

# Hormel Competition Sparks McCook Business Activity

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With the help of a \$25,000 investment from the Hormel Family Foundation and the Invest Nebraska Corporation, a new McCook business is moving ahead with plans for a November opening. "We're making progress," said Stephanie Hagan Dusatko, who is partnering with her husband, Jeff, and her sister, Ashley Hagan, for the launch of a new store called "The Kloset." "We have a couple of locations identified in downtown McCook and hope to be making a decision soon," Stephanie said. "We still have a lot to do, but it's an exciting process." The new store will feature leading fashion brands at economical prices. This will be made possible by extensive personal and on-line buying by the Dusatkos and Hagan in Denver and Omaha, as well as purchases from The Kloset's customers in McCook. "It is a concept which works successfully because customers are getting top line products at prices far below original retail," Stephanie said. "We've had overwhelming support," said the Dusatkos and Hagan, who were selected as the recipients of the 2009 business plan prize in June. "The Hormel Family Foundation and Invest Nebraska have been a great help to us in the development of an operating plan." The Kloset will stock a variety of fashion merchandise for women, including jeans, shirts, pants, dresses, tank tops, sweaters, hoodies and coats. Among the many name brands will be American Eagle, Abercrombie, Hollister, Lucky, Seven and Silver. In addition, The Kloset will offer a range of accessories. These will include rings, necklaces, bracelets, earrings, wallets and purses.

Both the Dusatko and Hagan families are in business in the McCook and Culbertson area. Jeff's father, Jim, is the American Family Insurance agent in McCook and Stephanie and Ashley's father, Don, is associated with Hagan Trucking in Culbertson. That has provided a good foundation for them, as have their careers in finance, computer information systems and real estate in Denver and Omaha.

On top of that, the mentoring from the Hormel Family Foundation has been invaluable, Stephanie said. The Hormel competition, launched in 2007, has made a positive difference for McCook business. The first year's award winner, Game On, has been a successful enterprise, with increasing business bringing expansion for the co-owners, Cody Dame and Tanner Lytle. In January they moved the Game On business to the Westview Plaza, doubling the store's floor space. Even more business activity is on the horizon. Cody and Amanda Dame are going ahead with a new business, Spotlight Studios, which will be located in the corner building at West First and C Streets across from the JCPenney store. They were among the competitors in the Hormel Business Plan competition, and are taking the idea forward even though they were not selected as winners of the \$25,000 investment prize. That was the hoped-for result of the Hormel competition, which is designed to inspire interest in entrepreneurship. Plans will be announced early next year for the 2010 competition. More information is available by going the foundation's website: [www.hormelfamilyfoundation.com](http://www.hormelfamilyfoundation.com).