



Wyoming Center for
Entrepreneurship and Innovation

WyCEI 2023 Q1 Report

- Sponsored State FBLA Conference—WyCEI Assistant Director Mike Martin judged the competition.
- WyCEI Director Penelope Shihab partnered and paneled at the UW Arab League Event.
- Reflected on Q4 WyCEI events during 2022.
- Announced the creation and launch of the Innovate Wyoming website and the Innovate Wyoming course.
- Hired new faculty, staff, and interns.
- WyCEI Director Penelope Shihab visited Sisecam Mining, Simplot Phosphates Inc., KelTec Firearms, and Western Wyoming Community College in Rock Springs, WY.
- Participated in the Governor’s Proclamation of Entrepreneurship Week
- Participated in the Wyoming–Japanese Business Forum
- Visited Railspur, a marketing firm turned restaurant in Cheyenne.
- Visited Dominion Energy
- Toured Wyoming Public Radio

*HELPING
ENTREPRENEURS
REACH THEIR PEAK*





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WyCEI Sponsored the Wyoming State FBLA Conference—WyCEI Acting Assistant Director, Mike Martin, judged the competition.

The WyCEI sponsored the Wyoming State Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) state conference held February 15-17, 2023 at UW's College of Business. Our investment allowed us to partner with the Wyoming Business Council to sponsor lunches for the 500 participants along with dozens of judges and other volunteers. Mike Martin, Acting Assistant Director judged three sessions on March 16th along with several partners from the Business Resource Network (BRN). The connection to the K-12 education was strong as the students are interested in entrepreneurship and business careers.





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WyCEI Director Penelope Shihab partnered and paneled at the UW Arab League Event.

First event in collaboration with University of Wyoming Arts and Sciences College.





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Reflected on 2022 Q4 WyCEI events

The WyCEI held and participated in multiple events during the last quarter of 2022. From October to December, the WyCEI hosted Entrepreneur Talks and Workshops for students interested in learning more about entrepreneurship and innovation from individuals who have unique experiences within those realms. Our guests included, Even Brande, Dan Lee, Sal Coca, and Jeff Dods (in partnership with SBDC).



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Wyoming Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation

The WyCEI is proud to present:

ENTREPRENEUR WORKSHOP SERIES

Dan Lee



The inaugural workshop will be held on Wednesday, October 26th from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. in Engineering Education Research Building Room 253. Light food and beverages will be provided.

The first workshop, "The Daily Difference: Branding for Differentiation" will feature Dan Lee, Chief Creative Officer of OnlyCo, based in Sheridan, WY.

One will first lead a discussion on Branding (including branding basics, details on OnlyCo's process, and things Dan has learned). This will be followed by an interactive branding exercise.

Dan Lee is the Chief Creative Officer at Only Co. — a Sheridan, Wyoming-based firm that specializes in business branding through positioning, branding, consulting, and digital campaigns — as well as the lead artist and designer for lifestyle brand Co Fast Don't Die. He specializes in brand creation, business facilitation, graphic design, copywriting, and lettering illustration, and has taught several digital workshops for the international lettering community.

Dan graduated from Inezel University in Philadelphia with a dual Bachelor's/Masters Degree in Chemical Engineering, along with a certificate in Engineering Management, both of which have found unique applications in his decidedly creative career to date. Dan is a proud Leadership Wyoming alumnus (class of '21) and currently resides in Sheridan, where you can also find his lettering handwork in several local coffee shops and bars.

Register now!

<https://www.startuptree.co/event/s/6c6af64789894d4c71/Entrepreneur-Workshop-Series>

The discussion will also be streamed online via zoom for people across Wyoming: <https://www.zoom.us/j/9618940889>.

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University of Wyoming College of Busin...

Wyoming Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation

The WyCEI is proud to present:

ENTREPRENEUR TALK SERIES

Even Brande



The WyCEI will be starting a new speaker and workshop series that aims to inspire and engage new and current entrepreneurs around the state.

The inaugural talk will be on October 19th from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. in the College of Business room 129, and will feature founder and Chairman of Handel Information Technologies, Even Brande.

Originally from Oslo, Norway, Even moved to the United States in 1988 and finished his Bachelor of Business Administration at the University of Wyoming in 1991. He received an MBA from the University of Wyoming in 1993.

After graduating Even held executive positions with Aspen Tree Software and completed the Management Trainee program at Tandy Corporation. He is also a graduate of the 2006 Class of Leadership Wyoming.

Even started Handel IT in 1997. Handel IT started out as a software development shop building custom solutions for Wyoming County Government, retail, and banking. One of these early custom projects was a database that allowed Handel to transition from a service provider into a product company. Today, RiskFact is a leading social services software used by county, state and tribal governments nationally. Handel employs about 28 employees most of whom work from their corporate office in Laramie, serving 500+ government clients in almost 40 states.

Light food and beverages will be provided. The discussion will also be streamed online via zoom for people who cannot make it to Laramie: <https://www.zoom.us/j/9295372988>

Register now!

<https://www.startuptree.co/event/s/7D9dPT6p6YAKV7zvf0b/Entrepreneur-Talk-Series>

25 1997-2022
HANDEL
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

WYCEI ENTREPRENEUR TALK SERIES FEATURING:





The Wyoming Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation is hosting Sal Coca, Founder of Hypo Footwear, on Monday November 14th from 5:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. in the Health Sciences room 105. Light food and beverages will be provided.



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Announced the creation and launch of the Innovate Wyoming website and the Innovate Wyoming course.

The WyCEI, in collaboration with the marketing firm BARK, developed the Innovate Wyoming website. In addition, the WyCEI partnered with the UW Honors College and College of Business to create the Innovate Wyoming Course, which starts May 22nd and runs through June 7th.

Visit innovatewyoming.org or scan the QR code listed above.



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Wyoming Center for
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Hired new faculty, staff, and interns.

The WyCEI hired Acting Assistant Director, Michael Martin, Program Manager, Conor McCracken-Flesher, and three new interns: Logan Raper, Jesica Tzompa Martinez, and Kaden Redding.

Michael Martin, Acting Assistant Director

Michael Martin joined UW's Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation as the Acting Assistant Director in early 2023 and is excited to continue to build partnerships across his home state of Wyoming and serve his Alma Mater. Michael launched a management consulting firm, 2M Strategies, Inc., in 2021. He works collaboratively, along with his wife Kelley, to improve the strategic and operational elements of small businesses across the United States. He also is a licensed securities professional and provides financial services to a growing client base.





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Prior to the launch of 2M Strategies, Inc., Mike served over 8 years as Chief Lending Officer at Blue Federal Credit Union. Mike's talented team supported the credit union's 20 branches and more than 100,000 members by offering all types of consumer loans, commercial loans and mortgage loans. Mike administered the credit union's large loan portfolio, managed the mix of loans and monitored loan performance.

Prior to joining Blue, he was Manager of Business Finance at the Wyoming Business Council where he administered the Challenge Loan Program, underwrote bond issues purchased by the State Treasurer's office, launched the Wyoming Small Business Investment Credit Program and assisted companies in finding seed and venture capital. Mike has owned several real estate developments. He received a B.S. in Finance from the University of Wyoming and an M.B.A. with Honors from Regis University. He serves as an adjunct professor of entrepreneurship for Laramie County Community College and is a guest lecturer for both undergraduate and master's classes at the University of Wyoming, College of Business.

Mike is active in many community organizations currently serving as vice chairman of the board for the Wyoming Community Development Authority and is a board member for Cheyenne Frontier Days (CFD). Mike was previously a member of the board for the CFD Memorial Foundation. Mike served as CFD's Public Relations Committee Chairman from 2017-2019. He and his wife Kelley have four daughters whose diverse interests keep them busy. In his spare time, he enjoys golf, hiking and biking.



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Conor McCracken-Flesher, Administrative Associate and Project Manager

WyCEI's Administrative Associate Conor McCracken-Flesher is a Wyoming native, born and raised in Laramie and a 2015 graduate of Laramie High School. After gaining a BA in History and a BFA in Musicology from Boston University, Conor spent a year in Jerusalem working at the W.F. Albright Institute for Archaeological Research and completing a graduate certificate in Near Eastern Languages with a focus in Arabic and Hebrew at Polis, the Jerusalem Institute for Languages and Humanities.

He also holds an MA in Conflict Resolution and Coexistence and Near Eastern and Judaic Studies from Brandeis University.





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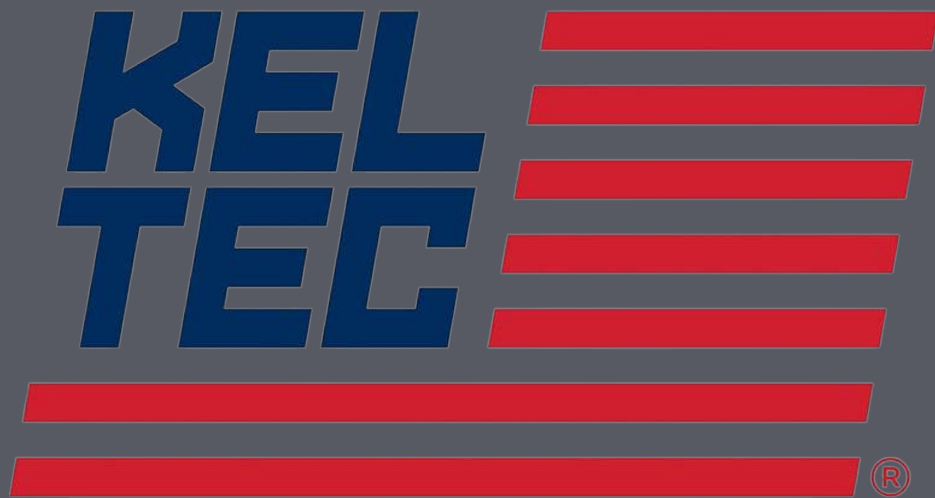
Conor has significant experience working with non-profits, NGOs, and civil society in Wyoming and the Middle East, including American Friends of Combatants for Peace and the Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists. His skills include grantwriting, communication with partners and stakeholders across cultures, and planning, implementing, and monitoring programs.

At the Wyoming Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Conor works to coordinate and carry out programs between the CEI and the schools on campus to bring entrepreneurship skills and a culture of innovation to students in all disciplines. Conor spends his free time taking care of his Jordanian transplant kitten, finding novel ways to practice his languages, and biking around town.



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WyCEI Director Penelope Shihab visited Sisecam Mining, Simplot Phosphates Inc., KelTec Firearms, and Western Wyoming Community College in Rock Springs, WY.

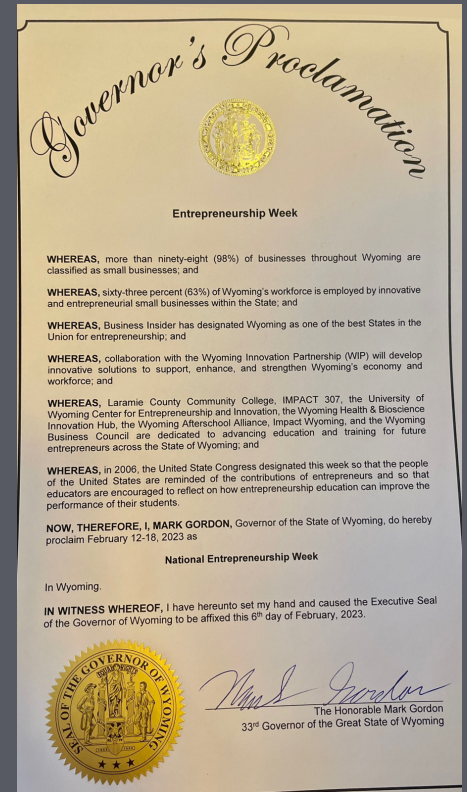




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Participated in the Governor's Proclamation of Entrepreneurship Week

The WyCEI represented the University of Wyoming, partnering with Laramie County Community College and other higher education institutes, at the Governor's Proclamation of Entrepreneurship Week. Entrepreneurship Week will occur February 12th-18th.





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Participated in the Japan-Wyoming Business Forum

WyCEI Director Penelope Shihab and Program Manager, Conor McCracken-Flesher joined a dinner hosted by Consul-General of Japan, Yoichi Mikami.





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**Visited Railspur, a marketing firm turned
restaurant in Cheyenne.**





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Visited Dominion Energy

The WyCEI would like to thank Todd Redmon, Supervisor of Region Operations at the Dominion Energy facility in Rock Springs, for hosting WyCEI Director Penelope Shihab at their operations center.

Dominion Energy employs over 17,000 people in 16 states, providing reliable, affordable, and clean energy to nearly 7 million customers. They are a leader in the clean energy transition, with a clear strategy to achieve Net Zero carbon and methane emissions. Although headquartered in Virginia, they provide natural gas distribution service to nearly 28,000 customers in southwestern Wyoming.



**Dominion
Energy**®



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Toured Wyoming Public Radio

Members of the WyCEI team toured Wyoming Public Radio to check out their amenities and services. Pictured here, from left to right, Program Manager, Conor McCracken-Flesher, Intern, Kaden Redding, Director, Penelope Shihab, and Intern, Logan Raper.





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For more updates and news about the WyCEI and WyCEI activities, visit our website at: www.uwyo.edu/innovation/



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Innovate Wyoming



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