

GROWING VERMONT

Products

Businesses

Entrepreneurs

MISSION

The student-operated, Growing Vermont store seeks to contribute to the continued sustainable economic development of the state of Vermont by pursuing a strategy of educating and supporting potential and current local entrepreneurs.

GOALS

In order to fulfill the store's mission the Growing Vermont team seeks to accomplish the following goals:

- Educate the campus community about the positive impacts of buying local.
- Build awareness of the availability of Vermont products and businesses.
- Provide a retail incubator space where students collaborate with Vermont entrepreneurs to research optimal marketing and business-planning strategies.
- Sustain a real-world laboratory where UVM students apply their academic lessons in entrepreneurship to solve business problems.

MORE INFORMATION

Located on the first floor of the University of Vermont's new Davis Student Center, the *Growing Vermont* Student-Operated Store is a one-of-a-kind store with the mission of: **Educating** the public about the positive impacts of buying local, **Serving** Vermont entrepreneurs and their businesses, and **Providing** applied-learning opportunities for aspiring student-entrepreneurs. To these ends, *Growing Vermont* undertakes the following activities.

Building awareness of Vermont businesses and products on UVM campus

Growing Vermont will develop awareness of the availability of Vermont products and services to campus consumers ranging from individuals to departments through several education and outreach processes. Through the rotating vendor relationships developed in the store, the campus community will be exposed to businesses and their products from across Vermont that they may previously have not been aware of. Additionally, this one-of-a-kind student-operated store will provide unique opportunities for Vermont businesses to come to campus and showcase themselves during demonstration events, etc.

Providing a unique Vermont business incubator space

Our partner-vendors will access the UVM community enabling them to develop brand identity with a variety of demographics including students, faculty and staff, visitors, alumni, and conference attendees on campus. Additionally, *Growing Vermont* will provide unique opportunities for our partner-vendors to develop specific, student-assisted research projects. Under faculty guidance, students will work directly with businesses that wish to research optimal marketing and sales strategies for their products and businesses. One popular research product includes conducting customer surveys about vendors' products as they are purchased. Student-researchers will conduct product pricing, branding and other marketing or business research while offering detailed customer demographic reports to interested vendors.

Operating an applied-learning laboratory for aspiring entrepreneurs

University of Vermont students are clamoring for new and innovative ways to apply their classroom learning to real world situations. This fully student-operated store will enable UVM students from every college and department to apply their interest in entrepreneurship in an academic, hands-on setting. This unique laboratory experience will also enable aspiring student-entrepreneurs to work side-by-side with Vermont's business entrepreneurs as they develop valuable entrepreneurial skills to bring to the marketplace upon graduation. Through a collaborative research and operating model, *Growing Vermont* will create new student-business linkages leading to internship and job placement opportunities.

For more information about the store please contact the project coordinator:

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