

Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State

Minnesota Public Benefit Corporation / Annual Benefit Report

Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 304A



Read the instructions before completing this form

Must be filed by March 31

Filing Fee: \$55 for expedited service in-person and online filings, \$35 if submitted by mail

The Annual Benefit Report covers the 12 month period ending on December 31 of the previous year.

Notice: Failure to file this form by March 31 of this year will result in the revocation of the corporation's public benefit status without further notice from the Secretary of State, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 304A.301

1. Corporate Name: (Required)

Chalkboard Commons, SBC

2. The public benefit corporation's board of directors has reviewed and approved this report.

3. In the field below, enter the information required by section 304A. 201 subd. 2 or 3 for the period covered by this report, (see instructions for further information); Note: Use additional sheets if needed. (Required)

See attached

4. I, the undersigned, certify that I am the chief executive officer of this public benefit corporation. I further certify that I have signed this document no more than 30 days before the document is delivered to the secretary of state for filing, and that this document is current when signed. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.

Yvonne Godber

Signature of Public Benefit Corporation's Chief Executive Officer

March 14 '16

Date (Must be dated within 30 days before the report is delivered to the Secretary of State for Filing)

Email Address for Official Notices

Enter an email address to which the Secretary of State can forward official notices required by law and other notices:

yvonne@chalkboardcommons.org

Check here to have your email address excluded from requests for bulk data, to the extent allowed by Minnesota law.

List a name and daytime phone number of a person who can be contacted about this form:

Yvonne Godber

Contact Name

612-227-3734

Phone Number

Entities that own, lease, or have any financial interest in agricultural land or land capable of being farmed must register with the MN Dept. of Agriculture's Corporate Farm Program.

Does this entity own, lease, or have any financial interest in agricultural land or land capable of being farmed?

Yes No

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First Annual Benefit Report of



chalkboardcommons
PEOPLE POWERED LEARNING

A Minnesota (Specific) Public Benefit Corporation

March 14, 2016



chalkboardcommons
PEOPLE POWERED LEARNING

The research is in, and it's crystal clear: Real people matter more than ever to the future of learning and life-long satisfaction. We remember more and persevere longer after learning with others than when learning alone. Face-to-face connections and dynamic exchanges are essential to growing vibrant communities overflowing with curiosity and entrepreneurial ideas.

The problem is: In an age of mass-marketing, how do you find the real people in your local community who model lives and careers based on passion and creativity?

We bootstrapped and established Chalkboard Commons as a public benefit corporation in July 2015 to help tackle this issue. www.chalkboardcommons.org - launched in beta on January 1, 2016 - is a unique online marketplace and social network site designed to "*promote and preserve access to community-based knowledge and local learning assets and resources.*"

If you love what you do (or want to learn alongside people who love what they do) **join us!**

-  Search for in-person learning events and local learning resources.
-  Create and propose classes, workshops, tours (really any in-person learning event imaginable) and post it on Chalkboard for locals and visitors to find. No event is too small. Your events are added to your profile to showcase your expertise and build trust and reputation.
-  Connect with others to build local knowledge hubs that result in even more unique and original ideas, content, and connections.

Stay-at-home professionals, retirees, small-business owners, non-profit staff, freelance educators, students - *anyone* with experience, inspiration, or grit has the power to help better prepare our communities for a rapidly changing future. Today's knowledge-seekers and knowledge-keepers need and deserve stronger, more active local learning networks.

If you believe community-sourced learning is important to the way we live and learn today, we need your help to grow this movement. Thank you for spreading the word that real people are essential to the future workforce and general life-satisfaction!

www.chalkboardcommons.org
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Chalkboard Commons

Consider the following scenarios, not uncommon for Minnesota's growing population of independent, community-based educators:

When Sam, a talented middle school science teacher moved to Minnesota, he decided - like 3 million teachers each year - to leave his profession and stay home with his young children. He works part-time as a tutor for an online tutoring company, but misses face-to-face contact with groups of students. In an effort to work more independently as a freelance educator, he decides to host weekend tech workshops for kids at a local maker-space. The kids and parents are thrilled with the quality of the content and experience he provides. Efforts to recruit students, however, have been tougher than he expected. He frequently has to cancel a class due to low enrollment. Because he's not able to create a sustainable following by advertising his expertise, Sam decides it's better to keep working as an online tutor even though the company takes 40% of his rate.

Joan started a small non-profit focused on repairing and selling bikes and bike parts to benefit kids in low-income communities. An increasing part of her job is sharing content about their classes, trainings, and events. While everyone on the non-profit's social media pages, website, and board is positive about the work they do, she's struggling to find and continually grow new audiences to continue expanding interest and keeping enrollment numbers high (how many times can you take a bike repair workshop, no matter how great it is?). She's even tried posting on Craigslist. Joan spends a disproportionate amount of time on old-school marketing tasks like creating individual flyers for local bulletin boards and is wondering how she can spend more time doing what she loves to do: Giving people new skills like repairing bikes and living healthier lives.

Who loses out when things don't work out for people like Sam and Joan? The fact is, we all do.

Our communities are brimming with creative, entrepreneurial people who love their craft and who are important role models for what it means to create and sustain a life based on curiosity and ideas. They are important because research shows that the more we can interact with people like Sam and Joan, the more we learn, remember, and persist. It's also usually just more fun.

But where do you turn to find these knowledge-keepers when you need them? The reality is that they (and their events) are almost impossible to find unless you happen to catch a flyer at your local coffee shop or gym bulletin board. And if you do find out about an event, can you find

enough information about the instructor to know what they have taught in the past, who are their collaborators, and find evaluation data from past participants?

It is remarkable that, in the information age, an asset as valuable as community-sourced learning is limited to neighborhood listserves/bulletin boards, facebook pages, and word of mouth. Whether you're in rural China, northern Sweden, Ecuador, or St. Paul, MN, it's *not the availability, affordability, or quality* of community-based education that's missing: It's the ability to *find* it. Community-based knowledge capital remains locked-up. Without an alternative, education will increasingly remain divided between ever larger institutions and more anonymous online courseware.

We created Chalkboard Commons - an online marketplace for local education - to make sure people like Sam and Joan always have a way to showcase their knowledge and events even in the absence of huge marketing budgets. A searchable event calendar, professional learning portfolios, and community learning hubs give individuals and groups with valuable content a powerful way to share that knowhow with a broader network.

www.chalkboardcommons.org

Our goal is to promote access to face-to-face learning opportunities by removing barriers for individuals, small business owners, non-profits, community clubs, and independent educators -- in other words, anyone actively involved in building local knowledge ecosystems. We aim to:

- broaden conversations about where learning takes place and why place/community-based learning remains so important to the future;
- expand access to rich, local experiences for young and old alike; and
- provide resources for individuals to showcase their knowledge in ways that build trust and reputation, and find community collaborators to co-create dynamic, community-based learning hubs.



History of Chalkboard Commons

Whether working, traveling, or making tough choices around our own family's learning, we - a family of 4 - found ourselves asking:

- *Where do you learn best?*
- *What do learners today need that is different from the past?*
- *Who are knowledge-keepers in this day and age - and how can you find them when you need them?*

We're indebted to the many local artists, writers, inventors, and entrepreneurs who, through their *original* work, inspired us to question, wonder, and become aware of different ways of thinking and being. We also realized that, despite their valuable contribution to community, more often than not, they struggle to find and connect with enthusiastic audiences.

In 2015, we decided to do something about it. Realizing that the technology to build a social networking site was becoming accessible (and affordable) enough to tackle on our own, we moved the conversation off the kitchen table. With the help of dedicated friends, family, and talented local developers, we created an online tool to spark local learning connections. We're committed to growing a movement that connects local knowledge keepers - *people who inspire and are role model for lives based on ideas, entrepreneurship, creativity, and grit* - with invested knowledge seekers who understand that carving your own path in life increasingly requires interactions with real people who love what they do. *Real people really do matter.*

On July 28, 2015, we proudly launched as a Minnesota (Specific) Public Benefit Corporation focused on broadening access to local expertise, and expanding ideas about where and how we learn best in this day and age.



Key Management

Co-founder **Yvonne Godber**, brings a PhD in Educational Psychology and years thinking about how learning occurs and the systems that need to be in place for students to thrive. She's a huge advocate for the research highlighting how it is the *quality* of interactions - the connections and relationships - that affect social, emotional, and academic outcomes. Experiences working with school staff and non-profits in Minnesota, around the U.S., and abroad have shown her firsthand that it is the *network* of people that make significant changes in kids' lives.

Unfortunately barriers often exist to finding and engaging a community and individuals continue to work in silos. People need people, and anyone working alone will struggle. The more we can build connections around learning, and broaden access to people who can inspire and support learners, the better off we are in preparing for a future workforce that doesn't even yet exist.

When co-founder **Derk Scholtz** graduated in the 90's amidst high unemployment and rapidly changing job descriptions, he knew an entrepreneurial life focused on design for community good was the only one for him. In 1992, years before Minnesota topped the list of bikers/capita, he started Dero Corporation with his brother Rolf and began manufacturing sculptural bike racks that helped elevate attention to biking as a viable form of transportation. Obtaining a Masters of Architecture along the way, he continued to work for design companies in NYC and Minneapolis. Over 25 years of work, travel, and parenting have convinced Derk that local communities have the power to propel creativity and preserve knowledge at risk of extinction in an era of mass-marketing. Derk brings these same design skills and an ever-growing desire to improve community to this, his next big "EDventure:" promoting access to community-based learning.



Public Benefit Corporation (PBC) Mission

As we grow this movement and spark ideas and connections to bring attention to the value of face-to-face, community-sourced learning, we look forward to one day dedicating profits from Chalkboard Commons to something near and dear to our work – our PBC mission:

Promoting and preserving access to community-based knowledge and local learning assets and resources.

Since establishing Chalkboard Commons as a Specific Benefit Corporation on July 28, 2015, we spent the last 5 months of 2015 working with local developers Triplo.co to build and finalize www.chalkboardcommons.org, an online marketplace and social networking site that allows members to:

- search local learning events;
- create & post local classes, demonstrations, events, workshops;
- suggest ideas to prompt others' interest in collaboration and bring events to fruition;
- link events to their individual profiles;
- build learning hubs to highlight partnerships between local educators as well as between them and local businesses, non-profits; and organizations; and
- message each other to foster partnerships and co-create learning events.



2015 Accomplishments

In the process of building our site, chalkboardcommons.org, in 2015, we

- interviewed many community-based educators and potential users to better understand their needs, and make sure that our site is able to address their challenges;
- learned a great deal about the economics, technicalities and legalities of starting a social media site;
- expanded our network and initiated content to support a social media presence;
- conducted precedent and potential competitor research; and
- benefitted enormously from resources available to the startup community in Minnesota, including Fredrikson & Byron's Benefit Cultivator Program.

Hard work and strong communication with our developers paid off. **Our main accomplishment related to achieving our specific benefit goal is that on January 1, 2016, our beta site - www.chalkboardcommons.org - went live with a network of local, trusted users who are committed to testing the idea with us!**

We are grateful to the friends, family, and growing network of wonderful community partners who believe community-based learning resources are essential to individual and community well-being, and are willing to trailblaze with us.



2016 Goals & Call to Action

We are extremely proud of the fact that we bootstrapped the initial development of Chalkboard Commons in 2015. We are ready to launch into 2016 with a robust site that supports our mission.

That said, building a social networking site as complicated as Chalkboard Commons inevitably takes longer than one hopes or intends. Now that the beta site is available for testing, we will continue to learn from site members to tweak and improve user experience and functionality, and grow membership.

To facilitate the availability of community-sourced events and resources, posts on the beta site are currently free. As we grow in membership and lessons learned, we will implement an affordable, graduated subscription to fund ongoing development and more actively contribute to our mission.

Ideas surrounding why community-sourced learning is important require ongoing conversations, and we look forward to expanding our network via social media, the site itself, and local and national conferences.

We invite anyone who values local learning as either a learner or a community-based educator to please **join us** by posting classes and events, inviting friends or other educators, or simply letting educators on the site know that you value their work and the role they play in our community.

Thank you for spreading the word that community-based, people-powered learning matters!

Chalkboard Commons, SBC
St. Paul, MN
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www.chalkboardcommons.org
tw: @chalkboardcoms
fb: Chalkboard Commons

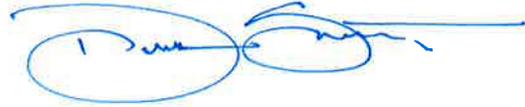


Certification by the Board of Directors

The undersigned, being all the directors of Chalkboard Commons, SBC, hereby acknowledge and certify that we have reviewed and approved the enclosed First Annual Report.



Yvonne Godber



Derk Scholtz

Submission

I, the undersigned, certify that I am the CEO of this public benefit corporation. I further certify that I have signed this document no more than 30 days before the document is delivered to the secretary of state for filing, and that this document is current when signed. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.



Yvonne Godber

