



# ENERGIZING ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITIES

## A Pathway to Prosperity



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## Young entrepreneur brings new energy to Madison WV,

by Cynthia Mccomas, *Energizing Entrepreneurial Communities Vista*



Lacey Cornell is a Boone County, WV native with a vision for improving her community through the one thing that never fails to bring people together—a good meal.

Cornell owns Ma & Pa’s BBQ, a restaurant in Madison, WV that specializes in home-cooked food that might remind you more of a cozy night in your grandma’s kitchen than any typical restaurant experience. Ma & Pa’s sources many ingredients locally, and their recipes have been passed down through Cornell’s family.

While Ma & Pa’s is becoming a cornerstone business in Boone County, getting there hasn’t been without its challenges. Cornell’s dream was to start a family-owned business, so she started out with a food trailer, then moved to a restaurant on Madison’s Main Street. At only 25 years old, Cornell is learning as she goes, but her resilience keeps her going through the tough times. The restaurant has been open for about two years, and Cornell has grown as a business owner during that time.



As a restaurant owner on Main Street, Cornell is closely connected with the people in Boone County. She says she cares about the community of Boone County as much as she cares about her own family, and without the people of her community, she wouldn't have a business.

To show her support, she participates in the Madison Meet-Ups, a community project supported with funds from The Hub. Madison Meet-Ups are a series of small business networking events for current and aspiring business owners in the community. The series was founded and is hosted by Kandi Workman, a Madison native and community advocate. "I spoke to Lacey because I had hopes for putting some positive vibes on Main Street," said Workman.

Hosting the events in a succeeding restaurant on Main Street may provide encouragement for aspiring entrepreneurs to take after Cornell and open their own businesses on the the once-thriving stretch of town. "Lacey is the face of the future of Madison," said Workman. "She confessed her desire to help Madison however she could and that community is so important to her."

Workman is hopeful that the success of Ma & Pa's might inspire more young people to stay in Boone County to open businesses. "We as a community need to encourage and support our young people who strive to establish themselves as business owners in this area. They certainly aren't choosing to stay in Boone County for the money. It's the people who keep them here," said Workman.

