owan’s student entrepreneurship club, the Collegiate Entrepreneurs’ Organization, took a delegation of aspiring student entrepreneurs to the United Nations. While there they participated in a three-day celebration of the impact of small and medium sized enterprises around the globe as well as met with students from other universities. Rohrer College of Business Dean Sue Lehrman and RCIE Executive Director Eric Liguori spoke at the event on the role of universities in empowering next generation of entrepreneurs.

2018 – A Year of Accolades

Entrepreneurship Students Attend UN Summit

While 2018 was a year of growth and excitement, it also proved to be a year of accolades for Rowan’s entrepreneurship students, faculty, and alumni. Finance major Sam Mardini’s team took first place globally in the ICSB Entrepreneurship Academy, and entrepreneurship major Melvin Sheppard’s team took third place. The academy brought together 70 students spanning 20 countries for a week-long competition in Taipei. The competition was tough, but Mardini and Sheppard excelled.

In addition, Rowan student entrepreneurs John Rondi and Brandon Graham were honored alongside Rowan MBA Alumus Melissa Schipke and Rohrer Chair of Entrepreneurship Dr. Eric Liguori by the NJ Tech Council as 2018 Innovators to Watch, Dr. Susana Santos’ new book titled “Poverty and Entrepreneurship in Developed Countries” was released in November, and RCIE received three grant awards: one from VentureWell, one from the U.S. Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship, and one from the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Exchange.
The Rowan Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship really hit its stride in 2018. Aspiring Rowan entrepreneurs had the opportunity to visit the United Nations, attend the Global Entrepreneurship Network’s annual summit in Istanbul, compete in the 11th annual Rohrer New Venture Competition, participate in the International Council for Small Business’ student entrepreneurship academy in Taipei, launch their ventures through the RCIE Summer Accelerator, participate in TechStars Startup Weekend Philadelphia, give back to their communities through mentoring high school students from across the region, meet with dozens of entrepreneurs, and excel in the classroom. This truly was a year of transformation.

We bid farewell to Professors Kimble Byrd and Linda Ross after a cumulative 80+ years of service to the university, though their impact on our students and the program will continue in perpetuity. We also welcomed Dr. Susana Santos, Dr. Lee Zane, Dr. Frank LoPinto, Greg Payton, and Sue Mayer to our entrepreneurship faculty. Overall the future is bright for entrepreneurship at Rowan. Thank you for your continued support of our students.

Kayvon Jahanbakhsh and Mike Lombardo (center), co-founders of Topos Teas, also took 1st Place in the 2018 Rohrer New Venture Competition

“The RCIE summer accelerator helped us translate our academic research into a customer-tested working prototype. The support from Phil and the RCIE team has been invaluable to our company.”

— Laura Osorno, Biomedical Engineering

The four startups who participated were LOIS Beauty Craft, Arke Aeronautics, Replica Robotics, and Topos Teas. LOIS Beauty Craft produces and sells natural, safe, timesaving, cosmetic-grade, hygienic, pre-formulated formulations for consumers to make their own beauty products. At the time of publication, LOIS’s final first product is undergoing its last round of toxicity testing and will soon be on sale. Arke Aeronautics develops drone software to assist first responders in crisis situations. Presently the Arke team is working in partnership with the Glassboro Fire Department. Replica Robotics finished developing their minimum viable product over the summer and are now fine-tuning their platform and beginning to talk with production facilities and licensing experts. Topos Teas produced fresh, cold pressed, cold steeped green rooibos tea, two flavors of which are now on sale at Bonesaw Brewing and at Rastelli’s Market Fresh locations.

“Sure, some students will also mention the glass wall exists that is fully led and staffed by Rowan students. They will likely say is how incredible it is that a space like this,”

—任何学生来参观Studio 231，第一件事就是他们看到这个空间的‘哇’的反应。

Students Learn from Leading Entrepreneurs

The second featured Phil Michaels, Co-Founder and CEO of Tembo Education. Additionally, each team also received seed funding to help them move their startups forward and access to other RCIE resources and mentorship.

$20,000+ Awarded to Student Startups

Selected through a highly competitive process, four Rowan student startups participated in a comprehensive ten-week accelerator program. Each team received weekly 1:1 coaching from Phil Michaels, Forbes 30 Under 30 Entrepreneur and Co-Founder of Tembo Education. Additionally, each team also received seed funding to help them move their startups forward and access to other RCIE resources and mentorship.

Kayvon Jahanbakhsh and Mike Lombardo (center), co-founders of Topos Teas, also took 1st Place in the 2018 Rohrer New Venture Competition

“The RCIE summer accelerator helped us translate our academic research into a customer-tested working prototype. The support from Phil and the RCIE team has been invaluable to our company.”

— Laura Osorno, Biomedical Engineering

Dr. Eric Liguori
Executive Director and Rohrer Chair of Entrepreneurship
2018 – A Year of Accolades

While 2018 was a year of growth and excitement, it also proved to be a year of accolades for Rowan’s entrepreneurship students, faculty, and alumni. Finance major Sam Mardini’s team took first place globally in the ICSB Entrepreneurship Academy, and entrepreneurship major Melvin Sheppard’s team took third place. The academy brought together 70 students spanning 20 countries for a week-long competition in Taipei. The competition was tough, but Mardini and Sheppard excelled.

In addition, Rowan student entrepreneurs John Rondi and Brandon Graham were honored alongside Rowan MBA Alumus Melissa Schipke and Rohrer Chair of Entrepreneurship Dr. Eric Liguori by the NJ Tech Council as 2018 Innovators to Watch, Dr. Susana Santos’ new book titled “Poverty and Entrepreneurship in Developed Countries” was released in November 2018, and RCIE received three grant awards: one from VentureWell, one from the U.S. Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship, and one from the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Exchange.

Entrepreneurship Students Attend UN Summit

Rowan’s student entrepreneurship club, the Collegiate Entrepreneurs’ Organization, took a delegation of aspiring student entrepreneurs to the United Nations. While there they participated in a three-day celebration of the impact of small and medium sized enterprises around the globe as well as met with students from other universities. Rohrer College of Business Dean Sue Lehrman and RCIE Executive Director Eric Liguori spoke at the event on the role of universities in empowering next generation of entrepreneurs.

Celebrating Women Entrepreneurs

Rowan University, along with 157 other universities spanning 29 countries and 45 U.S. states, dedicated a full week of programming this October to celebrating women entrepreneurs. The celebration included events such as Coffee with Entrepreneur Shari Hulitt (CEO of SharpLink Staffing), a film screening of Joy, Coffee with Entrepreneur Suzanne Scudiero (VP and Owner of Executive Cellular Phones), and a site visit to CoWork Street in Camden to meet with Founder Rosemari Hicks. The week concluded with a Women’s Inspiration & Innovation Power Summit featuring Brandi Baldwin-Rana, Cass Bailey, Tara Marcus and Stephanie Humphrey. The national organizing team noted Rowan was the only institution to offer events every single day of the week.
Student Leadership Takes Studio 231 to New Levels

Ask any student who has visited Studio 231 and the first thing they will likely say is how incredible it is that a space like this exists that is fully led and staffed by Rowan students. Sure, some students will also mention the glass wall adorned with dry erase marker sketches or prototypes or messaging, and others will note the feeling of ‘wow’ they had when they saw the robustness of the prototypes being built by their peers, but the student-centered-leadership model almost always comes up first. This is largely because the idea for the space originated with students in Rowan’s first cohort of University Innovation Fellows, and the final design for the space was led by Engineering student Brandon Graham.

Graham not only designed the space, he personally built much of the furniture in it, recruited in a team of other engineers to help staff it, and designed the learning modules needed to teach his peers. Graham worked in concert with Dr. Eric Liguori and Steve Kozachyn to make the space a reality, and he found a champion in Rohrer College of Business Dean Sue Lehrman who not only annexed a room for Studio 231, but also worked with Dean Tony Lowman (Engineering) and Dean Karen Magee-Sauer (Science and Math) to provide initial seed funding to get the space up and running. Upon Graham’s graduation in May 2018 he handed off the lead to a new crop of student leaders, Peter Genovese and Andrew Bunoza, who continue to run the space as a student-centric place for product development and experimentation.

Student creates prototype with help from Studio 231

The Studio 231 team helps students from all majors bring their ideas to life. One of their favorite projects this year has been helping Music Industry major Richard Shead transform his graphic mockups of “E-Mote” (pictured to the right) into a tangible wearable technology product.
Students Learn from Leading Entrepreneurs

The RCIE runs two initiatives aimed at bringing insights from the real world into the classroom. The first, our marquee Spotlight Speaker Series, attracts leading entrepreneurs from across the nation to share their stories with large groups of Rowan students. The second, our Coffee with an Entrepreneur program, brings in regional entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs to talk with students in a less formal and more intimate manner.

In 2018 we hosted two Spotlight Speaker Series events. The first featured Pete Ciarrocchi, Chairman and CEO of Chickie’s & Pete’s Crab House and Sports Bar, a growing restaurant chain boasting 80+ locations nationwide. Pete, pictured below, shared his journey from opening their very first location, to signing the licensing deal that put his food in theme parks and stadiums nationally, to filing three patents to protect their signature crab fries. His talk ended with networking over crab fries and then a smaller group dinner at his location on Rowan Boulevard.

The second featured Phil Michaels, Co-Founder and CEO of Tembo Education. For Tembo’s work educating underprivileged children across the globe, Michaels was named one of the 30 Under 30 Leading Social Entrepreneurs by Forbes and a Global Shaper by the World Economic Forum. Michaels shared his journey of founding Tembo while he was still a university student and discussed what it took to tackle a problem as big as educating children living in urban slums around the world. He left so impressed with Rowan and its students that he subsequently hired a Rowan entrepreneurship student to work for his organization and led our summer startup accelerator program.

The Coffee with an Entrepreneur series has been one of the most exciting new additions to our programming lineup this year. Speakers included Stan Woodland of CMI Compas, Chris Schaber of Soligenix, Morgan Berman of MilkCrate, Peter Hwang of Bite, Suzanne Scudiero of Executive Cellular Phones, Shari Hulitt of Sharplink Staffing, Scott Catron of Social Detection, Scott Sileo of The Sileo Agency, and Jessie Garcia of Tozuda. This program, launched with a goal of having 12 students per session, now boasts an average attendance of 20 students and has definitely become a part of the fabric of the RCIE.
owen’s student entrepreneurship club, the Collegiate Entrepreneurs’ Organization, took a delegation of aspiring student entrepreneurs to the United Nations. While there they participated in a three-day celebration of the impact of small and medium sized enterprises around the globe as well as met with students from other universities. Rohrer College of Business Dean Sue Lehrman and RCIE Executive Director Eric Liguori spoke at the event on the role of universities in empowering next generation of entrepreneurs.

2018 – A Year of Accolades

Entrepreneurship Students Attend UN Summit

While 2018 was a year of growth and excitement, it also proved to be a year of accolades for Rowan’s entrepreneurship students, faculty, and alumni. Finance major Sam Mardini’s team took first place globally in the ICSB Entrepreneurship Academy, and entrepreneurship major Melvin Sheppard’s team took third place. The academy brought together 70 students spanning 20 countries for a week-long competition in Taipei. The competition was tough, but Mardini and Sheppard excelled.

In addition, Rowan student entrepreneurs John Rondi and Brandon Graham were honored alongside Rowan MBA Alumus Melissa Schipke and Rohrer Chair of Entrepreneurship Dr. Eric Liguori by the NJ Tech Council as 2018 Innovators to Watch, Dr. Susana Santos’ new book titled “Poverty and Entrepreneurship in Developed Countries” was released in November, and RCIE received three grant awards: one from VentureWell, one from the U.S. Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship, and one from the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Exchange.

Rowan University, along with 157 other universities spanning 29 countries and 45 U.S. states, dedicated a full week of programming this October to celebrating women entrepreneurs. The celebration included events such as Coffee with Entrepreneur Shari Hulitt (CEO of SharpLink Staffing), a film screening of Joy, Coffee with Entrepreneur Suzanne Scudiero (VP and Owner of Executive Cellular Phones), and a site visit to CoWork Street in Camden to meet with Founder Rosemari Hicks. The week concluded with a Women’s Inspiration & Innovation Power Summit featuring Brandi Baldwin-Rana, Cass Bailey, Tara Marcus and Stephanie Humphrey. The national organizing team noted Rowan was the only institution to offer events every single day of the week.