A Force for Transformation: The Holmes Center for Entrepreneurship

Driven.
The Campaign for the Carlson School of Management
Developing the Next Generation of Entrepreneurial Leaders

Our economy is dependent on the formation of innovative new companies that create jobs and solve real problems. Our region looks to the University of Minnesota to develop the future entrepreneurial talent required to make this happen. Carlson School graduates cannot simply fill a job; they must be able to create and develop their own opportunities – either within an existing organization or through a new venture.

Entrepreneurship is no longer viewed as an innate talent held by a small group of trailblazers. Rather, it is a teachable process, mindset and set of skills that are becoming increasingly essential for business success. It is, of course, yet another example of how business can serve as a force for good. While the Holmes Center for Entrepreneurship has been tremendously successful since its inception in 2007, the opportunity exists to dramatically expand the school’s reach and impact on students across the University, and entrepreneurs throughout the state.

Prepare Our Students

The Holmes Center has developed unique experiential courses and programs in which students create, launch and operate real businesses that address meaningful problems. Student learn to persevere through ambiguity, adversity and outright failure. They develop the essential skills that enable them to creatively solve real problems and build enduring businesses. Through internships and fellowships, they are connected with leading entrepreneurs and gain experience working on real challenges. Through targeted programming designed specifically to inspire and connect aspiring women entrepreneurs (WE*), the Holmes Center seeks to dramatically increase the proportion of female students exploring entrepreneurship.

Innovate Across Campus

The Holmes Center has led the development of MIN-Corps, a uniquely successful campus-wide partnership between the Carlson School, College of Science & Engineering and Office for Technology Commercialization, to accelerate the commercialization of University technology. More than 200 new venture concepts have been evaluated through this new NSF-funded program that gets researchers out of the building with prospective customers to better understand the potential market from their inventions. A primary goal of this program is to develop an entrepreneurial culture among research faculty and students.

Engage with the Community

The Holmes Center organizes MN Cup - the largest statewide new venture competition in the country - by enlisting hundreds of public, private and alumni partners to support emerging entrepreneurs across the state. The competition positions our students and the University at the center of startup innovation in Minnesota, and has grown more than fifteen-fold since its launch in 2005. The state is looking to MN Cup to connect entrepreneurs to resources, develop educational specific programming and reach out to underserved groups - women, minorities, youth and rural entrepreneurs.

As a result of General Mills generous support of the MN Cup, a new Grow North initiative was launched in 2017 to accelerate the growth of scalable businesses in both food and ag. Grow North will serve as the mobilizing force in the region to connect food/ag entrepreneurs with the resources they need to develop and expand their companies.

Collectively, these courses and programs have the potential to dramatically improve the level of entrepreneurial talent in Minnesota, while creating tremendous opportunities for our students. We look forward to building upon the legacy of our entrepreneurial namesake Curt Carlson, and fulfilling his dream that “the school bearing my name would become a mecca for would-be entrepreneurs from all over the country.”
THE PHILANTHROPIC OPPORTUNITY

As part of Driven: The Campaign for the Carlson School, the Holmes Center for Entrepreneurship seeks the support of our philanthropic partners to strengthen the program to inspire, educate, and connect the next generation of entrepreneurs. Our growth will help establish Minnesota as a national leader in entrepreneurial education, programming, and talent development.

Choose your impact

Naming opportunities are available for both current-use and endowed gifts. Current use gifts support the Holmes Center during the life of the fund while endowment gifts create a lasting legacy that grows over time to support more students and programming.

MIN-Corps
Grow our capacity to educate highly skilled entrepreneurial talent across the University to drive the state’s economy and accelerate growth.

MN Cup
Expand this unique community-led competition that supports entrepreneurs and drives innovation, job creation, and economic development throughout Minnesota.

Grow North
Continue this effort to establish Minnesota as a recognized leader in food and ag innovation.

WE*
Expand the Womens Entrepreneurship program to inspire more women to pursue ambitious entrepreneurial efforts and connect them with appropriate resources.

Experiential Learning Opportunities
Develop new courses and immersive student programs. Create collaborative learning spaces that will engage the business community and embed entrepreneurship and innovation into the mainstream of the Carlson School and the University.

As a medical student, Paul Hines learned that lack of adherence to medication dosing is responsible for 125,000 deaths per year. He set about designing Dose, a smart pillbox with advanced communications for both the patient and caregiver.

“I was working really hard on engineering the product, but the MIN-Corps class offered by the Holmes Center made me focus on making the product functional and saleable, not just on what’s interesting to make.”

His enterprise received seed funding in the class to manufacture and test 20 prototypes. The company has since raised over $800,000 to bring its initial product to market.

THANK YOU

For more information, or to discuss options for making your gift, please contact:

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