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## Make It Happen! Volume 3 Issue 4 December 2024

Welcome to the December 2024 Issue of *Make it Happen!*

*This issue of Make It Happen! has been designed and edited by Haylyn Hiles '26, a junior English major of Marietta College.*

Dear Friends,

As we wrap up another semester, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude to our students, alumni, sponsors, and community partners who make everything we do possible. Your support fuels the success of the Center for Entrepreneurship and Career Development at Marietta College and inspires us to dream bigger with each passing season.

In this issue of *Make It Happen!*, you'll see highlights from an incredibly busy fall, filled with a variety of professional development opportunities for our students. As we look ahead to spring, we're gearing up for even more exciting events. One highlight we're thrilled to share is our upcoming Hackathon on March 29, generously sponsored by [Flex Crew](#).

If you're interested in supporting a program like PioBiz or another initiative, we'd love to hear from you. Please feel free to reach out to me at [khorassj@marietta.edu](mailto:khorassj@marietta.edu)—your involvement truly makes all the difference.

Happy holidays, and best wishes for a bright and prosperous 2025!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jan", is displayed on a light blue rectangular background.

Jacqueline Khorassani, Ph.D.  
Senior Director, Center for Entrepreneurship and Career Development  
Marietta College



# Auctioning The Sound That Sells



**By: Rocky Peck\***

My name is Rocky Peck. I graduated from Marietta College in 1988 with a bachelor degree in marketing. I have been a licensed auctioneer in West Virginia for 42 of my 58 years. Likewise I have been an entrepreneur for almost that long. My wife and I own Rocky Peck Sales and Marketing LLC.

Let's talk about some truths regarding the auction process as it pertains to selling estates;

First, the real estate is always worth more than the personal property. So if you can sell the bulk assets of the estate then you are closer to getting the real estate to market quickly.

Second, no one ever calls me because it is fun to be a consignor. There is always an issue like; death, divorce, or going out of business. The quicker you respond the more successful you will be. At that point in time the customer needs help and if you present a reasonable solution to them then you have the opportunity to do their business.

Third, consignors need competency. Follow the contract -do what you say -and pay on time.

Now, the basic skills that I use every day follows this mantra. Discipline leads to good habits - good habits lead to opportunities- opportunities lead to success.

Here are some basic things that I do over and over again;

First, I make a schedule at the end of every week and a list of things to do in that schedule every day.

Second, I make decisions based upon keeping the projects in that schedule moving forward to an equitable solution.

Third, I involve people in that process who contribute to its success. I cannot do everything and I do not know everything. The team pulls the wagon.

Fourth, I purposely involve myself in the hardest part of the process as to set an example to my team.

My wife and I are working to creat a business that we can be proud of. This takes a commitment not only financially but also in terms of time. We often have to prioritize the company ahead of things that we want to do. Having said that I find that the reason that our business is growing is because we are both committed to each other first and the company second. We are blessed with business because of this.

Marietta College was a great help in shaping me, when I was younger. Taking raw talent and molding me into something that was more polished and thoughtful. It is for that reason that I am involved in helping with the school's entrepreneurial program.

A closing thought comes from a slogan hanging in my office:

Live Honestly

Act Courageously

Speak Wisdom

I appreciate the opportunity to share these thoughts with you.

Rocky Peck

'88

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\*Rocky Peck '88 is the owner of *Rocky Peck Sales and Marketing LLC*

**Ask the Landlady**



**By: Wendy Keenan Myers\***

As a first-generation college attendee, I was just happy to BE at Marietta College. My mother left high school in England at the age of 16 and set out to work around Europe. My father was one of 15 children; he never finished high school and went straight to the Army. My parents were street-smart but never had the opportunity to become book-smart. Thus, I never took it for granted that I was getting to attend college, especially a private liberal arts college that I could never have afforded without several scholarships and a part-time job at Kmart (I know I am dating myself with this reference!). Marietta College opened my eyes to opportunities that my family and I didn't even know existed.

After finishing college, I went to graduate school and got married. Over a couple of years, I worked, I had babies, and I got two master's degrees. About this time, my husband and I moved back to Marietta. I needed something more fulfilling in my life than my job of processing workers' compensation claims, and I definitely could not stay home all day with my children (sorry girls, but that really was best for all of us!). I taught college courses and started a medical billing company. Then a side gig popped up; my husband and I bought a duplex that was going into foreclosure as a real estate investment. We thought we would tear down the duplex and develop a wide-open MRI property. However, that plan fizzled out pretty quickly when the MRI company backed out.

Thus, I became a landlady overnight. Now, mind you, I knew nothing about property management. My family had always rented from other people. We were tenants, not rich rich landlords. But here's the situation—I had two tenants and a mortgage, and I was NOT about to lose money. The great thing about higher education is that you learn how to conduct quality research and perform analysis. I asked everyone I knew for a copy of their lease; I talked to real estate agents; and I read books on the subject (although there weren't very many; landlords are very secretive.).

The next twenty years were a blur. Over time, I kept buying houses, duplexes and triplexes and renting them out. I kept putting a limit on the properties I could handle. I said I would stop at 28 units, then at 43, next 75. When I got near 100, I really considered myself done. I was running the operation myself with just a couple contract workers to handle cleaning and maintenance. It was starting to get old spending nights and weekends rehabbing properties; I never wanted to see another carpet tack strip again. However, there was an apartment complex that I admired in town, and I really wanted to have a multi-family property in the portfolio. So, I contacted the owner, and he was interested in selling—but there was a catch. I had to buy his entire portfolio: 252 units in five buildings, two in Marietta, one in Belpre and two in Canton, Ohio.



This was the leap. All entrepreneurs inevitably face the dilemma of growth. To take your little side hustle to the next phase is scary and hard but it can pay off in terms of bigger profits and an accelerated retirement plan. I had already failed at a couple of earlier endeavors. My husband and I had tried to develop an assisted living facility but stalled on the funding. My medical billing business was a nice side hustle, but it was hard to keep up with the technology to take it to that next level. I was cruising along with my side gigs and three kids and wasn't sure I wanted to take the leap. After all, this rental thing had all started with me becoming an accidental landlady. I never took any landlording classes in college and now I was going to have to hire actual employees, figure out payroll taxes and set up a real office. Luckily, my college research skills came in handy again. I spent ten years working hard and learning from many mistakes along the way. I learned so much from these errors that I wrote a book about it: *Lessons from the Landlady: How to Avoid My Mistakes and Be Successful in Real Estate*. (Now available from my website: [www.askthelandlady.com](http://www.askthelandlady.com) or Amazon!).

My company recently celebrated its 20th anniversary. It has been one of the best blessings for my family. Not only have we provided hundreds of people with quality housing, but we have also employed awesome people and provided a great living for our family. Certainly, this was not always easy. My kids put up with a lot along the way; they had to paint kitchens, watch Mommy take at least forty apartment phone calls daily and tag along for apartment showings. I worked strange hours, and my husband would come home from a hard day's work and go light a hot water tank or watch me work late into the night balancing the books. But the hard work and sacrifice has paid off. All three kids have obtained higher education degrees with no student loan burden, and my husband and I are now enjoying a semi-retired life. As a daughter of blue-collar workers, I never envisioned a life in which I would get to create my own opportunities and set my own schedule. If I hadn't attended a liberal arts college and had the opportunity to hear a variety of voices and learn across several disciplines, I doubt that I would have been open to the possibility of starting and cultivating several businesses. My professors at Marietta College taught me how to think critically, conduct quality research and analyze information. But, their greatest lesson was teaching me to dream BIG - the cornerstone of entrepreneurship.

You can connect with her [@askthelandlady](#) on the normal social media platforms and on her YouTube channel where she discusses all the best landlord tips for property investors.

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\*Wendy Myers '92 graduated from Marietta College with an English Major, Women's Studies Minor, and Leadership Certificate, Wendy is the CEO at [Ask The Landlady](#), CEO and Founder of [Mitcham Group Apartments](#), and a published author of three books.

## News & Events Recap

### September 10, 2024

#### Speed Connect

On Tuesday, September 10th, 2024, students at Marietta College participated in "Speed Connect" organized by the Center of Entrepreneurship and Career Development at Marietta College (CECD). During this event, students, faculty, staff, and mentors were given the ability to connect with one another. This event took place in The Great Room.



## September 19, 2024

### PioBiz Workshop

On Thursday, September 19th, 2024, students at Marietta College participated in “PioBiz Workshop” organized by the Center of Entrepreneurship and Career Development at Marietta College (CECD). In this workshop, the CECD’s Senior Director, Dr. Jacqueline Khorassani of the Marietta College Career Center, instructed students on how to compete in Round 1 of the PioBiz Competition taking place later in the semester on December 5th, 2024. Winners of the competition earn cash prizes. This workshop took place in Thomas 327.

*There are no photos from this workshop.*

## September 23-26, 2024

## Big Blue's 2nd Birthday

From Monday, September 23rd, to Thursday, September 26th, 2024, the students enrolled in the Big Blue practicum at Marietta College celebrated the second anniversary of the college's on campus non-profit thrift store "[Big Blue](#)." Everything in the store was buy 2, get 2 free, and every purchase was entered into a basket giveaway that was provided from local businesses.

Originally created as an entrepreneurship class project by Alexis Sommers '25 and Lilly Posti '25, the store continues to thrive as a student-led initiative, providing students an affordable shopping option, minimizing the clutter and waste that the college produces, and giving students business-related experiences.



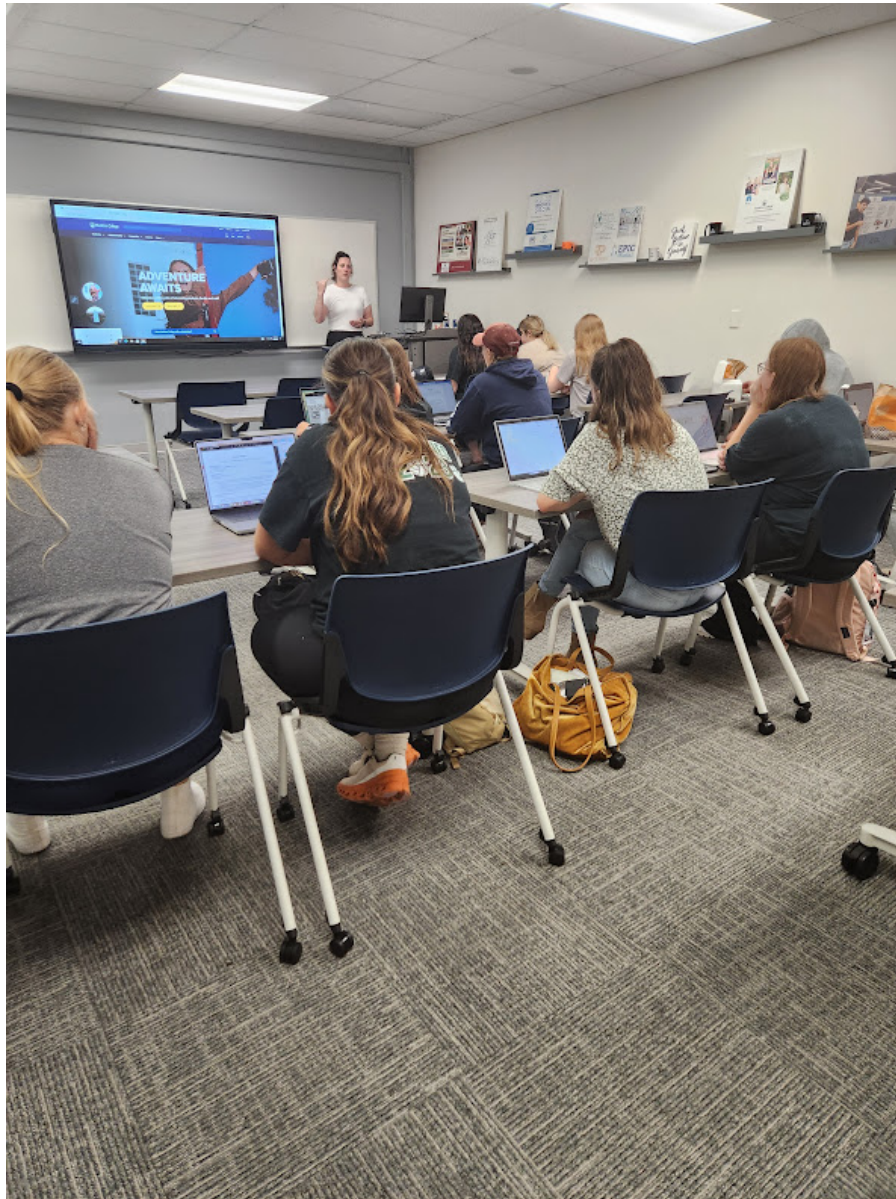




**September 24, 2024**

## **Job Market Prep Mini-Series, Part One: Resume & Cover Letter Creation**

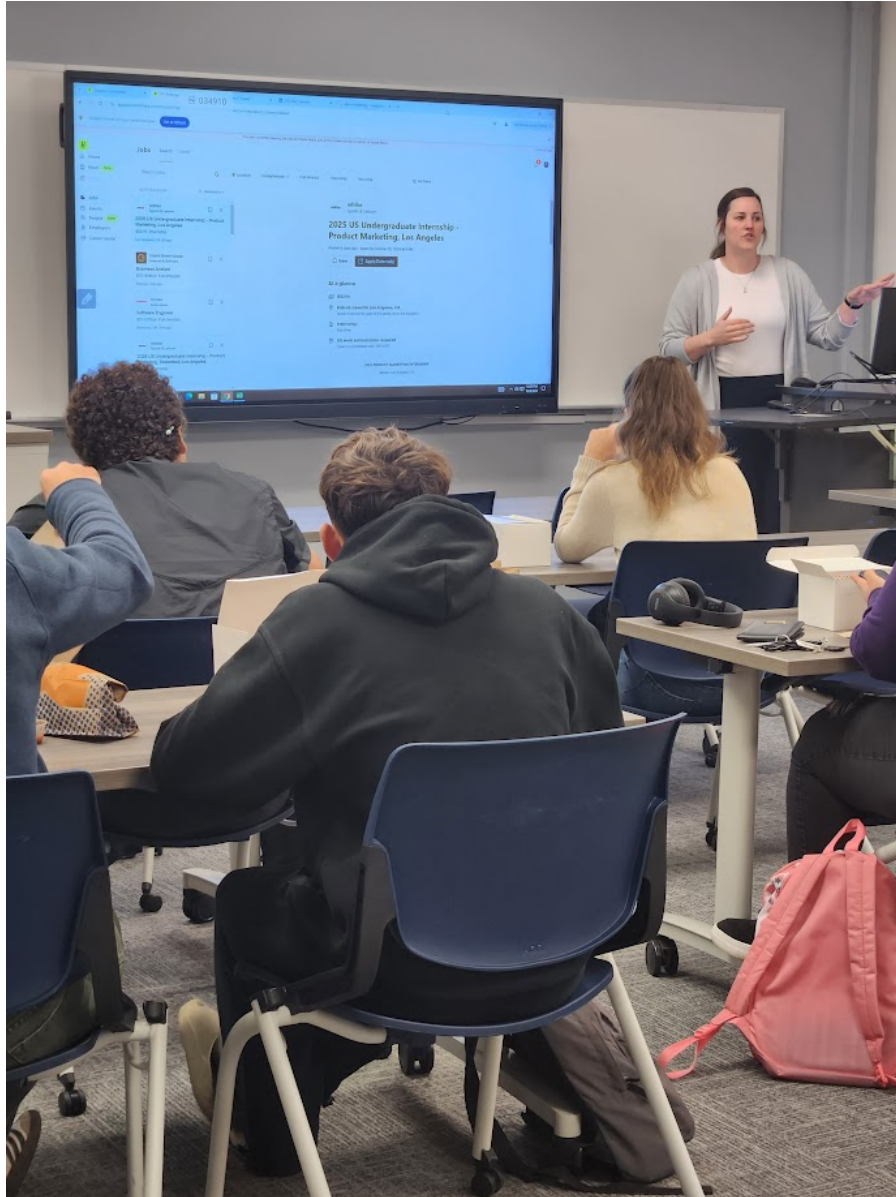
On Tuesday, September 24th, 2024, students at Marietta College participated in “Job Market Prep Mini-Series, Part One: Resume & Cover Letter Creation” organized by the Center of Entrepreneurship and Career Development at Marietta College (CECD). In part one of the mini-series, Ricci Bailey, Assistant Director of CECD, led a session on crafting a resume and cover letter tailored to specific career fields. The center’s platinum sponsor, QDOBA Mexican Eats, provided lunch. This event took place in Thomas 327.



**October 8, 2024**

## **Job Market Prep Mini-Series, Part Two: Interview Coaching**

On Tuesday, October 8th, 2024, students at Marietta College participated in “Job Market Prep Mini-Series, Part Two: Interview Coaching” organized by the Center of Entrepreneurship and Career Development at Marietta College (CECD). Lunch was provided by CECD’s Platinum Sponsor, QDOBA Mexican Eats. In this workshop, Ricci Bailey, Assistant Director of CECD, spoke of online employment opportunities, taught students how to search for career opportunities online, and coached students on the dos and don’ts of the interviewing process. This workshop took place in Thomas 327.



**October 22, 2024**

## **Job Market Prep Mini-Series, Part Three: Mock Interview**

On Tuesday, October 22nd, 2024, students at Marietta College participated in “Job Market Prep Mini-Series, Part Three: Mock Interview” organized by the Center of Entrepreneurship and Career Development at Marietta College (CECD). In this workshop, students at Marietta College were able to put their interview skills to the test, practicing a handful of industry-specific questions in real time. This workshop took place in Thomas 327.





**October 24, 2024**

## **Marietta Mingle**

On Thursday, October 24th, 2024, Marietta College's Center of Entrepreneurship and Career Development (CECD) organized Marietta Mingle, an opportunity for students to mingle with Marietta College alumni and meet with individuals with experience in their future careers. This event took place in The Great Room in Andrew's on campus.



**November 14, 2024**

## **The BIG Workshop**

On Thursday, November 14th, 2024, Marietta College's Center of Entrepreneurship and Career Development (CECD) organized "[The BIG Workshop](#)," an opportunity for students to collaborate with various community and business partners. The mission of the workshop is to connect aspiring entrepreneurs and business owners with each other and with resource providers and experts to create a network that solves business problems, identifies viable entrepreneurial ideas, and puts them into action.



## December 5, 2024

### PioBiz Competition

On Thursday, December 5, 2024, fourteen for-profit and nonprofit business ideas were presented in Round 1 of the [PioBiz Competition](#) in the Gathering Place on the Marietta College campus.

Round 1 of the PioBiz Competition consists of identifying a problem that is worth solving and describing a new product or service that solves the problem. The proposed solution must potentially lead to the establishment of a for-profit or non-profit organization.

This year's competition was delivered in poster format. The key components of the posters were as follows.

1. Problem: A clear description of the problem
2. Customer Segment: Who has this problem? Define the characteristics of your typical customer.
3. Why is the problem worth solving?
4. Existing Alternatives: How do your target customers currently solve the problem? Describe the nature of the competing products or services.
5. Solution: A clear description of your product or service and how it solves the problem.
6. Unique Value Proposition: What is the advantage of your product or service over the alternatives? Why should people buy your product?

The winners were collectively selected by a panel of four judges and an enthusiastic community of over sixty members. Judges evaluated each project, assigning scores on a scale of 0 to 100 points. Simultaneously, community members actively participated by investing \$1000 PioBiz dollars in their preferred project(s), with each \$100 investment serving as one point.

The top five projects with the highest total points won the competition.

The competition judges were as follows:

1. Dr. James Morell: Assistant Professor of Management, Marietta College
2. Rocky Peck '88: Owner, Rocky Peck Sales & Marketing LLC
3. Mike Workman: CEO, Contraxx Furniture

4. Dr. Julie Wilkes '98: North American Well-Being & Resiliency Lead & Global Health Faculty;  
Motivational Speaker; Author; Entrepreneur

## Top Five PioBiz Projects

Product/ Service

Abbreviated Description

Team Members

Award

Reena MaesBakery

Reena Maes Bakery offers a one-of-a-kind experience by combining high-quality, creative desserts with strategically paired beverages. Unlike other local bakeries and coffee shops, we provide a carefully selected selection of globally inspired sweets, as well as innovative drink pairings that enhance the experience. The emphasis on mixing desserts with alcohol and mocktails separates us, attracting customers seeking elegance and variety, as well as those looking to indulge in something else than the conventional bakery or coffee shop experience.

Loreena Williams

Major: Entrepreneurship

Class: 2025

\$200

Global Study Nexus

This is an online matching platform that connects college professors around the world. The platform makes it possible for professors to create classroom projects that require students from various countries to form teams and work collaboratively on their projects.

Hinata Sotsuda

Major: Management

Class: 2026

\$180

Opus

Opus is an app that allows first come first serve on landscaping jobs.

Teagan Klaner, Dayne Johnke,

And Reece Rupert

Majors: Entrepreneurship, Marketing, and Exploratory

Classes: 2028, 2028, and 2028

\$160

ZenDen

ZenDen is a mobile service that provides a variety of stress-relieving activities, such as; therapy animals, arts and crafts, and therapeutic music and lighting. This mobile service travels to different college campuses, providing various activities and solutions to mental health.

Rebecca Streets, Mason-Rice, and Jameson Embrescia

Majors: Biology, Psychology, and Management



Classes: 2028, 2025, 2028

\$140

Holy Helpers

Holy Helpers is a religious, educational brand of comprehensive product lines (educational packs and game sets) that provide a full array of resources and materials to inspire, educate, and excite kids about the Catholic saints and faith.

Kaitlyn Gough

Major: Graphic Design

Class: 2024

\$120

Competition winners and judges are pictured below:



### Spring 2025 Tentative Schedule:

1/23/2025: Ohio University's Info Session Geared towards MBA, Sports Management, and Accounting Master's Programs

2/6/2025: Speed Mock Interviews

2/11/2025: Life After Graduation Mini-Series, Part One: Debt

2/18/2025: Life After Graduation Mini-Series, Part Two: Budgeting

2/25/2025: Life After Graduation Mini-Series, Part Three: Employment Documents

2/27/2025: PioBiz Workshop - Round 2: Proof of Concept

3/29/2025: Flex Crew's Hackathon

4/1/2025: Job Talk

4/10/2025: Junior PioBiz

4/24/2025: PioBiz Competition - Round 2: Proof of Concept

5/1/2025: End of the Year Award Ceremony and Networking

# Thank You Sponsors!

It is, in part, due to the generosity of our sponsors that we can offer our cocurricular and extracurricular events and workshops to the community either free of charge or at a discount. We do this because our goal is to build a network of young and seasoned entrepreneurs that together create economic, social, and environmental values through collaboration and cooperation. [Read More.](#)







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Our mailing address is:

entr@marietta.edu

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