



Flemming Creativity, Entrepreneurship
and Economic Development (CEED) Center

FLEMMING CEED CENTER NEWSLETTER

Creativity, Entrepreneurship, & Economic Development (CEED) Center



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Our Mission

The mission of the Flemming Creativity, Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (CEED) Center is to inspire an entrepreneurial spirit and innovative thinking in the Penn State University Berks Community. The Flemming CEED Center seeks to foster growth and development in the Greater Reading area through technology based solutions, human capital development and enterprise creation.

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Flemming Creativity, Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (CEED) Center

Entrepreneurship & Innovation (ENTI) Minor

at Penn State Berks *New Venture Cluster*



This 18-credit, university-wide, interdisciplinary ENTI minor is designed to foster creativity, leadership, self-efficiency, and teamwork. This minor is open to all Penn State Berks students regardless of their major. The minor is found under the academic program, Intercollege on LionPath.

This cluster is designed to help students develop skills and knowledge in the following fourteen areas:

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|----------------------------|---|
| Opportunity recognition | Entrepreneurial finance |
| New product development | Effective teamwork |
| Innovative thinking | Entrepreneurial marketing |
| Tolerance for ambiguity | Entrepreneurial and innovation strategy |
| Resource acquisition | Technology commercialization |
| Effective negotiation | Intellectual property management |
| Entrepreneurial management | Business law |

Professors Teaching Entrepreneurship Courses at Berks:

- Dr. Abdullah Konak (MGMT 215)
- Dr. Sadan Kulturel-Konak (MGMT 425)
- Prof. James Laurie (BA 250/ENGR 310)
- Dr. Ada Leung (MGMT 427)
- Dr. Pauline Milwood (HM 484)
- Prof. James Shankweiler (MGMT 297/MGMT 497)
- Prof. Mary Zervanos (BA 243)



Penn State Berks Idea TestLab

In Spring 2019, the Flemming CEED Center hosted the second cohort of the Idea TestLab. The Invent Penn State NSF I-Corps Site is funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) Grant No. 1735627. The IdeaTestLab allows students to test the validity of their new business idea. The program lasted six weeks and had two guest speakers/mentors including Ernie Post, Director of the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in PA; and Tim Hillert of BenXchange. Participants included three teams; Sprockety, Vytah-Fit, and Panaga. Sprockety is a company started by Penn State alumna Danielle Pritz that is focused on promoting STEM in the classroom through hands-on activities. Sprockety provides resources and materials that teachers will use as part of their STEM curriculum. Vytah-Fit, LLC is a fitness company comprised of five members, Masen Suhadolnik, Ricky Romaniello, Bradley Owens, Karl Bruhn, and Tobias Welk. Their product utilizes integrated sensors, and relies on Bluetooth connectivity to transfer weightlifting data to a mobile application. Panaga is comprised of two members; Project Lead, Dr. Yi Yang of Penn State Abington, and Dr. Xuan Liu of NJIT. The team is exploring the commercial potential of applying laser scanning technology in the field of art application.

The following statements are testimonials from the Spring 2019 Idea TestLab participants:

“The Idea TestLab was an invaluable experience. Dr. Kulturel-Konak and Dr. Konak worked with the teams to develop value propositions, perform meaningful customer interviews, evaluate potential competitors, and refine our business ideas throughout the 6-week workshop.” -Sprockety.

"The PSU Berks TestLab was a crucial step for Vytah-Fit, LLC by means of customer discovery. Throughout the course of the TestLab, the team was meticulously guided regarding ideal customer segments, and how to apply the company's vision to accurately assess the pains of the ideal customer. " -Vytah-Fit.

“The training I received from the Idea TestLab at Penn State Berks is very practical and the methods can be easily applied. The training not only helped me to evaluate the commercial potential of my research, but I was also able to incorporate these methods into a student capstone project that I am advising.” -Panaga.





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Student Enterprise Award

The Flemming CEED Center's Spring 2019 Student Enterprise Award provides selected business startup teams with seed money to support enterprising and innovative students at Penn State Berks. This award encourages students to use their Penn State education to their advantage and start a business. The award is open to all Penn State Berks students as long as their project leader is a junior or senior, majoring in Engineering, Business, or Information Sciences and Technology programs. The teams first submit their business description, then submit a business plan and perform a pitch. A review committee consisting of five Penn State faculty members and a business leader will decide how the seed money will be distributed. The teams can be granted up to \$3,000 total for their business start up. There are currently a total of nine submissions and the finalists will pitch their business ideas to the selection committee.



Hospitality Entrepreneurship

The Spring 2019 Penn State Berks HM 484 class was given the assignment to prepare an elevator pitch video for a business idea related to hospitality or tourism sector. Seven business ideas were submitted. The ideas included a rooftop speakeasy; a greenhouse restaurant; make-your-own cookie dough shop; event registry app; a safety travel guide for single women; a fashion travel app for study abroad college students; and a music-embedded indigenous language learning app for tourists who want to learn how to 'speak like a local' when traveling to specific locations. After each team's pitch, the remaining classmates completed a peer evaluation of each business idea, determining whether they would fund the business idea or not. The purpose of this assignment was not only to strengthen student's oral delivery skills, but also to allow the students to think critically about a business model canvas when seeking funding for their business startup. The HM 484 class (taught by Dr. Pauline Milwood) consisted of ten students including Christine Baldwin, Tessa Caltagirone, Karisa Gauker, Cristine Humer, Gillian Mcsherry, Alexandra Morgan, Christina Pyrrhus, Miranda Reedy, Elizabeth Reynolds, and Ashley Wright.



Entrepreneurship Club Events

Traduki Speaker

On Monday, February 4, 2019, Ryan Morris, CEO of Traduki, came to the Flemming CEED Center to talk with the Entrepreneurship Club. Traduki is a company that brings together freelance translators with clients in need. Ryan shared his startup experience and expressed his belief in the help of Penn State in the process. Mentors, faculty, alumni, and Penn State Law attorneys were key inexpensive services that aided in his startup. One piece of advice that he wanted to leave with the students with was that networking is key. If you are not familiar with an area of expertise, then find someone who is an expert, and build a team with a diverse skillset.



BenXchange Speaker

One Monday, March 18, 2019, Tim Hillert of BenXchange, a finance and insurance company, came to talk to the Entrepreneurship Club. Tim is a Penn State alumni with an EMBA. Tim's talk was Q&A style, allowing students to ask him about his personal experiences and opinions about starting a business based on his own experiences. Tim says the key to running multiple businesses for him was finding a synergy. He also stressed the importance of education, networking, and having real data to backup your claims when starting a business.



3D Printing Workshop

On February 13, March 15, and April 8, 2019, the Entrepreneurship Club hosted three 3D Printing Workshops. The purpose of these workshops were to introduce participants to 3D Printing. More specifically, the use of 3D printing to create items with a function or purpose to better industries or everyday life.



LinkedIn Workshop

On April 10, 2019, the Entrepreneurship Club hosted a LinkedIn Workshop that taught students the value of having a LinkedIn account. They showed students how to setup their own account in a professional manner. They also offered free headshot pictures taken for the students to use for their own profiles.





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Entrepreneurship Student Club

Students in the Entrepreneurship Club meet to discuss ideas, events going on within the club, hosting 3D printing workshops, and future projects. The Entrepreneurship Club is a great opportunity for students in the Entrepreneurship and Innovation (ENTI) Minor who want to start their own business, or students from any discipline who have an idea or an invention that they want to create.



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Open House: ENTI Minor Students

On Wednesday, March 20, 2019, the Flemming CEED Center hosted an Open House promoting the Entrepreneurship and Innovation (ENTI) Minor at Penn State Berks. This event gave current and prospective students of the ENTI minor an opportunity not only to learn the value of the minor, but to also socialize with other like-minded students in the same field. They also congratulated the ENTI minor graduates of Spring 2019 who attended the Open House. Each graduate was given the opportunity to share their experience within the minor and advice to those who are about to embark on the journey of entrepreneurship education.





PennState
Berks

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K-12 Creativity Workshop

To head start the Penn State Startup Week, on Wednesday, March 27, 2019, the Fleming CEED Center hosted its bi-annual Creativity Workshop hosted by the Entrepreneurship Club. The purpose of this workshop is to inspire young children to think creatively, and ultimately develop an entrepreneurial mindset.

The workshop started with a lesson and demonstration on 3D printing. The students were introduced to 3D printers and how they can use them to solve problems in the community.

The students then practiced how to think creatively. This was accomplished through interactive PowerPoint presentations and multiple creative activities. The students started with the *Human Knot Game*, where they all held hands tangled in a knot and then had to work together to undo the knot. Then, the students were put into some friendly competition to see who could create the *Tallest Standing Tower* out of a few sheets of newspaper. Finally, the students were tasked with repurposing everyday items with the *Alternative Use Game*.

The participants were then given a chance to reflect and share what they have learned through their experience in the workshop. They expressed how they can apply some creative methods that they learned to the real world. They also identified that the workshop brought out realization of strengths and weaknesses not only within their teams, but within themselves.

Two Entrepreneurship Club members, Nathaniel Leighton and Caitlin Morris, analyzed the results of the previous workshops and shifted the main focus of the workshop from entrepreneurship to primarily creativity. They found the workshops were effective in teaching children the value of entrepreneurship education and creativity. They will present their findings at the Higher Education Council of Berks County (HECBC) Research Conference at Reading Area Community College on April 27, 2019.





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Entrepreneurship Speaker Series



April 1 through 6, 2019 was Startup Week at all Penn State Campuses. This week gives nascent student entrepreneurs an opportunity to participate in a plethora of entrepreneurial events. Startup Week features workshops, networking events, and a student startup competition.

On April 3, 2019, the Flemming CEED Center hosted the Entrepreneurship Speaker Series as part of the Startup Week. The Speaker Series allow students to listen to entrepreneurs' real life experiences including what worked or did not work towards the success of their businesses.

The panel consisted of Penn State alumni Camrin Edwards, Wedding Coordinator and Seamstress of Camrin Edwards; Ryan Morris, a student entrepreneur and co-founder of Traduki Technologies LLC,; Tito Orjhi, a student entrepreneur and co-founder of Trimatis LLC,; and Ernie Post, the Pennsylvania State Director of the Small Business Development Center at Kutztown University.

Each panelist had a chance to give a brief summary of their entrepreneurial experiences and then the floor was opened to questions from the audience. The overarching theme that kept arising from all of the panelists is that the best time to start a business is as a college student, more specifically as a Penn State student due to all of the resources and support that Penn State and their faculty can provide.

After the Q&A was completed, the event continued in the Flemming CEED Center with 'Coffee Hour with the Panelists'. This allowed the audience to get up close and personal with the panelists to get to know them and ask further questions. There was a very social and laid-back atmosphere, which was a perfect way to conclude the event.





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Nittany AI Challenge

On April 3, 2019, the Penn State Berks team, Resilient Resumes, was announced to be one of the top ten finalists in the Nittany AI Challenge at University Park to receive \$2,000 from the Nittany AI Alliance to move their idea forward and develop a prototype. To enter the challenge, teams were asked to submit solutions using the artificial intelligence platform of their choosing to address real-world problems facing students at the University. AI companies including Amazon, Google, Microsoft and Oracle offer hands-on workshops during the challenge to assist students with development.



The Resilient Resumes team designed a web application that walks users through the resume creation process. Through guided questions, the application ensures that all necessary information is included by the user. Then the resume will be analyzed through artificial intelligence and the application will send out recommendations to help the user improve various features in the resume.

The team is comprised of three Penn State Berks students, project lead Amie Croteau, Ethan Adams, and Ian Morrissey. In addition to the team, Bryan Cruz, a junior majoring in computer science at Penn State Harrisburg also joined them. The Penn State Berks faculty advisors are Abdullah Konak, professor of IST, and Yuan Xue, assistant professor of IST.

Inc.U Competition

PENN STATE
startup week

PennTAP's Penn State Inc.U competition is a program funded by a five-year grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (USEDA) in partnership with Invent Penn State and their entrepreneurial assistance centers. Part of the USED A grant funds the television show "The Investment," a competition where teams of Penn State students are competing for funding for their business startup.



As part of Startup Week, Penn State Berk's Team, Vytah-Fit was selected to be one of the six university wide finalists to pitch their ideas on WPSU's "The Investment" television show on Saturday, April 6, 2019, . This television show is similar to the show "Shark-Tank." The team presented a pitch to a panel of judges for a chance to win funding for their startup. Vytah-Fit created a device that attaches to weight-lifting equipment and collects data to inform the weightlifter about their performance.

VentureWell Grant for Creativity

VentureWell is a nonprofit organization that cultivates inventors, innovators, and entrepreneurs by funding the creation of new ventures, research labs, and entrepreneurship education. VentureWell’s Faculty Grant, “Cross Pollination of STEM Courses to Sustain Entrepreneur teams’ Disruptive-technology Solutions (STEM Seeds),” was given to a team of Penn State Berks faculty members in the amount of \$14,394.

The team of faculty consists of Sadan Kulturel-Konak, professor of management information systems; Abdullah Konak, professor of information science and technology; Marietta Scanlon, assistant teaching professor of engineering; and Ed Sauer, instructor of engineering.

The purpose of the project that is being funded is to promote the formation of “E-teams,” which is student entrepreneur teams. Their main goal being to increase the amount of E-teams that complete the ideation phase and move onto the testing phase.

The team plans to achieve these goals by implementing projects such as cross-pollinate introductory engineering and information technology classes with entrepreneurial concepts; cross-class interdisciplinary E-teams; and enabling students to continue their entrepreneurship projects started in class beyond the end of class time by creating entrepreneurship ecosystems through seed grants and coaching.

