



THE COLEMAN FOUNDATION FACULTY ENTREPRENEURSHIP FELLOWS PROGRAM

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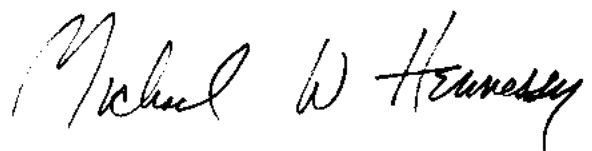
LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

Created by two successful entrepreneurs, the Coleman Foundation has made entrepreneurship education a central focus of its grantmaking since 1981. Coleman Foundation resources have anchored entrepreneurship teaching in many U.S. universities and colleges. Our most recent initiative, the Coleman Foundation Faculty Entrepreneurship Fellows Program, is the subject of this report.

For a decade, the Fellows Program supported faculty with entrepreneurship expertise to work with colleagues across campus to infuse entrepreneurship education into courses taught outside the school of business, with the longer-term goal of having such classes grafted into curricula.

We are proud of the Program's success. With limited funding, using a model with a few requirements and ample room for local adaptation, and through the creativity and commitment of faculty and administrators, the Program has helped entrepreneurship education take root and flourish in more than two dozen institutions well beyond business schools. Discipline-specific courses, from anthropology to zoology, now also address key principles and skills of business creation. In each of these fields, entrepreneurial learning is relevant, but only in the recent past has that become more widely acknowledged and addressed.

Our hope is that by describing the Coleman Foundation Faculty Entrepreneurship Fellows Program, we offer useful material for colleagues in philanthropy, our academic partners, and others wishing to prepare students across disciplines to create their own jobs and become business owners. We always intended to increase the political capital of those teaching entrepreneurship, and we hope that this is another resource toward that end.



MICHAEL W. HENNESSY,
PRESIDENT AND CEO,
COLEMAN FOUNDATION

INTRODUCTION

Suki John, Ph.D. is a dancer, dance instructor, and expert in Cuban modern dance. She is the author of *Contemporary Dance in Cuba: Técnica Cubana as Revolutionary Movement*, and the founder of Cuban Arts Match, which brings together North American and Cuban artists, students, scholars, and art lovers. John is also Associate Professor in the School for Classical and Contemporary Dance in the College of Fine Arts at Texas Christian University.

When her dean put out a call in 2011 for Coleman Fellows, John immediately recognized the opportunity. “Nearly as many dancers are self-employed as those working in performing arts companies, and a third of all artists are primarily self-employed at any given time,” she says. “Part of being an artist is building a career when there are few clear paths. As artists, we are really attached to our artistic product. But the question is: how can I make money to support my work of art? I was looking at how to make my experiences translatable to students, because building a career means being prepared.”

John worked closely with Michael Sherrod, the William M. Dickey Entrepreneur in Residence of the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Department at Texas Christian University, who himself has a notable record of business creation in publishing and web-based enterprise. Together—John as a Coleman Fellow and Sherrod as her Project Director—they created and co-taught Launch Pad, an interdisciplinary course for business and art students. The course was well received because, as John put it, “Business students need creativity, while art students need practical skills.”

John also developed *Career Preparation for Dancers*, a course now mandatory for all dance students. It includes a number



Suki John, Ph.D.

of career building blocks, including creating resumes, editing video for auditions, writing CVs for teaching, and developing websites for dancers. “I bring in various specialists: a career counselor, a Broadway dancer, a marketing consultant. I want students to leave with a toolbox.”

A student who completed the course described its impact:

I never believed I could be anything in the dance world but a dancer. The only thing my professors ever looked at was my form. After having Dr. John, I now realize that my career in dance can be more than my form or my dance talent, or luck. I can see myself creating a whole line of dance clothing, but I never got permission to go there until this course. It has brought back all the excitement and passion I had for dance when I started this program.

As the student's comment suggests, many career trajectories now include business development and self-employment, in professions as wide-ranging as music and engineering, culinary arts and chemistry, marketing and mathematics, philosophy and social work. This makes entrepreneurship learning widely relevant.

Over ten years the Coleman Foundation Faculty Entrepreneurship Fellows Program helped entrepreneurship professors (Project Directors) in business schools work with faculty (Fellows) in other departments to address this need. The Program design was straightforward. Fellows and Project Directors kicked off the academic year by joining Coleman Foundation staff in annual summits for relationship-building, learning, and idea-sharing. Fellows drew on Project Directors' deep business knowledge to integrate entrepreneurship into their own courses. Fellows taught and posted new syllabi on the Program website, and explored their colleagues' pedagogy and course content. Project Directors convened Fellows on campus for monthly webinars and discussions. The overall goal, as the Foundation's President and CEO Michael Hennessy put it, was "to have entrepreneurship professors in business schools reach a larger and more diverse number of students, and to help them see the opportunities provided by self-employment."

For nearly 40 years, the Coleman Foundation has supported the growth of post-secondary entrepreneurship education through a number of grant streams. The Coleman Fellows Program was its most recent initiative. The idea for the Program came from a handful of entrepreneurship educators who were working with faculty colleagues to expand teaching about self-employment and business development into other professions.

For a foundation that is proud of being responsive (and reluctant to impose its ideas on practitioners), building on work already begun by leaders in the field was an attractive proposition.

The Fellows Program leaves two main legacies: (1) multidisciplinary faculty from 33 colleges and universities who have embedded the teaching of entrepreneurship skills and knowledge in their coursework; and (2) tens of thousands of students who have learned about entrepreneurship as a possibility for themselves and acquired skills that can help them respond to opportunities.

The following report describes the goals of the Coleman Foundation for the Fellows Program, how the Program was brought to life, its development, and some of the most important lessons from its ten years of activity.



FERTILE EARTH: ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND FOUNDATION GROUNDWORK

Who is an entrepreneur and how does a person become one? Some readers will think big and historically: Richard Sears and Alvah Roebuck, creators of a phenomenally successful mail order business, or Madam C. J. Walker, whose hair and beauty products designed for African Americans made her a millionaire. For others, giant examples may be more contemporary: Oprah Winfrey's Harpo Productions and O Magazine, or Steve Jobs in his garage, teaming up with Steve Wozniak to launch Apple.

Smaller, more local businesses that crisscross our daily lives are less prominent but more prevalent: the neighborhood pie shop, our plumber or electrician, an ensemble company whose performances we never miss, the home-based child care center to which we entrust our children, our salon or barber, or the local independent bookstore.

Each month in the U.S., 3 of every 1,000 people start a new business.¹ Most—nearly 85 percent—do so to seize an opportunity, rather than in response to necessity. The smallest percentage of new business owners are adults between 20 and 34 years old; by age 45, more than one and a half times as many people will open a new venture.

One way that aspiring entrepreneurs learn is via formal education. Entrepreneurship education on campus is a recent and rapidly expanding phenomenon.

- In 1975, there were only 100 formal U.S. post-secondary programs offering majors, minors, or certificates in the subject.² By 2000, the number of programs had multiplied ten times, to about 1,000.³ By 2014, preliminary research identified more than 1,500.⁴
- About 250 entrepreneurship courses were being taught on campus in 1985.⁵ By 2014, this number had jumped to 5,000-plus classes, and more than 2,750 schools offered at least one course in entrepreneurship or small business management.⁶
- By 2013, more than 400,000 students per year were taking courses in entrepreneurship, almost 9,000 faculty were teaching the subject, and several schools had begun to require that all students take classes introducing entrepreneurship concepts.⁷

¹ All data in the paragraph are from: <https://indicators.kauffman.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/02/2017-National-Report-on-Early-Stage-Entrepreneurship-February-20191.pdf>

² https://www.kauffman.org/-/media/kauffman_org/research-reports-and-covers/2013/08/eshipedcomesofage_report.pdf

³ Ibid.

⁴ *Kauffman Entrepreneurship Inventory: Preliminary Analysis of the Status of Entrepreneurship in American Colleges and Universities*. Provided to the author by Jerome Katz, Ph.D., Saint Louis University.

⁵ https://www.kauffman.org/-/media/kauffman_org/research-reports-and-covers/2013/08/eshipedcomesofage_report.pdf

⁶ *Kauffman Entrepreneurship Inventory*.

⁷ https://www.kauffman.org/-/media/kauffman_org/research-reports-and-covers/2013/08/eshipedcomesofage_report.pdf

The hub of entrepreneurship education on campuses is the business school and, more recently, the entrepreneurship center. Students who don't think of themselves as business people or entrepreneurs may never set foot in either. Even those who recognize that an introduction to entrepreneurship would be valuable often find it difficult to make time for such electives without extending their studies beyond four years.

Making entrepreneurship education more widely available is important, because being an entrepreneur is becoming more common for more people, in professions well beyond the traditional careers chosen by business school graduates. In nearly 40 years of teaching entrepreneurship, Jerome (Jerry) Katz of Saint Louis University has found that 30 percent of entrepreneurship majors become self-employed, while national research shows that among people who study arts or agriculture, 50 to 80 percent become self-employed.⁸ This means, said Michael Sherrod of Texas Christian University, "if you don't know entrepreneurship, you won't make it. I think it's incumbent on educational institutions to ensure that students are prepared to survive."

As the Coleman Foundation saw it, the challenge (and opportunity) was to extend entrepreneurship education campus-wide, so that students who might never think to take a business class or had no time to do so were given the chance to learn about entrepreneurship *as a part of their field of study*.

Foundation staff and I were interested in finding out what majors entrepreneurs studied when they were in school. When we looked at the literature, it was obvious that most people who start businesses do not study business as a major. They study English, fiction writing, photography, you name it. This reinforced the Foundation's idea of taking entrepreneurship beyond the business school, to let it escape across campus. - Joe Roberts, Coleman Fellows Program Coordinator

INSPIRING FOUNDERS

The Coleman Foundation was established by two entrepreneurs who were successful long before the media attention of today. Dorothy W. Archibald took over control of Fannie May Candies on the death of her first husband in 1936, successfully grew the company, and became an enduring example of business ownership in her own right. She later married J.D. Stetson Coleman, a successful financier, investor, and business owner. Together they established the Foundation to return value to the community and to promote the values of personal control and self-reliance beyond their lifetimes.

Following J.D.'s death in 1975 and Dorothy's two years later, the Foundation became fully endowed and the Board of Directors developed its philanthropic vision. While the Colemans did not leave a direct statement of donor intent, they had appointed Directors who knew them personally, professionally, and philosophically. Directors recognized the value self-employment provides to individuals and communities, and have made entrepreneurship education one of the Foundation's core initiatives since 1981. Their objective has been to foster change through programs that are practical, long term, and results oriented.

⁸ Katz, J.A. (2018). Custom tabulation of occupation and employment status from the March 2015 *Current Population Survey Employment Supplement*. St. Louis MO: Saint Louis University Entrepreneurship Program.

The Coleman Foundation's interest in supporting high quality, sustained entrepreneurship education on college campuses predates its creation of the Fellows Program. In the early 1980s, the Foundation invested in endowed chairs at a number of business schools in both large and smaller institutions. Thereafter, it provided \$25,000 grants to seed campus entrepreneurship education at more schools. By design, most were smaller teaching universities rather than larger research institutions. Originally budgeted at \$1 million, Foundation funding grew to \$6.3 million as interest from emerging schools and younger professors exploded.

By 2008, two trends in education had paved the way for creation of the Fellows Program. The first was Foundation staff's recognition of initiatives begun by five Coleman funded professorships: Sharon Alpi of Millikin University; Gary Ernest of North Central College; Jerry Katz of Saint Louis University; David Pistrui of Illinois Institute of Technology; and Timothy Stearns of California State University, Fresno. Each had begun collaborating on campus with faculty outside the business school to extend entrepreneurship education to other departments. Later, Foundation staff identified similar work at three other colleges. Staff saw the model as a cost-effective way to increase entrepreneurship teaching across campus, one on which other campuses might build; it was an approach that appeared ripe for dissemination.

At the same time, proponents of interdisciplinary teaching in post-secondary education were calling for faculty from different departments to work together. Coleman staff considered how an interdisciplinary approach could help spread entrepreneurial education. As Hennessy put it, "The more we talked about interdisciplinary education, the more I thought, 'Here's the Trojan Horse! We have to utilize this alignment and ride into Troy.' While not perfect, I think we helped quite a few faculty and students see self-employment in a different light." The interdisciplinary approach helped break down the walls of academia, said one Project Director:

Walls are very hard to penetrate. What the Fellows Program has done is allow a network to develop organically. I don't think there's anything else I've seen in the college setting where a program has reached across disciplines to propagate knowledge, research, or interests so well. – Timothy Stearns, Project Director, California State University, Fresno

In January 2009, the Foundation announced the launch of the Coleman Foundation Faculty Entrepreneurship Fellows Program and by midyear the Program had begun funding on 15 campuses. While it was not initially clear whether the model would attract widespread interest, it was a good bet for a Foundation that is willing to try new things, take risks, and be patient about results.



AIMS & PRINCIPLES

The Program's three goals from inception were to:



ADVANCE THE COLEMAN DEFINITION'S FOCUS ON SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND FOR-PROFIT BUSINESS CREATION.



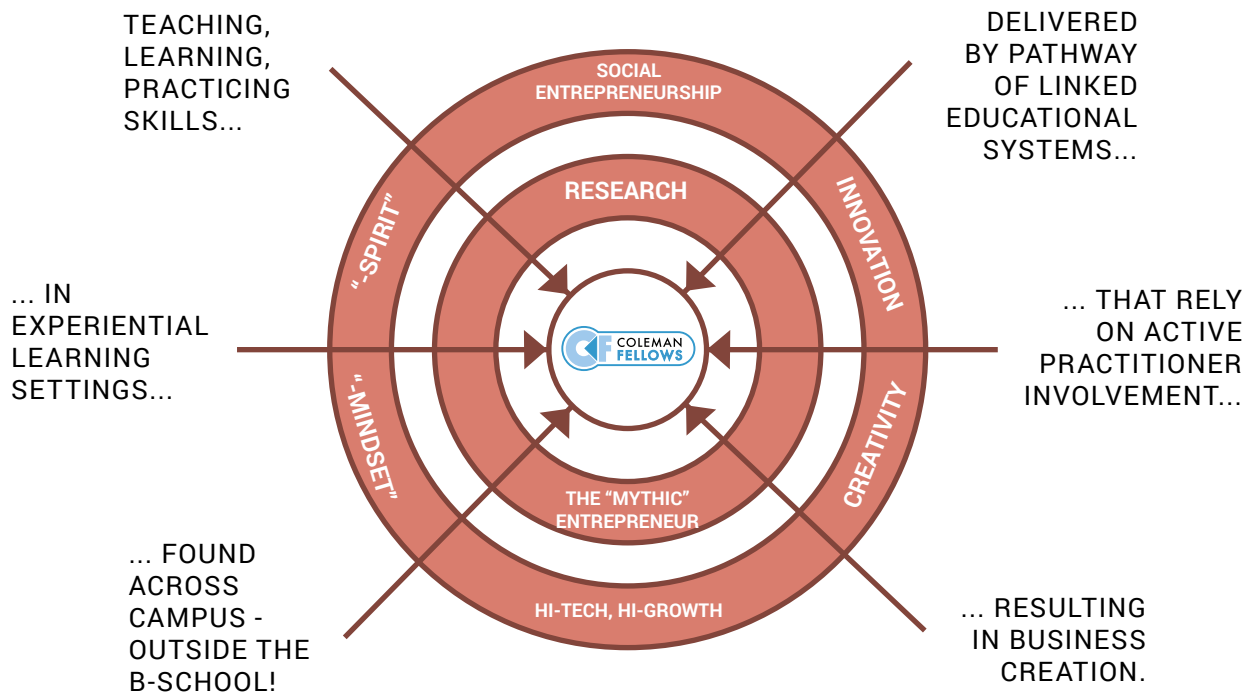
BUILD SUPPORT FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN NON-BUSINESS DEPARTMENTS ACROSS CAMPUSES.



CULTIVATE COHORTS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATORS ON INDIVIDUAL CAMPUSES AND ACROSS MANY DISCIPLINES.

All aspects of the Fellows Program trace back to what is known within the Program as "the bullseye," which defines the specific area of entrepreneurship promoted by the Coleman Foundation.

The definition acknowledges tension among ideas about what "entrepreneurship" and "entrepreneurial" represent. It stakes out specific territory and excludes other areas, including social entrepreneurship and high-tech, high-growth businesses. It acknowledges creativity and innovation as necessary tools, but not ends in themselves. It eschews the "mythic" entrepreneur as a natural-born genius, in favor of everyday people learning and practicing entrepreneurship principles and skills. Finally, the Coleman definition distinguishes between entrepreneurial "mindset" or "spirit" and the start-up and management of actual profit-generating businesses.



Over the course of the Program, some Project Directors and Fellows expressed frustration with the definition, most often because of the exclusion of social enterprises. However, most agreed that it provided a coherent focus, and they understood the Foundation’s interest in promoting it.

Another key Foundation principle was to act as partners with grantees. This was most clearly evident in the careful balancing of Foundation requirements with Project Directors’ need to adapt to their unique circumstances. The Program set standards in a few dimensions, including adherence to the Foundation’s focus on self-employment through business creation and mandating ongoing collaboration between Project Directors and Fellows. But on many other issues, the Foundation recognized the unique dynamics at play on different campuses, and opted not to be prescriptive. This flexibility was sometimes frustrating to grantees, who would ask: *What does the Foundation want us to do? Just tell us!* “Collaboration was really important,” said Senior Program Officer Clark McCain:

I’ve been very cognizant since I entered this role: I don’t have a Ph.D. in entrepreneurship, education, or in any of the subjects Fellows teach. Our grantees needed to teach us how to do this. So, I thought a lot about how we design the Program such that the best ideas from the grantees bubble up, and that people across the Program see those ideas, share them with one another, and apply them in the way that works best on their campus.

ANIMATING THE PROGRAM: KEY ROLES

Project Directors: Entrepreneurship Professor, Program Leader

Coleman Foundation staff invited entrepreneurship faculty in business schools and entrepreneurship centers to become Project Directors – and they in turn proved to be the key to success on each campus. Their deep knowledge of entrepreneurship was essential to advise the Fellows. Their standing on campus often lent luster to invitations to Fellows and helped win administrative acceptance of the Program. They nurtured cohesive cohorts of Fellows across campus. As Dianne Welsh, Project Director at University of North Carolina, Greensboro, put it: “We’re entrepreneurs in academia.”

The Project Directors applied for one-year grants for Fellows’ stipends and related activities, supporting fellowships for one or more faculty in other departments on campus, who became Coleman Fellows. Fellows candidates were identified and chosen by Project Directors, not by the Foundation, via locally developed application processes. In the early years of the Program, Fellow nominees were confirmed by a Foundation review that ensured their field of study aligned with Program intentions.

PROGRAM TIMELINE

DESIGN/PROOF OF CONCEPT

GETTING

2008

Coleman Foundation staff draw on promising initiatives to design new Fellows Program

JANUARY 2009

Program announced at United States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (USASBE) conference (*Creating Faculty Champions of Entrepreneurship outside the B-School*)

2009-2010

Academic Year: Program launch, first Fellows

2010-2011

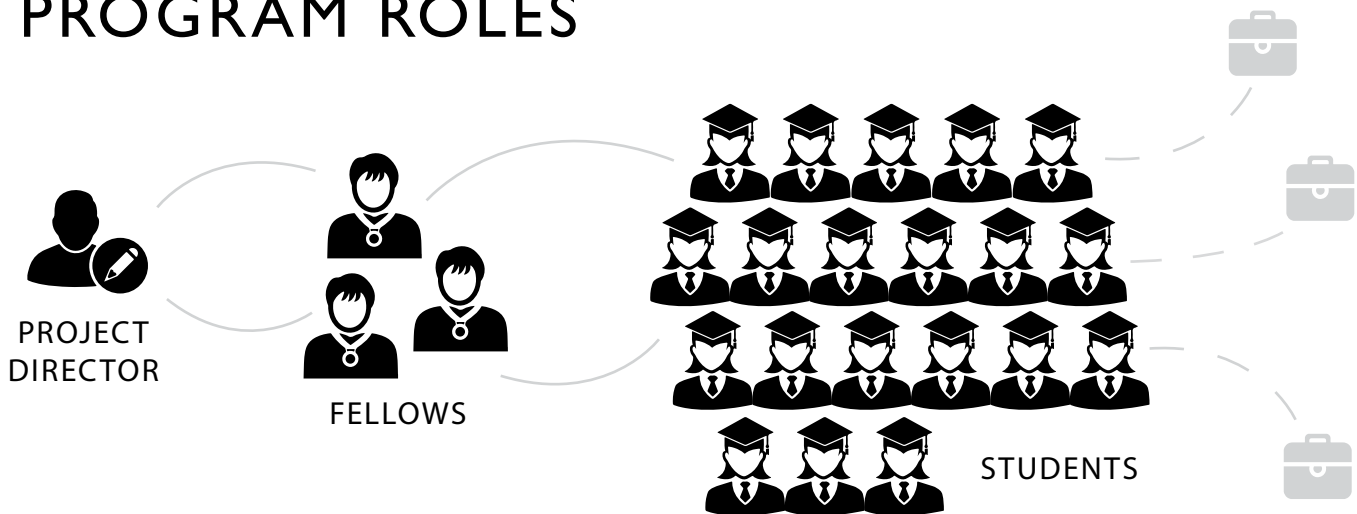
Program Coordinator begins, Program fleshed out and stabilized

In addition to applying for the grant and providing narrative and financial reports to the Foundation, Project Directors were responsible for participating in an annual in-person summit and monthly webinars with their Fellows. More broadly, they provided ongoing support to Fellows, sharing extensive knowledge about entrepreneurship, including previous Fellows' course development. Sometimes they co-taught with Fellows. They also convened regular meetings for Fellows to share experiences, questions, and lessons learned, and to recognize their accomplishments.

Some Project Directors had to be creative and persistent about cultivating administrative support. "What I found was that entrepreneurship education was a difficult sell," recounted Brian Morello, Project Director at Beloit College. His solution:

I developed this practice of taking the collateral material that the school puts out, like the magazine. And I circled all the things that we touched. All of a sudden there were Coleman Fellows fingerprints all over the effort to articulate the value of a liberal arts education. A museum studies class was centered around the story of how we did corporate exhibits to share the values of a company, or a repertory dance company that not only had to put the performance together but think about how they would market and sell tickets. The Coleman Fellows Program mirrored many aspects of what the college was trying to do, in a way that people could understand.

PROGRAM ROLES



IT RIGHT

2015-2016

Peak number of Fellows (157), largest program investment

2017-2018

Program wind-down begins

SUNSET

2019

Program ends

The few requirements in practice and process left a great deal of room for Project Directors to manage their programs in ways that best met institutional culture and the Project Director's style, aspirations, and strategy. For instance, some Directors recruited a Fellow in every department, to construct a broad base of support for interdisciplinary entrepreneurship education. Others took a "go deep" approach, creating cohorts of Fellows in selected schools and departments. Still others focused on curriculum development—traditional or online—to establish a cross-campus minor. "We hadn't prescribed, but lo and behold, these models emerged," McCain observed. "The Foundation managed the Coleman Fellows Program entrepreneurially from the start," says Gina Betti, Associate Project Director, Worcester Polytechnic Institute:

They would ask grantees, 'What are you going to try? Okay, try it. Oh, did it work?' They were not as concerned with failure as they were with hearing 'What did we all learn?' We never got the sense that they were thinking, 'Oh my God, it didn't work, you wasted our money.' Instead, they reinforced innovating and trying. I could learn from that and I could learn from them. For a foundation supporting academics to operate this way was phenomenal.

Faculty Fellows: Teaching Entrepreneurship in the Vernacular of the Discipline

The faculty Fellows were professors in departments outside the school of business. Working in close partnership with their Project Directors, each Fellow committed to:

- Attend the annual summit hosted by the Foundation, participate in webinars each month, and attend campus meetings held by their Project Director
- Choose an existing course in their area of study and modify it by infusing entrepreneurship pedagogy with help from their Project Director
- Teach the course

- Post the new syllabus to the Fellows Program's website
- Seek to have their course become a permanent addition to the curriculum, not simply a one-time "special topics" offering

Schools that met their commitments, producing work consonant with the Foundation's definition of entrepreneurship and advancing Program goals, were invited to reapply for support in successive years. Fellows could be renewed and new Fellows invited each year. Many veteran Fellows returned for multiple years. Fellows returning for more than one year attached their revised courses to the university catalog, modified additional courses, or conducted related projects.

Fellows described their Program experience as both practical and exciting. The Program's structure was intended to dismantle walls that separated business schools from other departments. This was a hit with Fellows as well as Project Directors. Suki John said, "I hoped from the beginning to get out of my silo in dance. As I worked with other faculty in other parts of the University, it enriched my experience, helped my teaching, and I met several rock stars along the way." She appreciated that the Program also connected her with artistic colleagues thinking about self-employment. "I talked with other performing artists, who helped me understand the building blocks I needed in place to prepare students. In my program specifically, we've really improved our career preparation for dancers in class. And I'm excited to keep moving that forward because it is such a difficult career and you have to be such a self-employed, self-starter." Fellows also were pleased that the Program sometimes lowered barriers between faculty and students.

Many have been recognized by their department leadership for their selection and involvement as Fellows. Some raised money for their work, using the Fellowship as leverage. For instance, Sridhar Condoor,

a Fellow in the School of Engineering at Saint Louis University, reported that, between Coleman and another foundation, he was able to raise millions for developing entrepreneurially minded engineers. Others secured research grants.

Program Coordinator: Making Connections, Highlighting Results

Recognizing that the Program needed more relevant leadership capacity, the Foundation retained Joe Roberts as Program Coordinator in 2010. Previously an entrepreneur, Roberts returned to school for his Ph.D. and created a blended study program in the University of Chicago's education department; he also studied entrepreneurship in the business school. This was an unusual combination—business programs rarely teach how to teach, and education programs rarely address business development—and thus a hybrid strikingly well-suited to the Fellows Program's needs. Once on board, Roberts focused on building the network of Project Directors and Fellows. "My challenge as the Coordinator was to build a common framework," he explained:

A school that has a faculty entrepreneurship expert, they're set in how they're going to make this work on their campuses, whereas someone who's coming in new might say, 'Well, I don't know how to teach entrepreneurship to other faculty members,' or 'I don't know how to teach entrepreneurship to students.' So, then, we had to bring in some instruction design. How do you build a module? How do you build a lesson plan that includes content in your subject area, which you know well, with entrepreneurship constructs that you may not understand—or vice versa—to blend it together? Those are the kinds of things that I was able to draw from my experiences and expertise to strengthen the Program.

In his intermediary role, Roberts heard questions and criticisms that might have been difficult for Project Directors to raise directly with Foundation staff, and fed



that information back to the Foundation. He provided significant insights about the performance and challenges of each institution, while also using his bird's eye view to identify overall trends and describe aspects of Program impact.

Roberts was a source of information, history, ideas, problem-solving, and wisdom, a well-liked and much trusted intermediary for Project Directors and Fellows as well as the Foundation. Hennessy said, "To be a good national coordinator you need several abilities: to understand what is going on in the Program and interdisciplinary education, so that you can talk to Fellows to help them break down the silos and barriers. You have to have an unassuming attitude. You've got to be able to pick up the phone and you have to be available a lot. You have to have paid your dues. You have to be a good facilitator. Be great at what you're doing and not have to say, 'Is anybody watching me?' or 'How great am I?' Joe did a fine job."

FELLOWS PROGRAM

SHORT-TERM GOAL

Sow entrepreneurship education beyond the business school in colleges and universities across the nation.

LONG-TERM GOAL

Promote self-employment through business ownership that has significant elements of risk, control, and reward.

STRATEGY



Support multidisciplinary faculty Fellows to work with academic entrepreneurship Project Directors to infuse entrepreneurship in coursework across campuses.



Foster a community of practice among Project Directors and Fellows on campus and across the Program.

INVESTMENT: \$4.7 MILLION OVER 10 YEARS | \$21,500 AVERAGE GRANT PER YEAR PER SCHOOL

PROGRAM ANNUAL TIMELINE

MARCH Coleman Foundation invited entrepreneurship faculty to apply as prospective or renewal Project Directors Project Directors invited one or more faculty outside the business school to apply to become (or return as) Fellows Project Directors prepared and submitted application to Coleman Foundation			MARCH-APRIL Coleman Foundation reviewed applications	APRIL Awards announced
JUNE Awards paid	LATE SUMMER/EARLY FALL Fellows began and annual summit held	JANUARY Project Directors sent Interim reports to Coleman Foundation	JUNE Project Directors sent year-end reports	

- Geography
- Biotechnology
- Nursing and health sciences
- Chemical engineering
- Natural sciences
- Economics
- Graphic communications
- Visual arts
- Supply chain management
- Agriculture
- Museum studies
- Biological engineering
- Leadership
- Animal behavior
- Electronic/photographic media
- Dance
- Biomedical engineering
- Earth and environmental science
- Finance, management, and accounting
- Sustainability
- Marketing
- Engineering
- Information technology
- Crisis management
- Hospitality leadership
- Anthropology
- Secondary education
- Human performance studies
- Journalism
- Construction management
- Public relations
- Ecology
- Musical theatre
- Child, family, and consumer sciences
- New media production
- Health and society
- International business
- Business administration
- Choreography
- Art and design
- Electrical and computer science
- Irrigation/water management
- Curriculum and instruction
- Food science and nutrition
- Architecture
- Culinary arts
- English
- Film
- Biological sciences
- Industrial and manufacturing engineering
- Science and health

2009 - 2019 RESULTS



\$199,000 to \$575,000

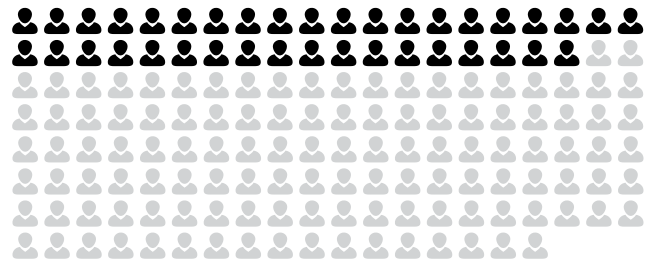
Annual Grants



Per year low of 9 and high of 21

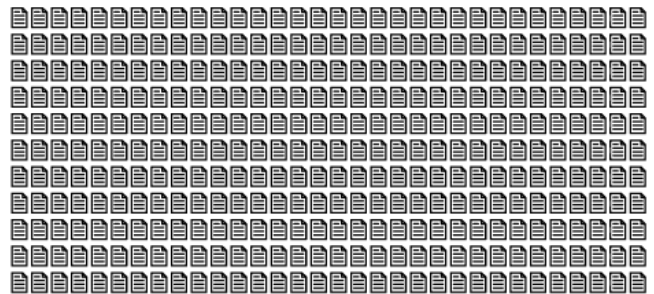
850+ Fellowships and 437 Professors

33 UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES IN 16 STATES



Number of Fellows per academic year: 38 - 157

Tens of thousands of students exposed to entrepreneurship concepts and skills in the context of their area of study; some have started for-profit businesses.



300+ syllabi created or modified by Fellows to include entrepreneurship education incorporated into university course catalogs

COURSES IN 157 SUBJECTS, FROM ANTHROPOLOGY TO ZOOLOGY, INFUSED WITH ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONTENT, INCLUDING:

- Urban studies
- Physics
- Electrical engineering
- Aerospace engineering
- Architectural engineering
- Law
- Social science and policy studies
- Floral design
- Art history
- Environmental engineering
- Advertising
- Zoology
- Animation
- Cognitive psychology
- Urban entrepreneurship
- Music
- Civil engineering
- Sociology
- Mathematics
- Philosophy
- Transportation design
- Chemistry
- Kinesiology
- Adolescent education
- Education
- Digital media
- Business law
- Mass communication
- Cinema
- Communications
- Graphic design
- Plant sciences
- Public health
- Religion
- Fashion entrepreneurship
- Educational counseling
- City and regional planning
- Social work
- Writing
- History
- Art administration
- Fine and performing arts
- Management information systems
- Applied sciences
- Consumer, apparel, and retail studies
- Biochemistry
- Computer science
- Psychology
- Special education
- Statistics
- Real estate
- Automotive restoration
- Design
- Recreation and tourism management
- Strategic communications

BUILDING COMMUNITY: COFFEE WITH COLLEAGUES

The Foundation believed that cultivating a sense of community within and across campuses was important to creating a Program culture that would engender cooperation and mutual learning. As McCain put it, "This was not about individual brands. It was a program."

McCain and Roberts recognized the importance of providing supplemental resources to Project Directors and Fellows to support their success and collegiality. "For several years, we compared the Fellows Program to a group of friends who gather over coffee," said McCain. He and Roberts began to develop supports for the Program, formally labeled the **Coleman Foundation Entrepreneurship Community of Practice** (and informally "the Coffee Cup"). The Coffee Cup included a handful of ingredients: face-to-face and web-enabled meetings, a website, and support for external professional development for Fellows.

Coffee Talk: In-Person Meetings

Roberts and McCain designed and led the Program's fall summit for new and returning Fellows and Project Directors. The gathering was an orientation, learning, and networking event. It ensured that everyone understood the interests, goals, specific focus, and expectations of the Foundation and the Program. It enabled Program Directors and Fellows from across the country and across each campus to meet and begin to connect with one another. Didactic and experiential workshops led by Project Directors and Fellows, and occasionally by outside speakers, provided subject matter, offered teaching tools, and enlivened the meetings, while roundtables, group meals, and long evening conversations served as networking opportunities.

SAMPLE SUMMIT WORKSHOPS



Opportunity Recognition (Frank Hoy, Project Director, Worcester Polytechnic Institute)



Laughs, Tears, and Funding: The Results of Effective Storytelling (Adam Cochran, Fellow, Colorado Mesa University)



The \$10 Business Plan (Karen Evans, Co-Project Director, Lawrence Technological University)



Healthcare Entrepreneurship (William Martin, Fellow, DePaul University)



Developing Feasibility Plans (Dianne Welsh, Project Director and Steve Cramer, Fellow, University of North Carolina, Greensboro)



Urban Entrepreneurship: A College Course and a Way of Life (Chris Sharton, Fellow, California State University, Fresno)

The summits provided two other significant benefits: First, they made time for Fellows to huddle with peers in the same field of study to discuss how to integrate entrepreneurship content within their subject area. Second, summits were a rare opportunity for Project Directors and Fellows to spend time with Foundation staff, including the President and two Program Officers, as well as the Program Coordinator. Project Directors and Fellows interviewed admired their knowledge of cross-campus entrepreneurship education, and their championship of the Program's participants.

On-campus meetings hosted by Project Directors were well attended, and Fellows appreciated the structure provided by Project Directors. Some meetings included local entrepreneurs, and others showcased the work of Fellows to deans and other administrators.

Fellows and Project Directors agreed that the summit and on-campus meetings were the most important supports, "the heart of the Program." Both effectively supported learning and relationship-building in a young field.

Coffee Hours: Monthly Webinars

Every month, Fellows and Project Directors gathered on campus to participate in the Coffee Hour, a Program-wide webinar on a topic germane to the work. These were presented first by McCain and later by Roberts, and sometimes featured campus teams.

In contrast to the summit and on-campus meetings hosted by the Project Director, web-enabled meetings did not serve the Program as well. Many respondents said there was a wide gap between the intention of monthly webinars—to engage and teach—and actual experience. The Program Coordinator tried several strategies to improve the webinars, without success.

Challenges included both substance and style. Webinar content and presentation quality were graded from occasionally great to generally poor. The problem was in part technological, and thus was far from unique to the Program. Perhaps future methods of electronic sharing will better support participant-speaker involvement, improve speakers' presentation, and reduce audience multi-tasking. Despite shortcomings, gathering for the webinars proved indirectly valuable, as a regular occasion for Project Directors and Fellows from across campus to meet, talk, and collaborate.

Coffee Table: Program Website

A Program website, created in 2010, was another tactic for encouraging a sense of community. It served as the place where Fellows posted their syllabi, a library of webinars, and a communications platform for Program participants. The website was visited over 1 million times during the Program's lifespan.



PRIMED FOR ACTION: WHAT LED PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE

A number of Fellows began as experienced entrepreneurs who had had to piece together their own entrepreneurial skills from scratch. Their ambition was to lay a foundation for students who they knew could avoid costly mistakes if they mastered the basics of business development. They described their motivations:

During the past 10 years, more change has happened in music than in the previous 40. The music education industry has a long history of training people for available jobs. The Paris Conservatory was formed to train musicians for military bands back in the 18th century. It was only in its second year that it added strings. It is just as important for us to train the new generation for what's happening today. My degrees are in music education and trombone performance. I perform as a soloist and play with the local symphony. I've had my own music businesses for the past 30 years and learned how important it is to teach about the business model. I learned a lot of music business—writing books, dealing with publishers, signing contracts, producing tours, and performing—on the fly, as most everybody did. There's organic stuff in those tasks and activities that we as academics need to embrace. I have done that as coordinator of our music business program, developing the courses I teach. Even our professional organizations are now having special national entrepreneurship conferences. - Sean Flanigan, Fellow, Colorado Mesa University, Department of Music

The overall value of the Coleman Fellows Program? It really opened my mind to new opportunities. When I started as a Fellow, I was also starting a company—making a protein-based suture that doesn't scar—and I succeeded. That helped me bring

examples to my teaching. The Program introduced me to other faculty, foundations, and organizations working in this space. For students, it's created value: I have a vivid memory of talking with a student who was not happy in his job and was thinking of moving to Colorado. I suggested he consider lifestyle entrepreneurship, which I'd learned of from the Fellows Program. He jumped at the idea! Entrepreneurship is firmly embedded in my undergrad and graduate classes. It's not for all students, but I think all should be aware of it. There are many skills that are transferable, whether they want to start their own business or not. Being a Fellow gave me a network of other people trying to do similar things. - Glenn Gaudette, Fellow, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Biomedical Engineering Department

My entrepreneurship students always want to know: What are you doing entrepreneurially? I say, 'After a full day of being an entrepreneurial professor, the entrepreneurship part of my current career is book publishing and consulting.' - Patricia H. Lee, Fellow, Saint Louis University, School of Law

Some Project Directors were similarly motivated.

I got involved and was all gung-ho because I owned a business and came from an entrepreneurial family. I found the key was to get people to play well with each other or to talk with each other. I got to know somebody in engineering, someone in art, somebody in music. We would get together to do things, and if a kid had an idea, I sent them there. That's worth a lot because it doesn't happen very often on an academic campus. - Georgann Joufflas, Project Director, Colorado Mesa University



Jerry Katz, Project Director at Saint Louis University, also an experienced entrepreneur, described the alchemy of blending entrepreneurship with diverse subjects:

Millie Mattfeldt-Beman, a Fellow, was an academic entrepreneur. She had come to me for help with getting more organized about teaching about selling food at farmers markets. She knew resources in agriculture, and I knew about resources such as the small business development center. We talked about registered dietitians; she said, 'Wouldn't it be great to teach so they're prepared for small business and e-commerce opportunities?' We now have a grad degree in culinary entrepreneurship.

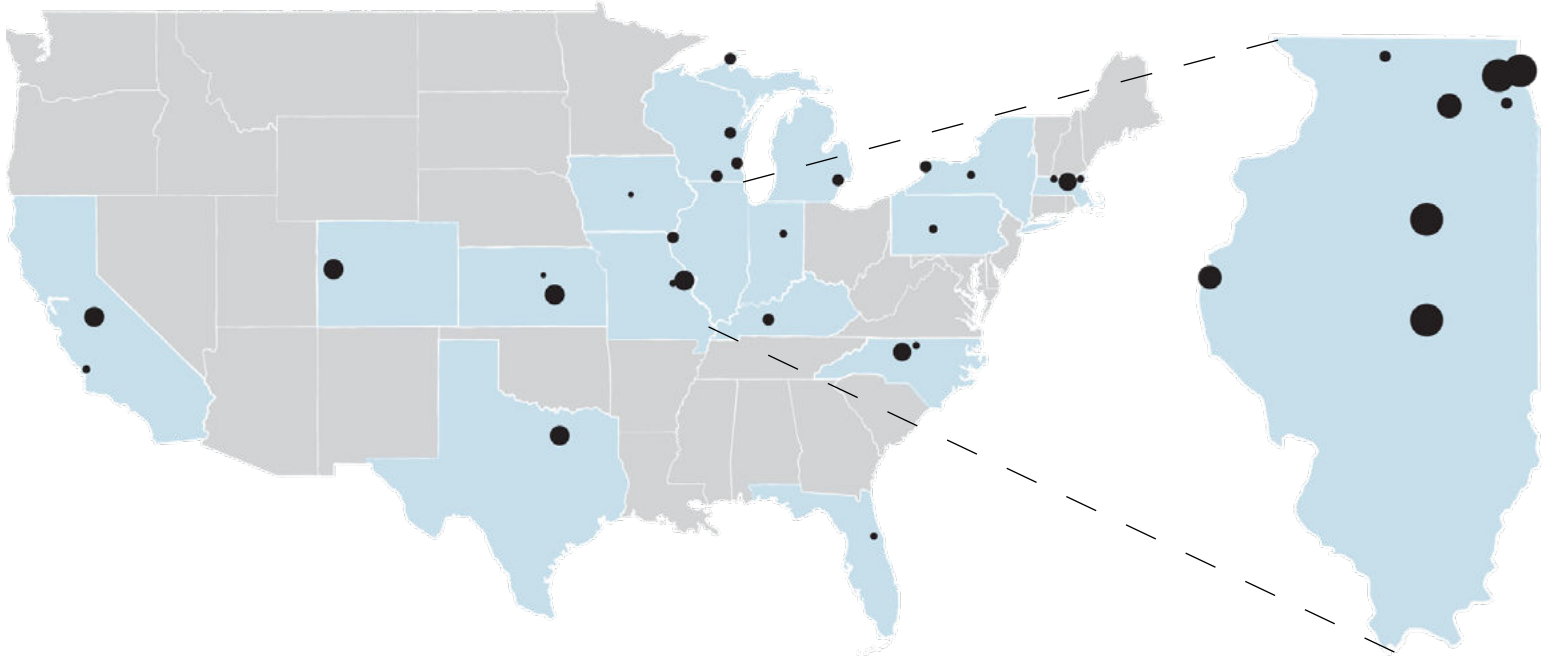
Sridhar Condoor, another Fellow, and I knew each other, because people in tech transfer would have students write business plans. We educated each other. After becoming a Coleman Fellow, Sri wrote one of the first grants in the nation to found a KEEN (Kern Entrepreneurial Engineering Network) program on our campus. He wrote three volumes of *Innovation Challenges: Mind Workouts for Teams*, available for free on iTunes.

In the law school, at first few faculty had any interest in small business, but a new dean who was a practicing attorney and former chief justice of the Missouri Supreme Court pointed out that many lawyers were working with businesses small and large. He encouraged the clinic to grow to be more of a resource for small community businesses. Coleman Fellow Ann Scarlett created an entrepreneurship law concentration, while Fellows Patricia Lee and Dana Malkus grew the Legal Clinic to make entrepreneurship a cornerstone of their offerings to the campus, and community.

And in the nurse practitioner department, Fellows Rebecca Lorenz and Joanne Thanavaro designed their capstone course to include a business plan along with a clinical study.

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Anderson University (2010–2011)
Beloit College (2009–2019)
California State University, Fresno (2009–2019)
California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo (2012–2014)
Canisius College (2010–2013)
Colorado Mesa University (2011–2019)
Cornell University (2014–2015)
DePaul University (2009–2017)
Elon University (2014–2016)
Finlandia University (2009–2015)
Illinois Institute of Technology (2009–2011 and 2014–2019)
Illinois State University (2009–2019)
Iowa State University (2010–2011)
Juniata College (2010–2013)
Lawrence University (2009–2012 and 2013–2014)
Lawrence Technological University (2009–2015)
McPherson College (2013–2014)
Millikin University (2009–2019)
Milwaukee School of Engineering (2009–2011)
North Central College (2011–2012 and 2015–2017)
Northern Illinois University (2011–2012)
Quincy University (2009–2014)
Saint Louis University (2009–2019)
Simmons College (2011–2013)
Stetson College (2014–2016)
Texas Christian University (2010–2019)
University of Illinois, Chicago (2009–2010)
University of Massachusetts, Amherst (2015–2016)
University of North Carolina, Greensboro (2010–2019)
Webster University (2013–2016)
Western Kentucky University (2009–2013)



SCHOOL TENURE IN FELLOWS PROGRAM

ILLINOIS

- 1-2 years
- 3-6 years
- 7-10 years



THE REAL TEST: STUDENTS

As Program Coordinator Joe Roberts discovered, students were eager for the learning opportunities provided by Project Directors and Fellows. “Listen, it’s not about us,” he said. “It’s about the success of students. The students were already thinking about entrepreneurship. We were talking about doing this and doing that. The students were saying, ‘Hey, guys, whether you do it or not, I’m already there.’”

Entrepreneurship education expanded horizons for students, as demonstrated by the experience of Todd Alexander, a Ph.D. student at Worcester Polytechnic Institution. “Typically, people only see two paths in science: academia or industry,” says Alexander. “The courses that included entrepreneurship were not designed to encourage everyone to become self-employed, but to challenge the idea of binary options.”

Alexander is developing antimicrobials to combat antibiotic resistance. He has been influenced by Fellow Glenn Gaudette and Project Director Frank Hoy, who co-taught a number of classes that combined science with entrepreneurship and occasionally brought in local entrepreneurs, who added to students’ skills and confidence.

Alexander said he had not planned to be an entrepreneur, but Gaudette, who had his own business, “brought an enthusiasm that made it possible for me to be enthusiastic too.” In 2016, he and a colleague began AMProtection, a business based on a novel microbial technology. They secured grants and won competitions, but were forced to close after two years due to a timing issue with funding. “Without the classes, I don’t know if I would have had the knowledge or the courage to try. I learned that failure is



okay, and it’s okay to take risks.” Alexander said he plans to start up another venture in the future. “That was my first company, not my last company.”

Alexander is an example of a student whose entrepreneurship education led him to business creation. As noted earlier, the age group least likely to be business owners are adults under 35. This fact makes it difficult to quantify the short-term impact of entrepreneurship education, since a longer timeline and purposeful tracking would be needed to truly evaluate results. Anecdotal evidence strongly suggests that some students find self-employment a compelling option even before graduation. Gina Betti at Worcester Polytechnic comments: “When you hear an engineering student talk about value creation, or a science student talk about intellectual property, they’re starting to speak our language and we’re starting to understand the confines and the constraints in which they operate. We’ve lowered fear of business. We’ve really increased respect for self-employment.”

Project Directors and Fellows described a continuum of student engagement:

- At one end of the continuum are the many students who participated in a single entrepreneurship-infused course or campus entrepreneurial event. The dance student quoted above reflects how one class influenced her thinking about entrepreneurship and her hopes for her career. Another student who participated in many of Sridhar Condoor's Innovation Challenges at Saint Louis University reports using innovative thinking techniques in her post-graduate work with Teach for America and her current job with a new charter school network, and daydreaming about possible future self-employment. Will these hopes translate into business creation? Time will tell. If they do, the former students will bring basic knowledge and skills to the challenge.
- At the next level of engagement are students who took multiple courses in which entrepreneurship intersected with their area of study. Some of these students, including Alexander, developed a business. He is committed to re-engage as a future entrepreneur, and will be able to draw on what he learned from his first efforts, which were informed by his coursework, professors, and entrepreneur guest speakers. Another indicator of this level of interest is reflected in students who asked faculty to design a new class that would focus on specific aspects of entrepreneurship in their fields. As Julie Shields, Project Director at Millikin University, put it, "We've experienced students driving curriculum now, which is kind of a cool story." For these students, seeking deeper education shows more developed interest in becoming an entrepreneur, during or following college.
- At the far end of the engagement continuum, some students sought out exceptional opportunities for hands-on learning and coaching. Examples include an internship begun by Project Director

Michael Sherrod for students to work with startup entrepreneurs at business incubators in Dallas and Fort Worth. When seed funding from the Foundation ended, the experiment had proven so popular that Texas Christian University picked up the ongoing cost of stipends and administration. Another advanced education option was the Student Fellows program launched by Timothy Stearns at California State University, Fresno. The project included a handful of students per semester who were in the process of creating a business, usually with a prototype. Stearns noted that, "It helped students move forward and connected the faculty Fellows directly to the entrepreneurship project." These students were early entrepreneurs.

Sridhar Condoor, a Fellow in the School of Engineering at Saint Louis University, comments that "the real beneficiary is the students. The next generation graduating is much more entrepreneurially minded. They have a better sense of the value proposition, which will help them launch better. Their future economic impact may not be quantifiable, but it will be significant."

Project Director Dianne Welsh at University of North Carolina at Greensboro projected even further into the future:

The Fellows Program has changed lives and will make generational differences for families. Many will be self-employed, and will create businesses that will hire others. Families in Greensboro have worked in mills and tobacco – they never went to college and they never had their own business. If not for the Coleman Fellows, kids would never have their own business. But former students have created businesses: selling guitars, putting out a shingle for management consulting, and opening an athletic clothing business.

PROGRAM SUNSETS: INTERDISCIPLINARY ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION THRIVES

Early in 2018, the Coleman Foundation announced that it would sunset the Entrepreneurship Fellows Program in the 2018-2019 academic year. The decision was based on the Foundation's sense that the Program's original goals had been achieved, as well as the desire of Board members to explore supporting local, community-based programs for entrepreneurs who are further along in their entrepreneurial journey.

The Coleman Foundation is transitioning its entrepreneurship education funding from universities and colleges across multiple states to Chicago neighborhoods, and hopes to work in tandem with other local grantmakers. Considerable thought has been given to a careful wind-down of the Fellows Program; this report is one result. The new entrepreneurship education grants program will reflect some of the most important lessons and most effective approaches from the Fellows Entrepreneurship Program:

The neighborhood work will be heavily collaboration-based. We have the opportunity to gather neighborhood non-profit entrepreneurship educators together, like we did at the summit, and enable them to learn from one another and other community partners, just like the Project Directors figured it out themselves and shared it with colleagues. - Clark McCain, Program Officer, Coleman Foundation

Looking back at the Fellows Program, McCain remarked, "We telegraphed the ending a couple years out, and I know there

was disappointment, but people are continuing on. They're finding ways to do this. Some schools won't do things like this, and others will do things very much like this. But everyone will be moving on in a way that's informed and educated by what the Fellows Program enabled them to achieve." Michael Sherrod, Project Director at Texas Christian University, added: "It's changed the curriculum in extraordinary ways. Nursing school has made it mandatory to study entrepreneurship. Design does the same. Engineering, ditto."

For a foundation, a productive program that lives on after funding ends is a high mark of success. Thus it was to the Coleman Foundation's delight that a conversation among eight of the nine 2018-2019 Project Directors and the Program Coordinator in April 2019 confirmed that the programs they had developed with support from the Foundation would continue beyond Coleman funding.

New sources of support have emerged and some programs will be rebranded. The Program at Saint Louis University is now called the Chaifetz Fellows Program, in honor of a major donor, and new participating faculty at Illinois State University are titled Interdisciplinary Entrepreneurship Fellows. Texas Christian University and Colorado Mesa University will call legacy participants Coleman Fellows while new ones may become Innovation Fellows. Worcester Polytechnic Institute will continue the Coleman Fellows moniker. The University of North Carolina at Greensboro is looking for

a new funding source that would be offered naming rights, and along with the Illinois Institute of Technology will continue with the same number of Fellows in the coming year.

The Coleman Fellows Program funded by our grant from the Coleman Foundation has been instrumental in the development of our Entrepreneurship Cross Disciplinary Program. Certainly the money helped entice faculty from disparate disciplines to participate, but it is also true that many of them became strong believers in the value of entrepreneurship for their students. In that regard, it has been invaluable to us. - McRae C. Banks, Margaret & Harrell Hill Distinguished Professor and Dean, Bryan School of Business and Economics, University of North Carolina, Greensboro

Foundation staff expressed satisfaction with the Program. Program Officer Rosa Berardi focused on the roots the Program had put

down. "The Program's a success because not only have we introduced but we've embedded entrepreneurship education in the institutions. It's not going away. There's been real mind change. Professors are committed to it." From Hennessy's perspective, "The program certainly helped break down silos and provide an interdisciplinary platform for diverse groups of students and faculty to be introduced to the opportunities provided by self-employment and learn basic entrepreneurial skills in the context of their own majors and disciplines."



PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Measuring the impact of any foundation grant tends to be challenging for a host of real-world reasons. For the Fellows program, one major impediment was pointed out by the Program Coordinator: "There is no proven method to test entrepreneurship [education]."⁹

The Coleman Foundation, an experienced grantmaker, recognized other difficulties early on. Said Berardi, "It's tough to come up with outcomes. I think you have to be somewhat flexible in that programs are going to be different and they will look different, but you have to allow people the flexibility because there are a lot of ways to get to the end you seek."

Berardi added, "Another lesson learned: give up that you're going to be able to measure success in the way you might hope. When we first started, we thought in terms of *how many businesses did the kids start?* Unless you're doing longitudinal studies, you can't get to that." One final note: "If you're going to consider funding a program like this, you have to be in it for the long haul, because a lot of the entrepreneurship education being provided might not come to fruition for a number of years."

The Coleman Foundation mainly evaluated the Fellows Program's implementation via the Program Coordinator's periodic updates on accomplishments and challenges among participating schools, biannual grant reports from Project Directors, and occasional site visits by program officers. These measures allowed the Foundation to know which grantees' work was the strongest, and to be sure that grantees followed through on their commitments. They were also conduits for lessons that could be incorporated into the Program.

Project Directors agreed that the Foundation set clear expectations and that its information-gathering processes effectively enabled it to exercise accountability with the universities and colleges that participated, rewarding those that followed through, and eliminating those that did not.

Though it kept its investment in evaluation light, in 2017 the Coleman Foundation contracted with the Center for Research and Service, Illinois Institute of Technology, for one formal study. The assessment focused on evaluating impact in relationship to three of the Coleman Foundation's impact strategies: (1) improving academic and community-based entrepreneurship curricula to build core skills for entrepreneurship and self-employment, (2) increasing local practitioner engagement such as coaching, mentoring, and teaching, and (3) supporting community-based experiential learning opportunities, and supporting entrepreneurship networks.

Researchers relied on stakeholder group meetings and interviews to develop the evaluation framework and survey protocols. Surveys were completed by 88 Fellows (a response rate of almost 25%) and 288 students. The evaluation showed:

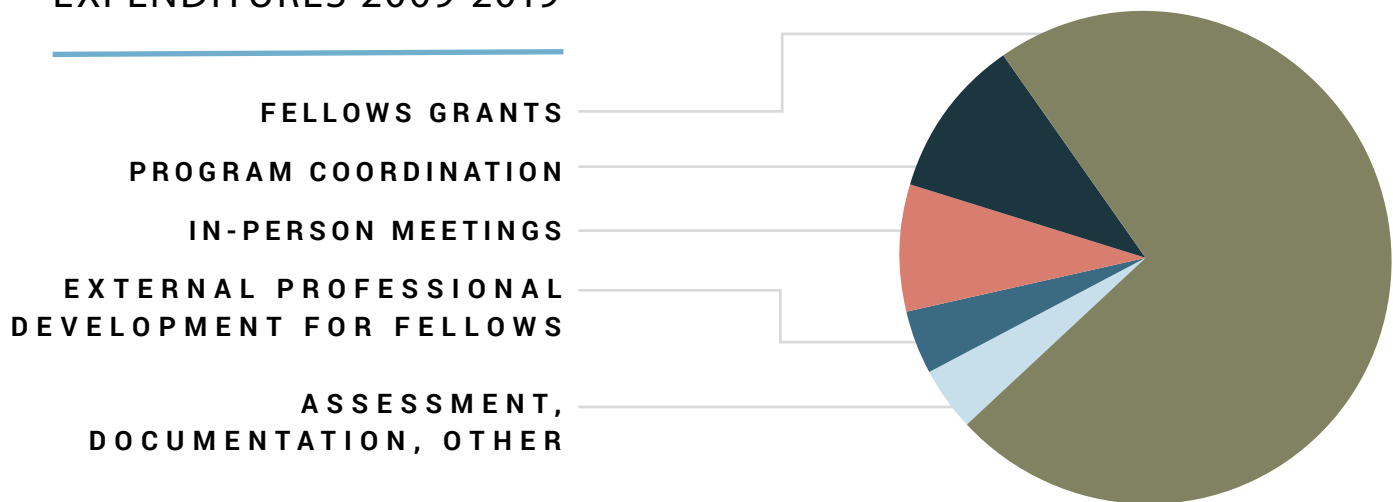
- Fellows indicated that the Program had had positive impacts on entrepreneurship education and their teaching. Most indicated that they involved alumni and local entrepreneurs to some degree in their teaching, and believed that creating cohorts of faculty across programs would foster engagement. "Most Fellows see value in the Program," said researchers, "affirming that it has benefitted them as academics, raised their visibility on their campus, and helped them identify new opportunities within their discipline."
- Almost 70 percent of respondent students in non-business majors reported that Coleman courses increased their desire to start businesses. Some had positive experiences learning from other entrepreneurs and were interested in experiential learning activities that engage with the community.

⁹ Roberts, J. (2013) *Infusing Entrepreneurship within Non-Business Disciplines: Preparing Artists and Others for Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship*, in *Artivate: A Journal of Entrepreneurship in the Arts* Volume 1, Issue 2 <http://artivate.org> pp. 53 -63

FOUNDATION RESOURCES

The Coleman Foundation is proud of its lean approach to funding the Program, and hoped that the relatively low annual cost of the Program would help make it possible for Project Directors to replenish their budgets from other sources. Over ten years, the Foundation invested \$4.7 million in the Coleman Fellows Program. This figure includes all Program costs except the value of Foundation staff time. As one of several Coleman Foundation entrepreneurship education grant programs, Fellows Program grants represented a fraction of the Foundation's annual entrepreneurship funding, ranging from 8-37 percent—a median of 17 percent—of the total each year. The percentage varied by the number of participating schools and number of Fellows each year.

EXPENDITURES 2009-2019



Over 10 years, \$3.5 million in Fellowship grants supported the involvement of 33 schools and Project Directors and 850-plus fellowships. Annual grant funding included \$5,000 per new Fellowship awarded, and could include up to \$2,000 to support continued participation by prior-year Fellows. Project Directors had full discretion to decide, based on local factors, how these funds were deployed on their campus, how much would be used as a Fellow stipend, and what amount, if any, would be used by the Project Director to cover costs of managing the program (including an optional co-director or graduate student assistant). Applicants could also ask for Program Support Funds, up to \$5,000 per campus, to augment Fellowship grant funds; these could be used to compensate Project Directors, co-directors, or assistants, or for other purposes directly related to the Program. Annual grants averaged \$21,500 per school. Total grants from the Coleman Foundation ranged from \$199,000 to \$575,000 per year.

The Program began in 2009, with McCain responsible for implementation and management, and Berardi identifying prospects and reviewing grant applications, while Hennessy's involvement became advisory. All three participated in annual summits and were readily available to grantees, to talk through questions and troubleshoot as needed. Three times during the Program year proved most demanding for staff: (1) The spring period, when staff sent the annual RFP to selected schools, reviewed applications, and prepared grant recommendations to the Board; (2) Summit preparation during the summer and attendance in early fall; (3) February review of interim grant reports and June review of final reports, with subsequent progress reports to the Board.

Approximately 20 percent of McCain's time focused on the Program in its first years. The retention of Roberts in the second year recognized the need for a director to devote more time and attention to developing and running the Program. His rare combination of entrepreneurial and pedagogical experience and content knowledge was invaluable. Roberts worked approximately 20 to 25 hours per week on the Program.

LESSONS LEARNED & RECOMMENDATIONS

Everyone who played a role in the development and implementation of the Fellows Program was thoughtful about what had worked best, and many also had ideas about strong elements that could have been even more effective. A summary follows.

1. The Foundation consistently signaled respect for faculty experts, showed interest in experimentation and learning, and acted in a spirit of partnership. Most significantly, it defined a few focused Program requirements and left a great deal of choice to Project Directors. The Directors decided how to implement the Program on their campus, developed their own Fellow recruitment and selection processes, and allocated Fellow and Program stipends. By clearly scoping its requirements, the Foundation ensured a cohesive program. By delegating significant authority to Project Directors, it recognized that multiple models might (and did) work. Small gestures, such as paying out grants in full, mailing grant checks directly to the Project Directors rather than to university development offices, and allowing them to decide how to use Fellowship funds, all conveyed respect and collegiality. This was so unusual in academic funding that Mark Hoelscher, Project Director at Illinois State University, commented, "In fact they were so open about how we wanted to work our programs that it would drive our grants' accounting people nuts." All praised the Program for helping them to build broader support for entrepreneurship education across campus, and connected the Fellows Program to important achievements on their campuses, such as big increases in interdisciplinary classes.

- **Recommendation:** Several Project Directors noted that the Coleman Foundation has cachet across the U.S. and beyond in the world of entrepreneurship education, which burnished their academic credentials and helped raise their profiles within their institutions. They wondered, however, if this prestige had been fully recognized by the Foundation Board and staff. The Foundation might have invested in communications about the Program to raise its public profile. This would likely have had benefits for Project Directors and Fellows, and helped to facilitate fundraising from other sources on campus and beyond.

2. Multilayered resources—grants, plus a Program Coordinator, plus a community of practice—were deployed to optimize the likelihood of success. The most successful—grants, annual gatherings, on-campus meetings of Project Directors and Fellows, access to one another's syllabi, and training scholarships—were highly valued and appear to have served as critical connective tissue.

- **Question:** Might more emphasis have been placed on developing the Program's scope and ambitions over time? The number of schools and Fellows grew steadily from inception. Once that success had been achieved, it may have been beneficial to consider whether additional elements and goals could have built on and increased the Program's value. Perhaps this might have created an opportunity for newer Foundation board members (who seemed less interested in the Program) to help shape and thus feel more attachment to it.

3. The Program sustained support for high quality work. Nearly two-thirds of schools sought and were awarded funding from one year to the next, for three to ten years. This allowed for deep and broad Program development on campuses.

- **Recommendation:** Multi-year commitments to proven schools would have simplified campus and Foundation administration and better signaled extended commitment. “When you go year-to-year-to-year-to-year, it’s difficult to convince an administrator that you’re going to have the grant next year,” observed one Project Director.

4. Investment was scaled to keep resources for Program continuation within reach of those who might remain active after the Foundation’s funding ended. From the outset, the Coleman Foundation encouraged Project Directors to seek financial and administrative support from their dean or provost, institutional buy-in that would enhance sustainability. This hope was inconsistently realized. Some Project Directors wished, in retrospect, that the Foundation had required more financial buy-in from their institutions, which would have better prepared them to continue the Program features they found most important. Fortunately, this has not proved to be a fatal flaw.

- **Recommendation:** Earlier and greater emphasis on leveraging support for the Program within the institution may have further raised the odds of sustainability, and also promoted greater Program development over time. Options might have included:
 - a. Foundation funding through an intermediary from the start¹⁰
 - b. Partnering with one or more other funders
 - c. Requiring contributions toward Program costs from each school
 - d. Use of a Program-Related Investment to test whether a revenue-generating stream could have been developed for the Program, as suggested by the Program Coordinator

5. The Foundation was realistic and open about the difficulty of showing Program impact by quantifying new business development by students and former students. Practical factors, including college debt, result in a low rate of new business development by younger adults. Longitudinal research is challenging and expensive. The Foundation accepted that indicators of success would be indirect but suggestive, and relied primarily on informal assessment, mainly from the grantees and the Program Coordinator.

- **Recommendation:** Despite very real challenges of tracking student entrepreneurship over time, having information about whether and how former students become business owners would have been meaningful. Some colleges and universities now track post-graduation success, in-house or by using third-part services. Perhaps the Foundation might have contracted with a few schools to monitor self-employment by former students. Alternately the Foundation might have created a limited number of cash prizes to incentivize former students to notify the Foundation when they began a business, and exchanged an award for an interview. Findings would have fleshed out the picture of how interdisciplinary entrepreneurship influences and prepares students.

¹⁰ In 2013, the Foundation explored transferring the Program to another institution. No viable option emerged, as is often the case with foundation-created programs. Typically, the prospective host wants the same level of funding (at least) as the foundation has been providing, plus an understanding that it will now operate the program as it sees fit. On the front end of funding, such requirements may seem much more palatable to grantmakers.



It is only fitting to give the last word about the Program to Project Directors.

It's been a really successful model. It gave us the freedom to use data, networks, and money that suited your situation, in your university. This is why the Program was so rich. I don't know of a comparable program that accomplished so much with so little money. It has had a lasting impact on professors and students. – Michael Sherrod, Project Director, Texas Christian University

I think Coleman Fellows campuses stand a good chance of sustaining. After Coleman announced that it was closing the Program, my dean asked what it would cost to keep our program going. I told him it would require \$20,000 a year. He said, 'As long as I'm here, you can count on it.' - Jerry Katz, Project Director, Saint Louis University

I grew up around entrepreneurs. My father created the first soft-sided luggage in 1962. My dad and uncle were entrepreneurs; my dad never went to college but he was super innovative and creative. My mom sold. There was not a lot of fluff with my dad and that's true of the Coleman Foundation too. They invested in people they believed in and who would get the job done. I always felt that the main thing they wanted to do was affect students, and faculty must understand entrepreneurship to teach it. It's been a revolution in higher education. – Dianne Welsh, Project Director, University of North Carolina, Greensboro

SOURCES

The following individuals kindly participated in focus groups and interviews to inform this report.

Project Directors

Sharon Alpi, Millikin University
Gina Betti, Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Mark Hoelscher, Illinois State University
Georgann Jouflas, Colorado Mesa University
Jerry Katz, Saint Louis University
Brian Morello, Beloit College
Nik Rokop, Illinois Institute of Technology
Michael Sherrod, Texas Christian University
Julie Shields, Millikin University
Timothy Stearns, California State University, Fresno
Dianne Welsh, University of North Carolina, Greensboro

Coleman Entrepreneurship Fellows

Christy Borders, Illinois State University
Sridhar Condoor, Saint Louis University
Sean Flanigan, Colorado Mesa University
Lynn Forsythe, California State University, Fresno
Glenn Gaudette, Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Suki John, Texas Christian University
Patricia H. Lee, Saint Louis University
The Nguyen, California State University, Fresno

Students

Todd Alexander, Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Rebecca Mitrovich, Saint Louis University graduate

Program Coordinator

Joe Roberts, Webster University

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Report researched and written by Alice Cottingham, Alice Cottingham & Associates, LLC, copy edited by Mary O'Connell, and designed by Jennifer Kotting. The author gratefully acknowledges all those who provided information and insight.



The
Coleman
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