



## Entrepreneur plans to headquarter nonprofit NewNorth Center in Holland

By Myron Kukla | The Grand Rapids Press

December 08, 2009, 5:12PM



Mark Copier | The Grand Rapids Press

NewNorth president Nate Young addresses Holland Area Chamber of Commerce members Tuesday morning.

HOLLAND -- Entrepreneur Nate Young wants to bring together creative right brain thinkers and data-driven, left-brain thinkers to create better corporations.

He calls his vision the **NewNorth Center for Design in Business**, a hybrid education and business-training center that will specialize in design and innovation courses along with research and executive education.

Young plans to headquarter the nonprofit center -- launched last spring with seed money and backing from the Lakeshore Advantage economic development group and Brooks Capital Management -- in Holland with training centers in Grand Rapids and possibly Detroit.

"We plan to start with custom-designed programs for West Michigan companies in the first quarter of 2010," said Young who most recently was executive vice president and chief academic officer of the Art Center

College of Design in Pasadena, Calif.

Speaking at a Holland Chamber of Commerce meeting on Tuesday, Young said he chose West Michigan for the NewNorth Center because of its history of innovative product design and international business leadership.

"West Michigan has that rare combination of interdisciplinary vision, entrepreneurial spirit and business leadership who embrace new ideas to improve product and operations," he said.

Plans call for NewNorth to have regular tuition programs operating next summer for business students, corporate employees and executives.

Right now, Young and his startup staff are working out of a lakeside home in Holland, spreading the word and gathering a group of corporate leaders and innovative thinkers to get the center operational.

Those on board right now include: Brian Walker, CEO of Herman Miller Inc.; David Slikkers, CEO of Tiara Yachts and Energetx; Chuck Jones, Whirlpool Corp.'s vice president of global consumer design; Kevin Budelmann, president of People Design Grand Rapids; and John Berry, executive director of Design West Michigan.

"If you took the best executive business school and the best design school and combine them into one entity, that's what NewNorth will be," said Young, a former vice president of design and global product development at the former Prince Corp. and Johnson Controls Inc. in Holland.

Mark Tanis, president of the communications and marketing firm The Image Group in Holland, said NewNorth is an "absolutely great idea."

"West Michigan craftsmanship and businesses have been driven by great ideas," Tanis said.

"When you stop to think of what designers Charles and Ray Eames and Herman Miller did years ago in bringing together office furniture and artistic design, you can see the NewNorth concept at work."

E-mail the author of this story: [localnews@grpress.com](mailto:localnews@grpress.com)

© 2009 MLive.com. All rights reserved.