entrepreneur and now a startup entrepreneur and it's been challenging, not only the pandemic piece but those in the Twin Cities who have been dealing with riots and safety issues which they've not been used to dealing with on a daily basis. With 47% of businesses in Minnesota being startups or small businesses, a lot of them have been going through this, so today she wanted to share the journeys of these amazing entrepreneurs she knows through either the FINNOvation Lab Fellowship or ImpactSKU programs. They are amazing leaders in their own right as well as the various stages of business. Their stories will have common themes, i.e., the

importance of being nimble, able to make quick decisions on limited information in uncertain times, resilience, courage, and grit, and taking care of themselves. That's what it takes to do what these women do.

Then she introduced the following women entrepreneurs who shared their business story and what they've done in response to the challenges they have faced during the pandemic.

- A. Junita Flowers, Founder and CEO of Junita's Jar (<https://junitasjar.com/>), advised they use the platform of selling cookies as a tool to engage college students in conversations about relationship violence. Trauma isn't new to her; it prepares you for pivoting one's life.

In chat Collison advised his favorite cookie product of Junita's is Oatmeal Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip. YUM!

- B. Bella Lam, Founder and CEO of Coconut Whisk (<https://coconutwhisk.com/>), is an accidental entrepreneur and passionate about supporting organizations that address food insecurity.

In chat she thanked Dan, Carina & Jacquie for hosting and everyone who tuned in!

- C. Katie Myhre, Founder and CEO of Red Market, Technology Manager at the national non-profit Farmers Market Coalition (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/katie-myhre-898b8283/>), ironically was researching the fragility of supply chains prior to the pandemic. Her entrepreneurial journey started as an undergraduate at St. Olaf learning about soil biology and that ultimately connects to environmental issues and the economic backbone of small communities. In chat, she provided these links: katie@redmarketmn.com, www.redmarketmn.com, www.frankandernestmarkets.com.

In chat Dan advised Katie takes her passion into MANY spaces and with several organizations, and gave a link to a great article in City Pages on the RED (Restaurants Eat Direct) Market effort: <http://www.citypages.com/restaurants/red-food-wants-the-local-food-movement-to-mean-what-it-says/396695421>.

- D. Darcy Olson, Founder and CEO of Let's Dish (<https://www.letsdish.com/about/founders2.aspx>), started 17 years ago this month as the first meal assembly concept.

During the Q&A period, and referencing *A Beautiful Constraint: How To Transform Your Limitations Into Advantages, and Why It's Everyone's Business* (<http://www.abeautifulconstraint.com/the-book-2>), Collison sought feedback on how they leverage their constraints.

III. Closing Remarks

Berglund thanked everyone for sharing their stories; they're great leaders and so inspirational. She asked the audience to please support these entrepreneurial women who are doing amazing work in their businesses and community.

Collison thanked Berglund and the women entrepreneurs for a tremendous forum, everyone for tuning in, and encouraged all to stay connected and to come back next month.

IV. Other Attendees via Zoom

Amy Carlson, Hennepin Healthcare Foundation
John Campobasso, Kraus-Anderson
Chris Fleck
Vanessa Haight, Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc.
Cyndy Harrison, Sawatdee Thai Restaurant
Chris Johnson, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis
Jeff LaFavre, IAG Commercial
Julia Lauwage, Minnesota Adult & Teen Challenge

Brian Maupin, Allied Parking
Wendy Merila, Valleyfair Family Amusement Park
Alanna Snortland, North Central University
Carletta Sweet, Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association