**Ken Szymusiak**

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**Personal Profile**

A highly motivated and driven academic professional. I’m passionate about entrepreneurship and “startup” culture and the belief that innovation is the key to alleviate the challenges that face our global society.

A pro-active leader who has supported student and private sector ventures in all stages of growth with a track record of providing guidance in strategy and planning. Also, a practicing entrepreneur with seven years of experience in the founding and management of a family business.

**Career and Achievements to Date**

**Managing Director, Burgess Institute for Entrepreneurship & Innovation Nov. 2013 - Present**

**Broad College of Business, Michigan State University**

* Generally responsible for the growth of entrepreneurial culture within the Broad College of Business and across the University.
* Manage the Burgess New Venture Challenge - Business Model Competition.
* Develop experiential learning experiences for students in the realm of innovation and entrepreneurship.
* Provide mentorship and coaching to student lead business ventures.
* Venture Advisor-in-Residence – Conquer Accelerator Program
* Manage university wide minor in entrepreneurship and innovation.
* Adjunct faculty member teaching the topics of business model creation and introduction to entrepreneurship at the undergraduate and graduate level.
* Faculty mentor / advisor – MSU iOS Design Lab
* Former member of the Broad College of Business Staff Leadership Committee
* Course Instructor
  + ESHP 190: The Art of Starting – Intro to Entrepreneurship
  + ESHP 170: Business Model Development & Prototyping
  + MBA 845\_302: Extreme Green – Innovation in Action
  + MBA 891\_303: Digital Product Management
  + MBA 891\_304: New Venture Consulting
  + PIM 871 & 875: Executive MBA – New Product and Service Innovation
  + PIM 832: Executive MBA - Entrepreneurship
  + American Semester Program: Entrepreneurship Bootcamp
* Other Relevant Workshops / Presentations
  + Inspired Innovation and Implementation – Broad College of Business Executive Education
  + How to Build and Sell a Business Case – Broad College of Business Executive Education
  + Thinking Differently by Design – Broad College of Business Executive Education
  + Multiple workshops / presentations for corporate clients on creativity, innovation, business model development.

**Co-Owner, Polka Dots Boutique April 2007-Oct. 2014**

* Family owned destination retail boutique specializing in home goods, women’s wear, and beaded jewelry.
* Self-funded and profitable in year one.
* Sold business to new ownership in Oct. 2014

**Co-Director, New Economy Division Jan. 2012 – Nov. 2013**

**Lansing Economic Area Partnership**

* Co-Managed the Lansing Regional SmartZone
* Administered $500,000 + of state grant funding for entrepreneurial support.
* Mentored and assisted 20+ businesses in various stages of business growth.
* Developed and executed a long term sustainability plan for Technology Innovation Center in East Lansing.
* Key partner in the development of a regional innovation network for Greater Lansing.
* Lead the development of full service prototype innovation program equipped with 3d printers and scanner.
* Key staff in the development of numerous entrepreneurial programs and events focused on transforming our local business culture including: StartUp Weekends, Hatching - business pitch competition, MSFCU Start Up Challenge, and many other events.
* Lead staff in the development of the Port Lansing Next Michigan Development Corporation – a municipal authority focused on elevating our regional economy through the use of incentives to encourage importing and exporting goods and services.

**Director of Business Investment & Incubation**

**City of Lansing Economic Development Corp. March 2010 – Dec. 2011**

* Management of incentivized downtown real estate projects and industrial/manufacturing expansion projects.
* Serve as co-manager of the City of Lansing’s brownfield properties program, which including the oversight of $500,000+ of EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant Funds.
* Author and lead staff member for the City of Lansing’s recent federal designation as an EB-5 International Investment Regional Center. President of the Lansing EDC Regional Center LLC.
* Responsible for the City of Lansing’s interests in economic development legislation at the state level, including lobbying efforts, tracking of legislation and testimony at committee hearings.
* Served as original project manager for the proposed “Red Cedar Renaissance” project entailing the sale and redevelopment of the Red Cedar Golf Course adjacent to Michigan State University.

**Director of South & Outer Lansing,**

**City of Lansing Economic Development Corp. Oct. 2006 –Feb. 2010**

* Served as liaison between the city and private industry to encourage investment and stimulate job growth, including the administration of local tax incentive programs including personal property tax abatements, brownfield tax increment financing, and real property incentives packages.
* Additional responsibilities included business retention activities, property research and site selection activities for prospective investors, as well as initiative oriented projects.
* Lead staff member for industrial and manufacturing projects, as well as international initiatives.
* Co-founder of the city’s talent retention and university outreach program, “Linking Lansing & U” in partnership with Michigan State University Career Services.

**Economic Development Program Manager,**

**South Lansing Community Development Association (SLCDA) March 2006-Oct 2006**

* Developed of market study for a traditionally underserved low income community including the analysis of census data, surveying local residents to determine spending habits and local market needs, and creating an inventory of existing retail markets and land use within the target area.
* Worked with local Economic Development Corporation and Chamber of Commerce to recruit and provide incentives to potential business investors who meet identified community needs.
* Assisted in the publication of a bi-monthly community newsletter.
* Participated in meetings with community and business leaders, neighborhood residents, and SLCDA director to strengthen community connections.

**Tenant Representative,**

**Friedman & Beitler Real Estate July 2005-Feb. 2006**

* Represented commercial real estate clients in Chicago in lease negotiations and provided consultation in real estate decision making.
* Responsibilities included preparing and reviewing lease documents and development proposals, prospecting for potential clients, performing comprehensive lease audits, and researching buildings and possible office locations for clients.

**Education**

**DeVos Graduate School of Management, Northwood University, Midland, MI December 2011**

Master of Business Administration Degree

**Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI May 2005**

Urban and Regional Planning

Bachelor of Science Degree

**Certifications / Training**

* **From Ideas to Action – Design Thinking Certification**
  + IDEO U – June 2019
* **Insights for Innovation – Design Thinking Certification**
  + IDEO U – April 2019
* **Strategyzer - Business Model Generation Master Class**
  + Strategyzer – Nov. 2018
* **Creative Problem Solving Program – Spring Board to Creative Problem Solving**
  + Creative Education Foundation – June 2018
* **Price - Babson Symposium for Entrepreneurship Educators (SEE) Program**
  + Babson College – Jan. 2015

**Skills and Competencies**

* Track record of thriving in fluid fast paced work environments.
* Ability to relate with entrepreneurs and business owners from experience in running my own family business.
* Comprehensive knowledge of local, national, and global entrepreneurial trends. Constant drive to learn and implement best practices.
* Proven ability to manage teams to accomplish complicated projects.
* Diplomatic with great relationship skills.
* Poised and comfortable public speaker.

**Current Professional & Community Involvement**

* Advisory Committee Member, MSU Center for Regional Economic Development
* Faculty Advisor, Phi Chi Theta Business Fraternity
* Faculty Co-Advisor, MSU Design for America Student Organization
* Faculty Co-Advisor, MSU Entrepreneurship Association
* MSU Libraries – Open Educational Resources Advisory Committee