

INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

NEWSLETTER OF THE MUHLENBERG INE PROGRAM



2018 INNOVATION CHALLENGE WINNER JOSH AJAMU '20 PITCHING HIS WINNING VENTURE: ITHACA

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2018 INNOVATION CHALLENGE

...3, 2, 1, LAUNCH

On April 12, 2018 the Innovation & Entrepreneurship Program hosted the 9th Annual Innovation Challenge. The Innovation Challenge is an idea pitch competition where students get 6 minutes to pitch their idea for a business venture to a panel of judges and the Muhlenberg Community. This year eight teams competed in the Challenge, all vying for the \$1,000 grand prize.

The winner of this year's Challenge was Josh Ajamo '20, who pitched "Ithaca". Ithaca is a platform that connects lawyers working on the ground with refugees, to lawyers willing to provide pro-bono services from their home countries. These remote attorneys provide key legal research that attorneys on the ground do not have time to complete due to

their large caseloads. In this way, Ithaca aims to help provide more efficient and effective representation to refugees in need. Josh also qualified to pitch at the Lehigh Valley pitch competition representing Muhlenberg against other schools in the region.

In second place was the team from "Ana" composed of Tom Littrell '18, Laura Styer '20, Patrick Kantner '20, and Kendrick Weingast '20. Ana is future-forward software, combining software and ethics. Ana compartmentalizes the features of your smartphone so you can reclaim your time and control over your phone.

Third place was "Retro Revolutions" by Jordan Curtis '21. Retro Revolutions brings retro console games back to life, through the use of a proprietary adapter that allows the retro gamer to save progress and high

scores in games that outlived their intended lifespan.

The Audience Choice award went to Shana Joseph '18 and Michael Kovach '18 for their app that allows partygoers to curate the songs on the party hosts' playlist.

ALUMNI ENTREPRENEUR SPOTLIGHT RACHEL BERGER: THE ARTISTS CO-OP

Rachel Berger '11 is the Founder and Executive Director of the Artist Co-op. She is an actor, blogger, producer in NYC. She started developing The Artist Co-op in September 2015.

The Artist Co-op was created by the need for an artistic community in New York City. Rachel was inspired by the coworking trends for tech and start up industries and realized how they directly benefit the performing artist community. As an artist, she defines herself as a slasher. (ie. actress/producer/blogger as well as a barre employee/babysitter/producing assistant/dog walker/etc) She found that there was no space that supported all of these titles. No longer wanting to waste money at coffee shops and dingy rehearsal rooms, she delved into deep thinking, on why she believes a coworking space for performing artists must exist.

On May 15th, 2017, The Artist Co-op officially opened its first location in Hell's Kitchen, 500 W 52nd Street. The location is 2,000 sq ft. featuring



THE ARTISTS CO-OP NYC

amenities for the performing artist community including shared coworking space, rehearsal space, business amenities, and member services including educational programming, and incubator performances.

In just under 1 year they have grown to over 100 members who range from Dance & Theater Companies like Ballet Nepantla to Poetic Theater Productions to amazing set designers, writers, actors and art business like (Broadway Babysitters and Actors Forum)

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Learn more at www.theartistco-op.com.



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EMILY SINENSKY @ FAILURE FEST 2018

B.Y.O.B. (BE YOUR OWN BOSS)

BY EMILY SINENSKY

What I love about Muhlenberg is how, even as a Freshman, my professors inspired me to explore my interests. For me, that interest was entrepreneurship. Since there was no club on campus for me to join I

decided to create one.

Thus, we formed, B.Y.O.B. (Be Your Own Boss) - Muhlenberg's first entrepreneurship club. The goal of this Club is to provide educational and networking tools and to create an environment of learning various business philosophies and networking with the business community. B.Y.O.B., is open to everyone with an interest in developing ideas into a business. It is a hub of creative thinking, big ideas, and guidance. Members learn skills necessary to build a business, as well as how to work within a group of not necessarily like-minded peers.

B.Y.O.B. offers much for those interested in the startup culture. In our first year we had several general membership meetings. Our highlight from our first year was, FAILURE FEST, where successful individuals spoke on a specific failure that was transformative in their lives. Failure Fest created a casual, fun, and lighthearted environment where faculty and students shared their stories of failure and how they prevailed. We are already planning for FAILURE FEST 2019.

We currently have 10 club members, and we look forward to adding to our roster this upcoming semester. We will be featuring the B.Y.O.B. Club at the Club Fair in the Fall. Future plans include to start a business on campus to raise money for local charities as well as for our own funding which can be expanded in the future as an innovative entrepreneurial model.

DINING WITH ENTREPRENEURS

This May, students interested in entrepreneurship were given the opportunity, thanks to a generous gift from Bill Miers '49, to visit Setter Ridge Vineyards.

There, owner Richard Blair, gave students a private tour of the vineyard and wine processing facilities. Students then joined Richard for casual dinner where they were able to learn about his entrepreneurial experiences.

