



**Office of Engagement and Outreach**

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May 10, 2019

To: President Nichols & UW Board of Trustees  
Fr: Jean Garrison, Director  
Re: Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (IIE) State Outreach Impact Report

This memo provides a report on the Spring 2019 Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (IIE) Service Club Outreach Program organized by the Office of Engagement and Outreach (OEO) in cooperation with IIE. This report includes a discussion of outreach practices, impacts/outcomes, and costs. Organization of IIE outreach events began on December 28, 2018 and continued through May 1, 2019. This endeavor included the organizational efforts of Jean Garrison for fourteen programs and the preparation and delivery of 20 programs overall by IIE Chief Operating Officer Jack Mason and IIE Entrepreneur-in-Residence Peter Scott. The effort focused on service clubs, particularly Rotary Clubs and Kiwanis Clubs, in nine communities including Casper, Cheyenne, Cody, Lander, Laramie, Powell, Riverton, Sheridan, and Torrington. In Rock Springs, the IIE presentation was given to the Chamber of Commerce. The bulk of these presentations were given between January 24-February 28, with three in April and early May.

Process: Jean Garrison acted as the fulcrum for the service club outreach effort including serving as the initial point of contact and liaison for the service clubs and IIE presenters. There were several meetings with the IIE team to help coordinate the message, materials, and presentation focus. Media efforts were coordinated with Chad Baldwin and Institutional Marketing assisted with development of presentation materials. UW Trustees attended and/or introduced meetings in several venues including Casper, Cheyenne, Gillette, Laramie, Rock Springs, and Torrington. Dean David Sprott from the College of Business participated in meetings in Gillette. Vice President Ed Synakowski and President Laurie Nichols attended meetings in Laramie, and Jean Garrison attended meetings in Laramie and Cheyenne.

As much as possible, service club presentations were paired with additional visits with constituent groups including economic development officials, political officials, and entrepreneurs.

- There were meetings with faculty and/or administrators from Central Wyoming College, Eastern Wyoming College, LCCC, Northern Wyoming Community College District (Sheridan and Gillette Colleges), Northwest College, and Western Wyoming Community College.
- Additional meetings were hosted in Gillette by Jack Mason with county and city officials that included officials from the college and economic development offices and a meeting with the Gillette Fuel incubator. Mason also gave a presentation and formed breakout groups to get feedback at the Wyoming Economic Development Association (WEDA) Conference at LCCC. Peter Scott hosted meetings in Cody/Powell (Powell Economic Partnerships, Forward Cody, and representatives from the SBDC and Wyoming Business Council) and in Lander/Riverton (Lander Chamber, Leadership Wyoming, and the National Outdoor Leadership School).
- Media contacts included an interview with the Torrington Telegraph, video interview and evening spot on KTWO-TV, an article in the Cody Enterprise, and an interview by a Boomerang reporter for an article in the LCBA annual report.

Direct impacts: Service club presentations directly reached 800 club members and many more people were reached through additional meetings organized by the IIE. There was intense interest in entrepreneurship everywhere. The presentations emphasized that entrepreneurship and innovations are not just about startup companies, but also about graduating students and developing a workforce that can think and act entrepreneurially to face the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. IIE presenters were looking for and obtained input about the needs that must be addressed by the IIE. Many attendees provided feedback during the meetings and stayed afterward to provide additional input. The presenters obtained more than 240 individual strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges that will be input for developing a strategic plan and for addressing entrepreneur needs.

Feedback: Early initiatives receiving positive feedback included:

- Engagement with community colleges
- Helping entrepreneurs figure out where to go to get help from UW
- Mentor network
- Center for Business and Economic Analysis, Center for Design Thinking, Health and Biosciences Innovation Hub, and Law Practicum to support entrepreneurs and startups
- StartupTree platform to support Wyoming's "hybrid" entrepreneurial ecosystem
- Support for faculty ventures, student internships for startups, and seed funding for student ventures
- Collaboration with the Wyoming Business Council and support for community efforts to develop innovation centers
- Development and approval of a cross campus minor in entrepreneurship for non-business students with course delivery in both Laramie and at community colleges

In addition, many provided useful suggestions for additional priorities to consider including: introducing entrepreneurial thinking in the high schools, clarifying who should be approached for support among all the various organizations at UW (SBDC, WTBC, Manufacturing Works, etc.), and thinking about how to address numerous impediments to working with UW (e.g., legal, bureaucracy, and process).

Top level needs identified by entrepreneurs included:

- Entrepreneur Community – Build a community/network of entrepreneurs to support founders in their endeavors. UW can act as a community connector.
- Resources – Build a resource hub for entrepreneurs when they need to find people focused on UI/UX design, web development, software coding, creative companies (brand, marketing, social media), and professional services (lawyer, accountants, etc.).
- People – Entrepreneurs will always need people to help start and grow their business. Many entrepreneurs across the state wanted access to UW students as interns, and UW graduates as full time/part time employees.
- Mentor – All entrepreneurs could use the advice of an experienced entrepreneur.
- Capital – All startups need access to capital to help start their company.
- Programs – In particular, programs that will educate entrepreneurs on how to start, grow, and scale a company.
- Culture – Develop a culture that embraces entrepreneurial mindsets and strategies that accepts, for example, the importance of accepting and learning from failure.

Outreach Program Results: As a follow up, Jack Mason and Peter Scott hosted a brainstorming session that included representation from ENDOW, WTBC (Casper, Laramie, and Sheridan), and UW College of Business focusing on the feedback they received. The group set priorities and then sketched out program details and organized working groups to address identified needs.

- High Plains Mentor Network – The mentor network will leverage UW alumni who have started businesses in Wyoming and outside the state to work with new entrepreneurs.
  - With a pool of mentors the HP Mentor Network will solicit startup funders via Startup Wyoming, WTBC, SBDC, Wyoming Business Alliance, and BreakThrough307. Target timeframe is mid-summer.
- Entrepreneur Education – UW will coordinate and deliver 2-day entrepreneur BootCamps in the main Wyoming urban centers. The programs will be developed in partnership with local economic development organizations and community colleges in Cody/Powell, Lander/Riverton, Wind River Reservation, Goshen County, Gillette, Cheyenne, Jackson, Laramie, Rock Springs, Sheridan, and Casper.
  - UW is working with Forward Cody, Powell Economic Partnership, and Northwest College to set a specific date and list of topics in Cody/Powell. Target date is late fall after the tourist season.
- Capital Needs – UW will coordinate Startup Challenges in various cities across Wyoming. Startup Challenges are currently being held in Casper, Sheridan, and Laramie (via the Fisher Competition).
- Connecting with Students – Development of a paid internship program, in which students can work for startups. The program is in final stages of approval. Planning for a Startup Career Program to connect startups with students interested in working with entrepreneurial ventures. The career fair will include a number of workshops, speed-dating to match students with startups, and an expo to allow students to meet startups from across Wyoming. Target date is fall or spring 2019-20 depending on student schedules.

#### UW IIE Outreach Expenses & Labor Hours

We have estimated actual expenses and calculated labor hours for the IIE Service Club Outreach Program. Travel expenses were estimated at \$2,800 and total labor hours for IIE Outreach include 30 hours for Garrison’s organizational efforts and 189 hours for IIE personnel for preparation, planning, travel and presentations.