

# MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP



We are a group of seven students from Green River College, working towards our Bachelor's degree in Marketing and Entrepreneurship and hoping to share more about our infused honey business. In the bustling kitchens and brainstorming sessions of our group of innovative Green River College seniors, a journey began with a single, sweet ambition: to reinvent the way we enjoy honey. Our team of determined marketing and entrepreneurship majors embarked on a project that was as challenging as it was thrilling, aiming to put a unique spin on honey products for PNW foodies.

A highlight of this program is the venture launch capstone. "This is a six-month program where, in the first quarter, students develop a business idea and then get a chance to present to a panel of judges in order to get funding. In the second quarter, they used this funding to launch the business in the real world. These skills will help them in

their future career and in any business they start," Explains Professor Jeff Perlot.

The business that we've created is Rainier Honey Co, a collaboration with Rusty Plow Farms that isn't your ordinary honey-based venture. By infusing raw, local honey with a variety of organic, dried ingredients, we are crafting a lineup of flavored honey – lemon, strawberry, cinnamon, habanero – each with its own unique and robust profile, promising a strong flavor to use in a variety of ways.

The collaboration with Rusty Plow Farms highlights a significant aspect of our mission. By sourcing honey locally, we are supporting and promoting the importance of local agriculture, ensuring that the benefits of their success ripple through the community of Enumclaw and beyond.

"I had the idea for this partnership while I was sitting down for coffee at The Local and saw they had a 'fill your own jar' station for local honey," says Kelsey, one of the team members. "When the barista told me where they sourced this honey from, I remembered picking blueberries with my mom at the farm as a kid. Sue and Doug have helped us so much with this project and we want to extend our gratitude towards them."

"The road to get to this product was a long one filled with ups and downs," explains Isaac, another member of the team. "But, as we know now, that's just how entrepreneurship goes. You try and try ideas until you find something that you're all passionate about and there's a market for."

Our team's first idea was to create honey candy. The concept was simple yet captivating: encase liquid honey within a shell of natural

beeswax, creating a delightful treat. However, reality proved to be more bitter than sweet as the end product was far more appealing in theory than in taste. We just could not seem to make it work with the resources and time that we had.

Team member Sabrina shares, "That's brought us to what we call 'the pivot.' We really didn't want to change ideas so late into the program but it ended up being a blessing in disguise since infused honey ended up being a great idea."

Team member Sean adds, "Katie, our CTO, dried some ingredients and put them in honey, just as an experiment. When the ingredients had properly infused and we were able to try it, we knew that she'd made some magic happen, and immediately pivoted to work on this instead."

As we scale our business we continue to innovate as we gather the resources to do so. Our next steps involve purchasing our dream packaging designs, and creating an experience for the customer that says "we really spent a lot of time on this."

"This project has been a lot of work, and it's definitely difficult to balance night school with many of us working full time, but the creative spark ignited by this project and this team makes it all worth it," shares team member Genevieve.

Niko adds, "We are all in the same cohort in our Bachelor's program at Green River College. Since the start of the program, we've known that our capstone would be Venture Launch: a project where you launch a business venture in groups. Going through the program for the past year and a half we got to know one another through various smaller projects and group work. Before we even began Venture

Launch, we all knew that we wanted to work together. So when it came time to pick our groups officially, we did not doubt that this was the dream team since we balance each of our strengths and weaknesses well."

This journey from honey candy to infused honey exemplifies more than just the evolution of a product. It represents the essence of entrepreneurship and innovation taught at Green River College. Our team's ability to adapt, pivot, and persevere in the face of challenges is a vivid illustration of the real-world application of our studies. Through our venture, we have not only enriched our learning experience but also contributed a novel product to our local community, embodying the spirit of making a positive impact through entrepreneurship.

