

Generation Y embraces entrepreneurial spirit

By Bill O'Driscoll, Reno Gazette-Journal

Ashley Gonzales is all of 23 years old, but she has mapped out a clear future. She plans to open her own business, a teen center, in Carson City.

First will come night classes this fall leading to a business degree. Then, she said, she'll be ready to pursue a haven for Carson-area teenagers.

"I want to see youth succeed rather than get into trouble. I saw it firsthand," she said. "The way society is going, with gangs and drugs, I fear for children. I really want to do this."

Gonzales' drive to control her future is reflected in a recent nationwide survey by Reno-based Employers insurance showing nearly half – or 46 percent – of Generation Y Americans ages 18-25 plan to start their own business in the next five years.

Of the next age group, Gen Xers ages 26-45, about 35 percent stated the same goal, according to the survey.

The do-it-yourself spirit doesn't surprise local entrepreneurs, especially in the face of economic recession. In the greater Reno-Sparks region, unemployment topped 13 percent in all but one of the past 12 months.

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