



2021-2022

**WERTH INSTITUTE
IMPACT REPORT**

IN 2022, THE PRINCETON REVIEW
RANKED THE UNIVERSITY OF
CONNECTICUT AS:

#36

FOR TOP GRADUATE
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
PROGRAMS

#44

FOR TOP UNDERGRADUATE
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
PROGRAMS

#1 IN CONNECTICUT
PROGRAM FOR
ENTREPRENEURSHIP STUDIES

DESHPANDE SYMPOSIUM
2021 EXCELLENCE
IN CURRICULUM INNOVATION
AWARDEE



“
THE WERTH
INSTITUTE HAS
BECOME ONE
OF THE MOST
IMPACTFUL
ORGANIZATIONS
ON CAMPUS
AND IS A BIG
PLAYER IN THE
FUTURE OF
UCONN.”

Dr. Radenka Maric

PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

OUR VISION IS SIMPLE:

**CREATING
OPPORTUNITIES
— NOT YET —
DREAMT OF.**

UCONN
WERTH INSTITUTE

BE GOOD. MAKE A DIFFERENCE. CHANGE THE WORLD.

This is Peter J. Werth's vision for entrepreneurship at UConn, one that has guided The Peter J. Werth Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation over the past four years. In that time, we have grown from an idea to an award-winning program that prepares and propels students with the entrepreneurial mindset necessary to create the world they want to live in.

This happens by reaching students earlier in life. This year, we expanded NetWerx to local middle and high schools with near-peer mentoring from UConn students in WILD. We're also reaching more first-year Huskies than ever before with personal growth workshops complementing their

mentorship experience, giving them the tools to navigate college and beyond.

Another area of focus has been experiential learning. Last fall, we launched Stamford **Startup Studio (S3)**, a unique cooperative educational experience that marries skill development, career preparation and the entrepreneurial mindset. S3 will place Huskies in competitive roles and increase the trajectories of our students for a lifetime. This is a huge investment in individual students – way beyond what most programs do – that is already transforming lives.

One of the biggest programs we launched in 2022 is Championship Labs – a true testament to our focus on the long-term benefits of an entrepreneurial



mindset Championship Labs supports student-athletes as they navigate the new era of athlete entrepreneurship surrounding name, image and likeness (NIL). By helping student-athletes monetize their brands, The Werth Institute has created a deep partnership with UConn Athletics that's an asset other athletic departments don't have. We have a revolutionary strategy and intend to be a leader in the NIL space. Veteran NBA player Rudy Gay of the Utah Jazz becoming the face of this groundbreaking initiative is just the start of big things to come.

Our approach to meeting the student first isn't common, even in the entrepreneurship space. It's not us working for them. It's us working together.

It's an approach that will be propelled forward under the leadership of UConn's new president, my friend, Radenka Maric. As you'll often hear her say: "Students First, UConn Always. Huskies Forever." As an entrepreneur, innovator and champion of mentorship, Radenka is a strong advocate of The Werth Institute's mission and from the start, has been steadfast in urging me to innovate further, create more opportunities and keep growing. You'll read about how we're doing that in the following pages, where you'll see stats quantifying our progress. Beyond the stats, you'll read about the greatest measurement of our impact – the authentic relationships created between people.

I often get asked, "How do you teach entrepreneurship?" You don't teach students how to be an entrepreneur. You give them the platform to fail as an entrepreneur without the having to pay a steep price. That's what we try to do every single day at The Werth Institute – prepare and propel our students forward into opportunities not yet imagined.

Huskies Forever!

David Noble

David Noble
Managing Director, The Werth Institute
david.noble@uconn.edu

PRINCIPLES GUIDING OUR PROGRAMS

1. CREATING ENTREPRENEURIAL ACCESSIBILITY AND LIFE-TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS

We learned from our students that the structure of entrepreneurial opportunities was exclusive and reserved for later stage students. So, we flipped the switch and began to involve younger and younger students. This investment of time and resources is meant to have a massive societal and personal impact by opening the pipeline of opportunities available to any student, regardless of their year or major, that have the power to transform their lives beyond college.

2. INCREASING INCLUSION AMONG GROUPS UNDERREPRESENTED IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP, ESPECIALLY FEMALE AND BLACK FOUNDERS

Diversity and inclusion can often be buzz words in the entrepreneurship space, but at UConn, we are building the most accessible and inclusive entrepreneurial community. Whether that diversity covers gender, race, first-generation college students or even majors, The Werth Institute is designed to support all students where we find them and give them the confidence to pursue opportunities they would have otherwise self-selected out of.

3. BUILDING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET

The ability for a student to develop entrepreneurial alertness and intention early on directly affects how their career grows and improves over time. Our programs incorporate skills that enable students to identify and make the most of opportunities, overcome and learn from setbacks, and succeed in a variety of settings. ■

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES NOT YET IMAGINED.

The Werth Institute is the legacy of Peter J. Werth, Jr., philanthropist and the founder, president and CEO of ChemWerth, Inc., a full-service generic drug development and supply company. His investment is changing the lives of thousands of students who take part in our mentorship, leadership and experiential learning programs. This is life-transformative education in action.

“Every year, The Werth Institute gets better and better,” said Peter. “Its unprecedented growth these past four years is a marvelous achievement and continues through innovative partnerships like the one recently formed with UConn Athletics. It’s a recognized brand nationally, and very soon will be known throughout the world.”

With the support of The Werth Institute, Allie Davenport '24 (BUS) set out to make a difference in the lives of others through the creation of [StarMind](#) – an interactive journal that combines daily self-reflection logs, thought-provoking activities and a series of QR codes that leads the journalist to digital resources and tools on specific psychology-related concepts.

Following his visit to The Werth Institute where Allie spoke, Peter purchased a book for the faculty, staff, students and parents in attendance from his alma mater, Fort Hays State University.

Since then, Allie has continued meeting with Peter to receive mentorship and advice about being a young entrepreneur. ■



WERTH INNOVATORS LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT (WILD)

One of the nation's top entrepreneurial leadership development programs, WILD provides personalized support through goal setting, skill-building guidance, mentorship, and leadership and networking opportunities. Open to sophomores and juniors across all majors, Werth Innovators are student ambassadors for entrepreneurship and innovation and receive a \$3,000 scholarship along with access to transformative experiences during their time at UConn.

A cohort of WILD, F3 was initially created to address the gender gap that exists in the business world when it comes to female-founded ventures. It has since expanded to reach first year undergraduates who are traditionally underrepresented in entrepreneurship, providing mentorship, networking and resources to support their entrepreneurial journey. At the end of the first year, students receive \$4,000 to launch their own initiative during their summer internship at The Werth Institute.

NETWERX

NetWerx is now reaching students earlier in their academic careers by integrating key elements of the entrepreneurial mindset into its signature mentorship program, starting in middle and high school, and meeting Huskies at every stage of their college experience with tailored mentorship that cultivates personal development and leadership skills.

STAMFORD STARTUP STUDIO (S3)

A one-year co-op style educational experience, S3 employs students full-time to create technology products for local industries. Special attention is paid to skill development around emerging technologies, such as machine learning, 5G-ready applications, and virtual and augmented reality. The intensive program allows students to enhance their entrepreneurial skill sets while gaining design, engineering and product management experience.

CENTER FOR NEURODIVERSITY & EMPLOYMENT

Adults with ADHD, autism, dyspraxia, dysgraphia, dyslexia and Tourette Syndrome are chronically under or unemployed. The Center was created to improve employment outcomes for neurodivergent job seekers nationwide by bringing together a coalition of colleges and universities to build a more robust talent pipeline with employers and develop affordable resources businesses need to employ neurodivergent individuals.

CHAMPIONSHIP LABS

Championship Labs was launched in partnership with UConn Athletics in January 2022 to support student-athletes as they maximize name, image and likeness (NIL) opportunities, including third-party deals, brand development, and launching their own companies and ventures.

This first-of-its-kind program empowers student influencers and athletes with the tools to explore individualized opportunities for money-making potential through careers in personal brand and content entrepreneurship. The program complements UConn's new multi-disciplinary academic program to support social media influencers in their entrepreneurial pursuits.

EXPERIENCE INNOVATION EXPO

Part of October's Month of Discovery celebrations, the Experience Innovation Expo (EIE) is an opportunity for students to discover the wide range of programs, resources and activities facilitating entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity at UConn. It brings together students who have been involved with The Werth Institute to share their perspectives and ideas with their peers.

HACKUCONN

HackUConn is a 20-hour marathon event that brings together students of all disciplines to find innovative solutions for today's biggest problems. They are tasked with bringing these solutions to life with the help of mentoring and workshops from industry professionals. The event is free for all participants thanks to the generosity of our sponsors.

GROWING OUR IMPACT

DURING 2021-2022, THE WERTH INSTITUTE SAW UNPRECEDENTED GROWTH AS WE LAUNCHED NEW PROGRAMS AND EXPANDED OTHERS.



63%

WOMEN IN WERTH INSTITUTE PROGRAMS

\$181,960

TOTAL SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

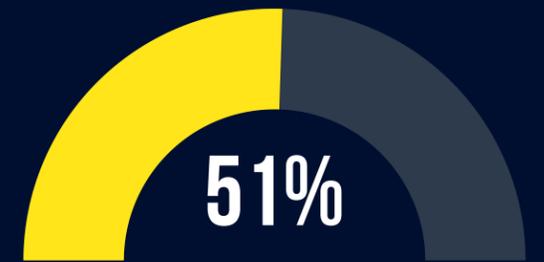
55%

STUDENTS FROM UNDERREPRESENTED POPULATIONS

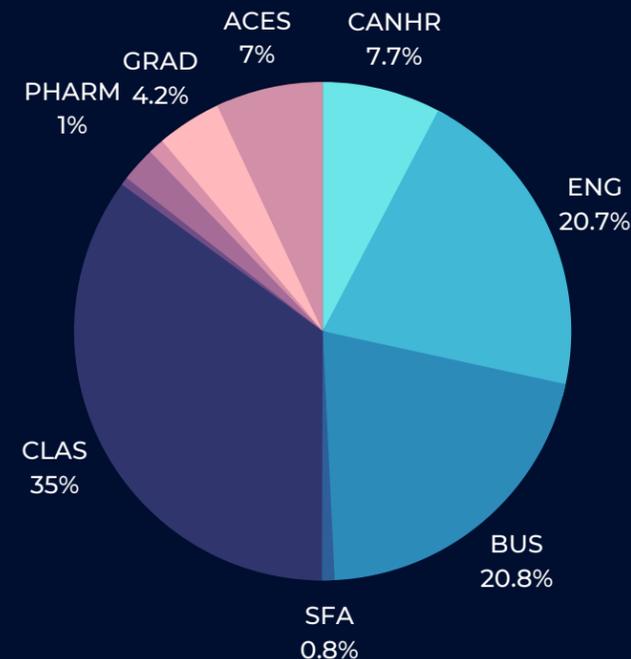


86

WERTH INNOVATORS IN 2021-2022



OF WILD GRADUATES WORKED FOR AN ENTREPRENEURIAL-RELATED COMPANY OR STARTED THEIR OWN VENTURE



115

NETWERX ALUMNI MENTORS

300

NETWERX MENTEES

3,000+

HOURS OF MENTORSHIP PROVIDED

\$34M

IN DILUTIVE AND NON-DILUTIVE CAPITAL RAISED BY UCONN ALUMNI STARTUPS

01.

LIFE-TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION

NEW PROGRAMS WERE LAUNCHED THIS YEAR THAT ARE TRANSFORMING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL EXPERIENCE AT UCONN WITH THE POWER TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' WELL-BEING AND WORK ENGAGEMENT THROUGHOUT LIFE.

CHAMPIONSHIP LABS

UConn men's basketball team captains Andre Jackson, Jr. and Adama Sanogo made their mark off the court this year as the first UConn student-athletes involved in the Championship Labs pilot program.

Andre began his entrepreneurial journey in high school, creating the brand True Bunnies. Now a rising college basketball star, Andre joined Championship Labs to gain the tools to grow his brand. "Championship Labs had me take that brand to the next level by providing the right resources, different graphic designers, videographers, photographers – just people who helped me market it to help it be more attainable and increase the demand."

Adama, named Big East 2022 Preseason Player of the Year, launched a summer basketball camp in his hometown in Mali, supported by

donations made possible through the rule alterations surrounding Name, Image and Likeness.

"This camp was really important for me to do because I remember when I first started playing basketball in Mali, people use to do this type of camp to help us with free shoes, talk to us about how basketball could change us and teach us some basketball skills," Adama said.

"So, this camp was a giving back for me. It was a two-day camp where 47 kids had free equipment, free food and we taught them some basketball skills. After the camp, I also talked to kids about basketball in general and how they could use basketball to change their life. I told them to start taking basketball more serious by working hard. I told them I was like them, and they could be me in the future if they work hard and take it serious." ■



STAMFORD STARTUP STUDIO (S3)

Since its launch in the fall of 2021, S3 has provided an intensive experience of learning and working to accelerate student growth and place them in elite roles.

From the inaugural cohort of 10 students, Jake Winter and PatentPlus became the first undergraduate student startup to be accepted into UConn's Technology Incubation Program (TIP).

Two additional undergraduate student startups were founded as well. The interdisciplinary group of students also worked together to launch a minimal viable product, WKNDR, harnessing AI curation technology to make deciding weekend plans a bit easier. From the inaugural cohort, every graduating student had a job placement six months after the conclusion of the program. ■

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH S3 IN ACTION](#)



student spotlight

REAJ UDDIN

CLASS OF 2023, SFA



Life-transformative education looks like Reaj Uddin '23 (SFA), a member of the S3 team that launched WKNDR.

A self-proclaimed introvert who says he's never thought of himself as an entrepreneur, Reaj and his family immigrated to Stamford from Bangladesh in 2009. He had little formal education and spoke no English. Reaj took a course on web development in high school and found that writing code and building programs appealed to him. The first in his family to attend college, Reaj interviewed for S3 while on a visit home to Bangladesh.

Coming in, he was not as confident and secure in his abilities but left learning back-end development from an Amazon developer, landing an internship at New York City startup Orthosnap, and starting his own venture. Reaj hopes to use his entrepreneurial pursuits to contribute to a sustainable world, particularly for developing countries. "I want to be a part of a company that contributes to greater change," he says. "I want to be a part of making the world better than what it is right now." ■

[READ MORE ABOUT REAJ HERE](#)



CENTER FOR NEURODIVERSITY AND EMPLOYMENT INNOVATION

Unemployment for neurodivergent adults runs as high as 30-40%, three times the rate for people with disability, and eight times the rate for people without disability. The Center for Neurodiversity and Employment Innovation kicked off three major initiatives in its inaugural year that are helping improve employment outcomes for historically minoritized populations.

Established the University Council for Neurodiversity Employment

This coalition of 45 universities and colleges from across the country, led by UConn, is working collectively to improve outcomes for college-level neurodivergent (ND) talent with autism, ADHD, dyslexia and other neurodiversities. The council was created to provide a forum for discussion and work that seeks to improve employment outcomes for our neurodivergent students and alumni.

UConn volunteers its time and resources to organize and lead the group and the activities it decides to pursue to advance the state of employment outcomes for ND students affiliated with our schools. We are committed to supporting other universities and colleges in a collective effort to scale successful solutions.

Launched a Neurodiversity Employment Pilot Program across colleges and universities

UConn's ND Center is leading 24 universities in a pilot program that has convened these schools to use Mentra, an employment platform tool designed specifically for neurodivergent job seekers. The pilot seeks to drive the centralization of employment programs and opportunities that specifically target neurodivergent candidates to improve accessibility for both candidates and employers. By aggregating neurodivergent talent from across many

schools in one platform, and better understanding and communicating these candidates' unique talents and needs to employers, the pilot program's goal is to improve outcomes at the college level that are currently constricted by a resource-intensive, inefficient process.

Established the UConn Neurodiversity Center Student Registry

Outreach continues to build upon the dozens of students who have signed on to be part of the Neurodiversity Center Student Registry in order to receive information about programs, resources and opportunities related to neurodiversity employment. In addition to one-on-one support and coaching,

students receive individualized communication about employment opportunities that align with their interests and strengths, and which target their neurodiversity. The Center is a 100% donor-driven initiative made possible with the generous support of our corporate founding partners, including Wells Fargo, Synchrony and Travelers Insurance.



02.

INCREASING INCLUSION

AT THE WERTH INSTITUTE, IT IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE THAT HISTORICALLY MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES FEEL WELCOMED AND ENCOURAGED TO DEVELOP INTO ENTREPRENEURS AND LEADERS OF TOMORROW.

F3 EXPERIENCE

UConn surpasses its competitors when it comes to accessibility, providing low- and moderate-income students with an education that helps them climb the economic ladder. The Werth Institute is a central part of the University's strategic direction, particularly in engaging students who are traditionally underrepresented or marginalized within entrepreneurial communities.

We continued to create and expand programs this past year aligned with our commitment to engaging female entrepreneurs. We are poised to reach female athletes, a group that has been underrepresented and undervalued in professional sports, and female and Black founders as more students see themselves represented in our programs.

Part of the Werth Innovators Leadership Development program, F3 partners with Lockstep Ventures and The FEAT, Black and women-led companies, to engage first-year undergraduates who identify as a woman or other minority within entrepreneurship with mentorship, networking and resources to support their entrepreneurial journey at UConn. The program aims to create lasting change and equity across the gender gap through consistent emotional and financial support while at UConn.

F3 serves as a beacon for people traditionally marginalized within entrepreneurship to find their home with The Werth Institute and a future in entrepreneurship. ■



student spotlight

MADELINE KIZER

CLASS OF 2024, BUS



At the start of the 2020-2021 school year, Madeline Kizer '24 (BUS) was tasked with finding a problem and creating a solution as a member of the F3 cohort. With a passion for sustainable fashion, Madeline worked on building a sustainable clothing swap brand called "KizersKollektion." After hosting small events and entering pitch competitions, she realized it would be beneficial for students to have a permanent second-hand clothing store on campus.

Madeline turned her dream into a reality when the UConn Swap Shop opened its doors on September 8, 2022 in the Family Studies Building. She plans to support and showcase sustainable local businesses and UConn entrepreneurs, opening people's eyes to what is possible.

"David Noble and my mentor Katie Britt at The Werth Institute have supported me throughout this entire project, and I am very grateful because without their support we wouldn't be where we are with the Swap Shop. With the grants we received, we were able to purchase sewing machines and everything necessary for opening the store." ■

[READ MORE ABOUT MADELINE HERE](#)

student spotlight

SUDIKSHA 'SUDZY' MALLICK

CLASS OF 2023, CLAS

Passionate about education reform since high school, where she worked with her local school district to rewrite curriculum with a focus on building more perspectives into learning, Sudiksha is co-founder of a startup developing a set of flash cards designed to support the learning needs of neurodiverse elementary-age students.

Smart Cards AR utilizes augmented reality technologies to provide an interactive experience offering greater engagement to learners. Like a flashcard but with audio and visual components, images on the cards come to life when a phone is hovered over them, helping students who may have trouble reading or learning from traditional methods by bringing real-life aspects to learning.

Sudzy never thought of herself as an entrepreneur and was hesitant to apply to F3 but was encouraged by her sister and a Werth Innovator to give it a try. "I didn't think that I fit what they were looking for, but I was like, why not go for it? And then it probably became the best decision I made in my college experience so far. In this group [F3], everyone is just there to help, and I think it's so beautiful to see that." ■

[READ MORE ABOUT SUDZY HERE](#)



03.

BUILDING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET

INNOVATION CONVERSATIONS

A collaboration between The Werth Institute and the UConn Foundation, Zoey England '22 (CLAS) founded Innovation Conversations.

"In October 2020, I gave my first TEDx talk," Zoey said. "I quickly realized that despite how valuable it is for students to have opportunities to share their ideas with audiences outside of the direct University community, chances to do so can be quite rare."

As part of her F3 project over the summer of 2021, Zoey worked closely with the UConn Foundation and The Werth Institute to found Innovation Conversations. The first event was held on March 22, 2022 in Boston, MA. Student talk topics that evening included embracing innovation in education, modernizing global health, bridging the digital divide in emergent nations, and the applicability of the founder's mindset.

Innovation Conversations offers a platform for current students to discuss topics they're passionate about with UConn alum and other industry leaders. "When given the chance to share their thoughts, I firmly believe students offer a unique, untapped roadmap to what the future holds," Zoey mentioned.

In 2021, Zoey also became the first person in UConn's history to receive the Gilman-McCain Scholarship from the Department of State. Zoey England has since graduated and is now a full-time employee at The Werth Institute. ■



[READ MORE ABOUT ZOEY HERE](#)

NETWERX

NetWerx expanded its focus this year to help students identify and explore their own pathway to leadership while further developing their entrepreneurial mindset, particularly in the areas of Communication and Collaboration; Flexibility and Adaptability; and Opportunity Recognition. With a goal of reaching students earlier in their academic careers, the program began working with local middle and high school students to provide near-peer mentorship from students in the WILD program. Building connections with

people closer to their age increases students' self-identity and aids future career growth.

NetWerx also increased its efforts to empower first-and second-year Huskies with leadership development to promote greater self-identity and complement mentorship which builds the entrepreneurial mindset that gives our students the competitive advantage necessary to compete with elite schools

Forming personal connections with the individual student at the core is a staple of what makes our program unique. ■

“

SOMETHING THAT I NEVER REALLY THOUGHT OF UNTIL [MY] NETWERX PAIRING WAS MAKING A CONNECTION WITH PROFESSORS... BECAUSE OF WHAT LORRAINE [TOLD ME AS MY MENTOR], I AM AWARE AND READY TO MAKE AN EFFORT FOR THOSE VALUABLE CONNECTIONS.”



JORDAN TERRY
CLASS OF 2025, STUDYING FINANCE

BE FEARLESS SUMMIT

The Werth Institute partnered with Alexa Curtis, a Mansfield, CT native and lifestyle blogger, host, podcaster and promoter of “living fearlessly,” to bring the Be Fearless Summit to Storrs on February 26, 2022.

The free summit opened with a virtual VIP keynote session from current Miss Connecticut USA Amanda Torchia and included panels and workshops designed to help students learn to be fearless, persistent and resilient in their endeavors toward landing their dream job or internship. The following day, students gathered together in-person for additional talks, panels and networking opportunities. Themes included “Finding Your Identity” and “Understanding Your Strengths and Weaknesses.”

Werth Innovator and 2020-2021 F3 Cohort member Rachel Laemle, Class of 2024 (CAHNR), served as one of the summit’s lead organizers. ■



RACHEL LAEMLE



HACKUCONN

For the first time in two years, HackUConn was held in-person on April 9 and 10, 2022 at Werth Tower in Storrs. With the theme “Innovate Well-Being,” UConn’s flagship hackathon featured nearly 100 undergraduate and graduate students who formed 18 teams that created and presented transformative solutions to problems related to well-being. The teams received guidance from a group of nearly 30 mentors. The winning team, EcoCrib, was comprised of

five students, all from different schools, who met for the first time at the event. Together, they designed a centralized dorm energy usage and carbon footprint platform for UConn residents. Using IoT and augmented reality, it incentivizes reducing energy use and tracks carbon footprints in dorm rooms and campus buildings. Team members Aditya Dubey, Rohan Parikh, Sunny Sarker, Sushant Raj and Akash Binoj took home the \$2,500 team prize. ■

SPONSORS INCLUDE:



MONTH OF DISCOVERY

October is the Month of Discovery, and this year more than 1,000 students learned about exciting opportunities involving research, innovation and creativity. Students are encouraged to attend multiple events by signing up for the Discovery Quest app where they can earn prizes for participation. Signature events include:

Experience Innovation Expo: Student-led event sponsored by The Werth Institute, Office of Undergraduate Research, First Year Experience and Learning Communities (FYE&LC), and Department of Operations and Information Management (OPIM) that showcases the 60+ programs and resources available to students interested in exploring innovation.

Research Connections: Designed especially for early career students to explore the breadth of inquiry happening throughout a research university through conversations with researchers representing a range of departments, topics and approaches. More than 250 students attended.

Fall Frontiers: The 9th Annual Fall Frontiers in Undergraduate Research Exhibition was offered in a hybrid format, with undergraduate students presenting 45 projects in person at Storrs and 26 projects virtually. In addition to giving student presenters valuable experience sharing their discoveries with the university community, the in-person exhibition allowed over 150 students to learn from their peers and spark their imaginations about questions and topics they might explore through undergraduate research. ■



BUILD HARTFORD

SHARI AND MICHAEL CANTOR

Alumni couple Shari and Michael Cantor's strong belief that their UConn educations have helped them achieve the career and life goals they set for themselves when they met in the mid-1980s has fueled their giving over the years. Looking to support a creative project that combined their love for the Business, Engineering and Law programs that would be both innovative and entrepreneurial led them to the creation of BUILD Hartford.

BUILD Hartford launched in the spring of 2021 as part of The Werth Institute. The academic course promotes economic development and entrepreneurship throughout the greater Hartford region by helping students develop critical economic, corporate and entrepreneurial development skills as they work for local start-ups. Students from all majors partner with the team



at the Connecticut Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation to solve real problems start-ups face and in doing so, create a vibrant start-up community where they'll want to stay and work after graduation.

The Cantors have built careers that revolve around entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship. As the Mayor of West Hartford, Shari has worked for many years to make the city and the surrounding Greater Hartford region an economically vibrant place for businesses to locate and grow. Michael has grown a small intellectual property law firm based in Hartford into one of the largest patent and trademark firms in the country while also chairing the board of Connecticut Innovations (CI), the State's venture capital firm with over 200 companies in its portfolio.

The couple sees a bright future in BUILD Hartford. "We view BUILD Hartford now as a beta site for determining best practices that will eventually support similar classes at the other UConn campuses. It could be used as a model program for other cities across the U.S. and for that matter, across the globe.

In addition, we see some of the projects/solutions worked on by students to be continued, developed and if it makes sense, commercialized, by nonprofits, other companies or even student-run start-ups." ■



“ IN FIVE YEARS, WE EXPECT TO SEE MANY OF OUR BUILD HARTFORD GRADUATES TAKE THE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE LEARNED AND TAKE FLIGHT AS ENTREPRENEURS IN THEIR OWN START-UPS OR IN OTHER EARLY-STAGE COMPANIES WHO ARE HUNGRY FOR THE SKILLS THESE UCONN GRADS WILL BE BRINGING TO THEIR COMPANIES.”

SHARI AND MICHAEL CANTOR

ALUMNA HELPS WERTH INNOVATORS REACH THE ‘LAST YARD’



their current semester or start their next semester fresh. The Werth Institute matches the scholarships to further support future alumni on their entrepreneurial journey.

In addition to the impact she’s making with her foundation, Renee is also a member of the **Werth Institute Advisory Board**. Renee retired from the WNBA in 2021 after sitting out the 2020 season to focus on social reform and justice. She serves as a Sports Analyst for NBA/ESPN, host to numerous media outlets and host of her own weekly podcast, “Montgomery & Co.” Renee is currently part-owner and vice president of the WNBA Atlanta Dream. ■

At the start of the semester, many students are, on average, \$100-\$1,000 short of paying off their tuition balance due to a lack of financial resources. Seeing the need for more resources for these students, alumna and women’s basketball legend Renee Montgomery ‘09 (CLAS) launched the **Renee Montgomery Foundation (RMF) Last Yard Scholarship** to help students reach the finish line. RMF’s goal is to nurture students to keep their passion alive and capitalize on moments that will continue to fuel their momentum.

The inaugural Last Yard scholarships were launched at the Renee Montgomery Foundation’s first-ever **Werth Innovators Career Day** and awarded to Astou Diallo ‘23 (BUS) and Rashana Weerasinghe ‘23 (BUS), both members of the Werth Innovators Leadership Development program. Astou and Rashana were each awarded a \$1,500 scholarship to supplement the cost of tuition, books or any other expense that will help them complete



“As a recipient of this award, I will continue to recognize and take advantage of moments that provide momentum. I am grateful for the generosity of both the Renee Montgomery Foundation and The Werth Institute for distributing this scholarship. It is an honor and privilege to receive this scholarship.”

RASHANA WEERASINGHE
CLASS OF 2023, BUS

“The Renee Montgomery Foundation is doing incredible work with all its initiatives, and I’m truly honored to have been selected as a recipient this year. Having financial needs met can really be instrumental in being able to continue your education, and I’m glad the Renee Montgomery Foundation and The Werth Institute are helping students do that.”

ASTOU DIALLO
CLASS OF 2023, BUS



PROPELLING US FORWARD: THE WERTH INSTITUTE ADVISORY BOARD

The Werth Institute Advisory Board is a distinguished group of alumni business leaders dedicated to the continued elevation of inclusive entrepreneurship at UConn by serving as ambassadors, advisors and advocates in our business communities, and beyond.

BOARD MEMBERS



PETER J. WERTH, JR. '15 H

Founder, CEO, President and Chairman, ChemWerth, Inc.
Life Member



RICHARD VOGEL '87 (BUS), '22 H

Founding Partner, CFO and COO
Loeb Enterprises
Committee Chair



SARAH K. BRODERICK '00 (BUS), '02 MS

CEO and Founder
FEAT Capital & Advisory



AMY J. ERRETT '79 (CLAS)

Co-Founder and CEO
Madison Reed



ROBBY ANDREWS '06 (BUS)

EVP, Head of Publishing
Wildlife Studios



KEVIN J. KULAK '85 (ENG)

Partner, G Squared



BILL FACTEAU '92

President & CEO
Earlens



KAITLIN ARCHAMBAULT '11 (CLAS, SFA)

Founder and Principal
Incendiary Designs



RENEE MONTGOMERY '09 (CLAS)

President
Renee Montgomery Foundation



DONNELL BEVERLY JR. '11 (CLAS)

President
Russel Westbrook Foundation



DR. LANCE BALDO '98 MD

Chief Medical Officer
Freenome



NOVA LORRAINE '95 (CLAS), '97 MA

Fashion Designer, Author,
Speaker, Branding Advisor

CHAMPIONSHIP LABS ADVISORY BOARD

These founding members of the Championship Labs Advisory Board are alumni who have deep ties to UConn Athletics. As former student-athletes who have created incredible success off the field, along with Rudy Gay who's a role model for those pursuing a career in the pros, our Advisory Board has the passion and expertise to connect Huskies with valuable opportunities beyond money-making that will help these burgeoning professionals create long-term success.

There's no limit to the impact this group will make in the NIL space in the years to come.



LORIN DIXON '11 (CLAS)

Founder and CEO
ZaveryCakes
UConn Women's Basketball



AMY ERRETT '79 (CLAS)

CEO and Founder
Madison Reed
UConn Women's Field Hockey



RUDY GAY

Professional Basketball Player
Utah Jazz
UConn Men's Basketball



BRIAN KRAUSE '03 (CLAS)

Chief Development Officer
Focus Brands
UConn Football



AARON TORRES '07 (CLAS)

Owner, Aaron Torres Media
Authored The Unlikeliest Champion chronicling UConn's run to the 2011 basketball national championship



JOSS TILLARD-GATES '10 (CLAS)

Director of Community Affairs
Clark Construction Group
UConn Football



MICHAEL WOODWARD '03 (CLAS)

Senior VP, Franchise Sales
Focus Brands
UConn Men's Basketball

ALUMNI FEATURE

Joseph E. Parsons

CLASS OF 1979, BUS
1913 VENTURES LLC

Joseph E. Parsons is a strategic and operational leader with experience starting up and expanding the scale and performance of investment management and structured finance business models.

During his 13 years as a corporate officer and subsidiary CEO of the General Electric Co., and record board level/management committee role at Bridgewater Associates, he structured, closed and ran more than \$50 billion of acquisitions, mergers, strategic partnerships, private equity investments and high yield debt

placements in the retail, healthcare, energy, financial services and internet commerce sectors.

Joe has been an instrumental advisor to The Werth Institute, helping the team form an approach different from traditional education, one that puts student development at the forefront. An invaluable thought leader, Joe has led brainstorming sessions with our students to help them identify and leverage their strengths to reach their full potential. ■

“WHEN GIVEN FEEDBACK, DON'T ASK IF IT'S TRUE, ASK IF IT MIGHT BE TRUE - BE OPEN TO ALWAYS LEARNING AND UNDER-CONFIDENT THAT YOU KNOW WHAT IS TRUE AND ALWAYS INTERESTED IN WHAT MIGHT BE TRUE.”

JOE E. PARSONS '79



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Left: Rob Herting and Ben Curtis '06 (center) speak to students in the inaugural Personal & Content Brand Entrepreneurship Course on February 17, 2022, Storrs, CT.

Below: Rich Vogel '87 poses for a photo with President Radenka Maric and Werth Institute Director David Noble following the conferral of his honorary doctorate degree, May 7, 2022.



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