



Imagine Argentine students presented their concept for a pop-up splash park, complete with water gun props.

Middle School Entrepreneurs Make a Splash

Water fun and swimming in Wyandotte County is hard to come by with only one public swimming pool. A group of middle school students in Argentine tackled the challenge.

Youthfront's Imagine Argentine social entrepreneurship program gives young people a chance to wrestle with the most pressing issues facing their neighborhood. On July 18, the students presented "City Splash," their concept for a new pop-up spray park, to a room full of city leaders, business owners, friends and families. They shared their business plan - complete with

water gun props - for "bringing fun, portable water oases to KC's swimming pool deserts."

"It's entrepreneurship for a new world, for God's kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven," said Kurt Rietema, Youthfront Director of Justice Initiatives. "When we have youth look to their neighborhood at the brokenness they see around them, they're

asking themselves, 'What does it look like when heaven comes to Argentine?'"

Youthfront piloted Imagine Argentine in 2016 with the goal of sparking youth to be passionate changemakers in their community. The four-week intensive program equips youth with entrepreneurial skills and channels their creativity into

social ventures that improve quality of life in under-resourced neighborhoods. In Argentine, nearly half of children under 18 live under the poverty line and only 10 percent are at grade-level standards in math and 12 percent in science.

The Snack Shack KC was the brainchild of the first cohort of youth as a way to address the social isolation of neighborhood kids and the blight of empty storefronts in their community. Snack Shack KC is now a social business run year-round by youth and volunteers, located by the South Branch Library in Argentine. Youth in the second cohort established Boredom Busters, which provides programming, classes and games at the Snack Shack.



Cover and top: Imagine Argentine students participated in a neighborhood mural restoration project during their experience. **Bottom left:** Seventh-grade student, Javier, shares about resources that would be needed to make City Splash a reality. **Bottom right:** Imagine Argentine leaders, supporters, friends and family members enjoyed the students' presentation at Pitch Night.



This year's students have already raised more than half of the start up funding for City Splash, but more help is needed. If you would like to be a business mentor, volunteer or contribute, visit www.youthfront.com/imagineargentine.