

2021 Think Big Award

The Think Big Award recognizes an up-and-coming entrepreneur who has displayed extraordinary potential on their entrepreneurial journey. This award is given to an individual who not only develops their own business ideas, but encourages others to participate in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Iowa.

Rebecca Runyon



By the age of 9, Rebecca had established her own Jersey herd and found a passion in the dairy industry. She says this is where her passion for entrepreneurship began. Rebecca has always had an interest in starting her own ice cream business with her dairy herd, while also bringing an added educational component to help others understand how a dairy farm works and operates. The idea of starting her own dairy business was put on hold while she studied pursued her bachelor's degree majoring in Agricultural Studies and minoring Entrepreneurial Studies. While at Iowa State she was involved in the university's Agricultural Entrepreneurship Initiative and participated in ISU Pappajohn Center for Entrepreneurship's CYStarters

program. She continued to be involved in CYstarters after completing the program and was later awarded the CYstarters Alumni Award in 2020.

During her time at Iowa State, Rebecca also started a business in 2017 called Lunchsox. She came up with the business idea during a mission trip in Zimbabwe where she saw a big need to feed children a nutritious meal. As a farmer, she has always been passionate about feeding people.

Lunchsox contracted with wool mills to produce socks that would later be sold to consumers. 100% of the proceeds were donated to provide a hot meal for children abroad and in the United States. During 2019, Rebecca also started Bessie's Parlor a producer and retailer of quality ice cream. Also during that time she also assisted another woman-owned business, KinoSol, where she helped with marketing and operations. She ultimately left KinoSol in late 2019 and sold Lunchsox in early 2020 so that she could devote all of her time and efforts to developing and growing Bessie's Parlor.

**LEARN MORE ABOUT
BESSIE'S PARLOR**

<https://www.bessiesparlor.com/>

