

****Which Universities Are Leading the Charge to Educate Successful Entrepreneurs?***

While colleges and universities are a natural breeding ground for new businesses, some universities excel at producing entrepreneurs and designing entrepreneurial programs that meet the needs of their community. Fortune Small Business Magazine <<http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fsb/index.html>> recently released a list of 56 institutions that have embraced their role as educators of the next generation of successful entrepreneurs. These schools each provide a suite of programs and opportunities that have fostered active and consistent entrepreneurial activity among their students and within their region.

The list was compiled after interviews with entrepreneurs, faculty, students, administrators, alumni and venture capitalists. No rankings are given, but individual institutions are recognized for their achievement in training undergraduates, MBAs, executives and social entrepreneurs and in providing online opportunities.

Fortune notes that nearly 3,000 schools offer classes in entrepreneurship, 10 times more than in the mid-1980s. As the number of entrepreneurship programs has grown, institutions have begun offering more diverse and specialized opportunities to their students. Six schools are singled out for their work with family businesses and an increasing number offer entrepreneurship opportunities in specific technology areas, such as the University of Colorado at Boulder's clean technology and renewable energy entrepreneurship programs.

Among the recognized universities is the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, which since 1988 has supported its students'

business-ownership goals through the Severino Center for Technological Entrepreneurship <http://www.lallyschool.rpi.edu/programs/index.cfm?p=5&inc=severino_home>.

The center operates within the Lally School of Management and Technology to develop initiatives linking the Institute and the business community and joint programs with the Rensselaer Technology Park and its Incubator Program. Students have access to the RPIdea Lab, which provides access to experienced mentors, workshops and office technology.

Another honoree is the University of Maryland and its Dingman Center for Entrepreneurship <<http://www.rhsmith.umd.edu/dingman/>>, which provides a host of opportunities for student and regional entrepreneurs. These include a wide range of undergraduate and graduate coursework, seed-stage funding of up to \$30,000 for student businesses, and a capital access network for regional entrepreneurs. The university also offers the nation's only student residence devoted to launching new businesses. The Hinman CEOs <<http://www.hinmanceos.umd.edu/>> program provides students in the residence with on-site mentoring, meeting rooms, workspaces, and regular gathering and workshops that promote technology entrepreneurship.

*NC Schools link

<http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fsb/bestcolleges/2007/states/NC.html>