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Leavey School of Business
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The Leavey School of Business is heavily involved in the many and varied innovation-related activities at Santa Clara University (SCU). This is not to say, however, that such activities are confined to Leavey School. Indeed, SCU has taken great pains to ensure that all their students, regardless of major, receive some exposure to the concepts and techniques of innovation, primarily through the vehicle of university-wide interdisciplinary units known as the Centers of Distinction.

Founded in 1997, the Center for Science, Technology, and Society (CSTS)¹ is one of three Centers of Distinction at SCU, along with the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics and the Ignatian Center for Jesuit Education. The CSTS in particular positions itself at the nexus of three major activity areas: Education, Social Impact, and Public Engagement.

With regard to education, CSTS has both graduate and undergraduate courses available, drawn from multiple academic units, including the Schools of Engineering and Law, the College of Arts & Sciences, and the Leavey School. All undergraduate SCU students are required to fulfill a Science, Technology, and Society (STS) requirement with specific courses developed and delivered by the Center. CSTS’ educational output is designed in a highly integrative, multi-disciplinary fashion, to enable students to make linkages between STS topics and disciplinary perspectives. CSTS also offers research grants to faculty and students in support of projects that are commensurate with the Center’s mission “to understand and enable the innovative application of science and technology for global human benefit².”

With regard to social impact and engaging the public, CSTS pursues a number of key activities. The Global Social Benefit Incubator (GSBI) was launched in 2003, and is billed as CSTS’ signature program³. The focus of the program is to provide support for entrepreneurs serving the world’s bottom 4 billion people. In 2009, GSBI received 350 applications from social entrepreneurs competing for 20 fellowships that support five months of distance learning, followed by a two-week intensive residential learning module at SCU⁴. Those who participate in the program have the opportunity to present their formal business plans to Silicon Valley entrepreneurs and venture capitalists, who serve as a pool of mentors for the participants. According to Professor James Koch, the executive director of the program (and founding director of the CSTS), the mentors themselves are carefully selected based on their knowledge and track record, and subsequently provided training on the program structure and content, as well as on how to serve as an effective mentor. A skills matrix maintained by GSBI staff enables mentors to be paired with GSBI participants who can benefit the most from consonances of interest, needs, technological expertise, type of innovation, etc.

According to Koch, there are already 180 more applicants for the 2010 cohort, which is not surprising due to the fact that approximately 50% of the GSBI’s alumni organizations remain sustainable, and as many as one-third become high growth organizations. Koch says that over 100 successful GSBI alumni...
organizations exist, and include the likes of Digital Divide Data, B2BPriceNow, Drishtee, IDE-India, Thamel.com, the Freepay Foundation, Gram Vikas, Kiva, and VisionSpring (previously the Scojo Foundation\(^5\)). To apply to the GSBI program, it is necessary to become a member of [http://www.socialedge.org](http://www.socialedge.org) (a website of the Skoll Foundation\(^6\), a major supporter of the GSBI), and complete three online GSBI Business Planning Exercises, which cover value proposition, target market or beneficiaries, and business model planning. The exercises take place in January and February, and a GSBI Application Mentoring Team reviews and comments on the exercises of all the applicants. The application mentoring team includes a select group of Leavey School MBA students who have completed a Social Entrepreneurship course covering much of the same material as the GSBI program. Koch says the students help to pare the hundreds of GSBI applicants down to 35-40 finalists that will be invited to interview for one of the 20 spots in the GSBI. Students in the next year’s Social Entrepreneurship course will then have opportunities to study and work with projects from among the GSBI cohort that is “graduating” as the fall semester begins.

Koch estimates the cost to support each GSBI venture to be around $25,000. Funding for the GSBI is provided through grants and private donors, including a $1 million grant from the Skoll Foundation (the incubator’s primary source of funding). Other foundations provide scholarships to cover the cost of accepted individuals, sometimes designating the funds for projects with a particular area of focus aligned with the foundation’s mission. Koch notes that much of the funding is tied to specific deliverables, but that the tracking mechanisms in place to ensure these deliverables are met often enables the GSBI to secure additional funding by demonstrating a track record of high return on social investment.

Since 2001, CSTS has also managed and overseen the judging process for the Tech Awards\(^7\), which are $50,000 annual awards presented by San Jose’s Tech Museum and Applied Materials, Inc., in five categories (Education, Environment, Economic Development, Health, and Equality)\(^8\). 15 Tech Laureates (three in each category, who may be individuals, for-profit organizations, or non-profits) are selected by the judges each year, and entered into a searchable database\(^9\). The individuals and organizations in this database and the pool of GSBI mentors and alumni form the foundation for the Social Enterprise Innovation Network (SEIN)\(^10\), an online network of social entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, and others that support or want to support social enterprises. SEIN is in beta-testing as of this writing, and is designed to be a work-focused site with functionality and content intended to help members discover each other and work together to solve immediate challenges that the social entrepreneurs are facing. Current projects include an effort to code variables related to university-supported ventures in order to facilitate analysis of success factors.

The Leavey School of Business, though certainly woven into what Executive Director for Entrepreneurship Programs Dan Aguiar calls the “pervasive entrepreneurship activities” at SCU, also has its own initiatives. Professor Aguiar directs the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE)\(^11\), based in the Leavey School, which builds on the University’s Jesuit educational tradition, state-of-the-art
facilities, faculty expertise, Advisory Board, and extensive alumni network to prepare students for entrepreneurial leadership through a variety of programs and opportunities. The CIE strengthens community ties by cultivating an opportunity-focused Venture Information Network\textsuperscript{12} that leverages the advantage of SCU’s location in Silicon Valley, and helps to develop the entrepreneurial competence of SCU students by offering an interdisciplinary Entrepreneurship Program at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

The CIE hosts a variety of events such as the CIE Speaker Series, Global Entrepreneurship Week, business plan competitions at the undergraduate level, and the Venture Capital Investment Competition (VCIC)\textsuperscript{13} at the graduate level. In addition, innovative and entrepreneurial students can engage with like-minded peers through student-led clubs such as the Santa Clara Entrepreneur Organization (SCEO), for undergraduates, and the Entrepreneurs Connection (EC)\textsuperscript{14}, for graduate students. The Network also maintains an online newsletter and blog.

The Entrepreneur Leadership Program (ELP)\textsuperscript{15} provides course offerings for degree-seeking students. SCU undergraduate students of any major can enroll in the four-course Entrepreneurship Certificate, designed to offer experiential learning within a Silicon Valley start-up. Graduate students in the evening MBA program can complete a four-course Entrepreneurship Concentration. CIE also offers a Certificate in Technology Entrepreneurship program to graduate-level students with a technical background.

The CIE will soon be reactivating an alumni and faculty advisory group representing various areas of expertise within the high-tech start-up ecosystem, known as the e-Council\textsuperscript{16}, which offers free start-up consulting, connections to internships, mentoring, etc., to SCU students as well as alumni entrepreneurs who are actively engaged in launching new ventures. All student, faculty, and alumni entrepreneurs can receive business plan, venture, or career advice by appointment at the CIE.

Finally, beginning in 2010, the CIE will host the Leavey School’s new California Program for Entrepreneurship (CAPE)\textsuperscript{17}, a six-month program whose foundation, Aguiar says, owes much to the GSBI, including shared mentors and aspects of curricula. In contrast to the GSBI, however, CAPE is funded through a grant from the Santa Clara University Executive Development Center and is specifically aimed at entrepreneurs who will start and build businesses that contribute to the economic growth of California. The goal, according to Aguiar, is to launch “20 companies in 20 months.”

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End Notes