



Annual Report 2022

Reviewing 2021



VENTURE VALLEY™



At the 2021 CEO Global Conference, attendees got an exclusive first look of the Venture Valley game. Venture Valley is a fast-paced multiplayer mobile and PC business strategy game where players take on the role of an entrepreneur, pitting their business savvy against that of others. The game is a project of the Singleton Foundation for Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship. CEO members competed to win part of a \$5,000 prize pool – the attraction saw over 310 play sessions with 75 unique players.

“Venture Valley makes what seems complex, simple, and revolutionizes entrepreneurship for anyone and everyone to understand business.”

-Hunter Beale

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Annual Report Reflection

At the inception of Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization, our founders fought for the creation and establishment of co-curricular entrepreneurship programming at university and college campuses. With the support of the Coleman Foundation, Gerald Hills and John Hughes met with countless university leaders to achieve this goal. In these early days, senior administration had a hard time understanding and measuring the unquantifiable impact the discipline would have on campuses which resulted in limited support. I remind you of these early beginnings because the "great reset" has thrust many campus communities into a similar cadence of deficient on-campus co-curricular programming that supports entrepreneurs. CEO has always defended the importance and creation of entrepreneurial student communities and co-curricular learning experience for an aspirant entrepreneur. As I witnessed the retraction of these meaningful programs beginning in 2020 and continuing through 2021, I activated the CEO headquarters team to find new ways to support our communities. I challenged our faculty advisors, chapter presidents and community members to do the same.

In that spirit, I would like to highlight a few exciting organization accomplishments and partnership initiatives that strategically position CEO for continued support of co-curricular learning.

1. Harness x CEO: Harness is the most powerful and equitable virtual platform to support, track and advance your on-campus entrepreneurial community. As a result of this partnership, CEO chapters now have FREE access to Harness. When a chapter chooses to launch Harness, members immediately gain access to a campus-specific community of mentors and advisors and to a Q&A board that permits campus-to-campus feedback and entrepreneurial coaching. Now, members of a community college campus have access to the same mentors and advisors from that of a four-year university. Harness eliminates the need for cost-prohibitive software and provides the campus with more financial resources to accomplish its mission. It is a great tool to engage both your in-person and virtual entrepreneurship community members, all while providing central administrators with powerful metrics necessary to advance the ventures on your campus.

2. PitchPages.io: PitchPages is a first-of-its-kind tool, designed to help the entrepreneur create and maintain a living, interactive pitch deck. CEO formally installed PitchPages as our competition management tool in 2021, empowering CEO evaluators with authentic information to help them select new ventures that demonstrate the highest potential of growth. Additionally, the enhanced features provide students with a more formative path toward fundraising. These decks live beyond the competition and reside in a marketplace where funders can review and consider investments for early-stage CEO ventures.

3. Becoming Agents of Change: CEO's return to in-person programming brought together key players in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The 38th annual conference was the largest among comparable annual events with more than 500, in-person student attendees from all 50 states and several other countries. Notable engagements included a Venture Valley E-Sports Tournament, Amazon Web Services (AWS) Uni Scouts attendance, a Marketplace Simulation Challenge, and a featured program EMCEE from the Singleton Foundation for Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship, along with

keynote presentations from the Founder of Hydro Flask, the director of AWS Startups, the editor-in-chief of Entrepreneur Magazine, and the founder of Modern Campus (formerly known as Presence). The size of this program indicates a deep desire from network membership to return to in-person programming and again connect with the ecosystem.

4. Notable Partnerships: For the second year in a row, CEO played a notable part in the annual AWS University Pitch Competition, as it maintained its "largest referrer" status and supported AWS in the processing of applications. We also launched new network-wide resources such as WeFunder, a crowdfunding, equity-sharing platform that allows an entrepreneur to begin a crowdfunding campaign in less than 15 minutes. These partnerships and tools allow our entrepreneurs to reach more interactivity in the global entrepreneurial ecosystem while advancing the direction of their ventures.

Despite the lack of on-campus programming, CEO individual membership grew and chapter metrics remained steady. Our partnerships point towards future sustainability of the CEO network. I am excited to soon share more details of expansions among these relationships that will further push the CEO network to achieve its mission of informing, supporting and inspiring college students to be more entrepreneurial.

The efforts of Hills and Hughes taught us long ago that the pursuit of further resourcing and supporting the entrepreneurial discipline is a journey, not a destination. I urge you to recount the energy, momentum and spirit that vibrantly flows through your centers and campus amid new venture expos, entrepreneurship club meetings and community programs that create a meaningful link between students and the local business community. These are the programs that create entrepreneurs, and we must not lose sight of the value of supporting these efforts.

To that end, in our 38th year of undeniable support to university/college campuses, I am pleased to present our 2021 Impact and Growth, Member and Alumni Features, and our 2021 Pitch Competition winners and program metrics. I am certain that you will join me in congratulating the efforts of these exceptional student entrepreneurs and celebrate their accomplishments. If you are a current supporter, on behalf of the CEO Board of Directors and staff members, I thank you for your commitment to our mission. If this is your first time learning of CEO, I look forward to working together on ways that you might be able to participate in our network of 16,500 entrepreneurs across 250 campuses.

James N. Zebrowski, Jr., M.S.

Executive Director
Collegiate Entrepreneurs'
Organization Inc.



About CEO

Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization, a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit charitable corporation, founded in 1983, supports more than 16,500 emerging collegiate entrepreneurs annually. CEO believes that any student, regardless of academic discipline can launch a business. Through our global network of more than 250 college and university chapters, we support and inspire the growth and development of any student that seeks to be entrepreneurial.



Mission: To inform, support and inspire college students to be entrepreneurial and seek opportunity through enterprise creation. With a diverse entrepreneurial community and global network, CEO provides student entrepreneurs with opportunities, events, chapter activities and conferences to help start businesses.

Upcoming Events

- June** ● Venture Valley Competition: Mid June - August
- Inc. Young Entrepreneurs | Collegiate Mentors: Summer
- Aug** ● Annual Membership Meeting: August 24th
- Sep** ● Applications for Pitch Competition Close: September 12th
- Start-Up Wars: Date To Be Determined
- Oct** ● 39th Annual Global Conference: October 28th - 30th
- Jan** ● Big Idea Bootcamp



Impact

In 2021, CEO chapters on universities/college campuses left a noticeable impact on student entrepreneurs. CEO's mantra of "stop dreaming, start doing" is apparent in the results of the annual impact survey. During the Spring/Fall 2021 semester, the chapters hosted...

- 734** speaker sessions with accomplished entrepreneurs
- 468** social networking events
- 444** entrepreneurial skillset workshops

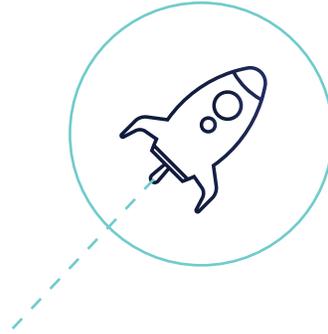
75% of the chapters in CEO's network hosted anywhere from five to more than 15 coordinated events for their student entrepreneurs.

Despite the global pandemic in 2021, CEO chapters hosted nearly 2,000 events globally with an individual average attendance of 11-20 attendees.

These coordinated events vary from campus to campus. Chapters ultimately aim to develop a sense of community for their students, provide valuable first-hand knowledge from accomplished entrepreneurs and of develop the entrepreneurial mindset of their chapter members.

A cornerstone of the CEO network is new venture creation. The entrepreneurial process indicates that ideation and mentoring are two direct ways that navigate the business launch process. By way of 2,108 mentor meetings this year.

CEO chapter members launched more than 1,174 businesses.



Resources

CEO is committed to providing value to its chapters by way of its membership model. In 2021, CEO added new resources to its chapters at no additional cost in membership. QuickBooks, Patent Hacks and WeFunder are new additions that dramatically enhance the experience of launching entrepreneurial ventures. With this increase in value, CEO saw an increase in chapter membership...

Resulting in 14% increase in membership revenues.



The nominal \$300 dues collected from chapters helps to operate the day-to-day mission of CEO. With this increase in chapters, CEO realized an...

Increase in individual memberships by 42%.



In addition to membership growth, CEO expanded relationships with our partners-- the Singleton Foundation for Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship, Association for Entrepreneurship USA, Synapse, Venture Valley, Harness and AWS. CEO was the number one referral to AWS Pitch Competition, and CEO had a helping hand throughout the competition. These partners enable CEO to offer programming that provides one-on-one support to our most successful college entrepreneurs by way of business acceleration and funding.

CEO regularly evaluates corporate relationships across our chapter campuses. These relationships offer jobs, internships and mentorship to the network.

Member Feature

Tommie Hughes
Jackson State University



At 9 years old, Tommie Hughes of Chicago, IL lost his only parent, falling into the care of his older brothers and navigating life with a new sense of independence. Growing up with only the guidance of his 19-and-21-year-old brothers, Hughes learned the importance of financial stability from a young age. He knew nothing was going to be handed to him on a silver platter and the things he wanted had to be worked for.

By 13 years old, his passion and interest in entrepreneurship was already growing, as he was building his own secret business selling snacks to other kids in school. Fast forward almost a decade later, Hughes now has his own clothing company, JUGGHEADz Apparel, and will be graduating from Jackson State University in May 2022.

“There’s no business that was established in my family, and I want(ed) to be the first person to do it,” said Hughes.

When Hughes started college, he realized his friends were engaging in organizations and that he should also seek out his interests on campus. The following year, Hughes joined three organizations: Leaders of Excellence, The Society of Entrepreneurs and The Investment Club. With a thirst for knowledge, Hughes continues to engulf himself in an array of different areas, including mentoring, entrepreneurship and leadership. Day by day, he chooses to surround himself with leaders and picks up on their healthy habits.

“My goal is to learn as much as I can and to really become a mentor to the people I’m around,” said Hughes. “I just become more dedicated day by day and gained that drive. I want to give back knowledge.”

These new skills from involvement in experiences in the business field led Hughes to launch his clothing line in 2020, growing it over the year to earn about \$2,000 each month.

“The meaning [of the clothing line] can be very touching to the community,” said Hughes. “It is the abbreviation of the word juggle; so, it means to be able to juggle so many things in life, but to remain focused.”

When first starting out, Hughes faced the brunt side of starting a business head on, watching his investment in the business crash almost as soon as it started. He quickly realized how important it is to take into consideration all aspects of a business, like being able to manage, understand the market, how to get the brand and host pop-up shops. With a little fixing, and a lot of dedication, Hughes reworked his business and is now seeing a more profitable outcome.

“Being a JuggHead represents and also defines the will of a dedicated individual who is ambitious and eager in pursuing eternal success,” the website states. “A JuggHead is one who is continuously practicing self-discipline, self-determination, self-motivation and massive execution to build legacy daily.”

As Hughes navigated his way through college, he realized the diversity of his assets and has a desire to apply each of those assets to different areas of the entrepreneurship and financial world, whether it’s in his own company, e-books, at a business internship, or working for a firm.

Alumni Member Feature

Nick Cianfaglione Bryant University

Nick Cianfaglione started at the CEO Chapter at Bryant University his freshman year pretty much the first week. When he joined Bryant, Cianfaglione was at the end phases of his first company, Northeastern Entertainment Solutions (hosting concerts across the east coast), and joining CEO helped him level up. Cianfaglione was instantly surrounded by close to 100 passionate and highly motivated entrepreneurs, and for the first time in his entrepreneurial journey, he felt at home. This empowerment led to the launching of his second company, NES360, which was a full-service marketing agency for music artists, music venues and more. Cianfaglione grew this company to over six figures in eight months from his dorm room before launching Artist Republik, the largest independent 360 record label in the world. In two-and-a-half years, Cianfaglione raised over \$2 million in venture capital funding, and Artist Republik was utilized by over 100,000 artists from 192 different countries to manage their careers. In January of 2022, Artist Republik was officially acquired by Fanpass Live (OTC:FDBL), a publicly traded music technology company from California. Since starting his career at Bryant and CEO, Cianfaglione has learned so much about how to start, scale and grow a business in addition to, meeting people that changed his life forever. For instance, one of his first advisors, investors and COO of his company was a woman who spoke at Bryant CEO, and Cianfaglione asked after if they could grab coffee and pitch her his company; the rest was history. Bryant University and Bryant CEO helped Cianfaglione become the successful entrepreneur and leader he is today.



Chapter Leader of the Year

Jacob Woolf University of Central Florida

Jacob Woolf '22, integrated business major at the University of Central Florida (UCF), has been president of CEO Knights (the UCF Chapter of the Collegiate Entrepreneurs Organization) since Fall of 2020. CEO Knights has had its fair share of hardships, such as their beloved past faculty advisor, Gary Nichols, passing away due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With the help of an amazing executive board, along with the kindness of their new faculty advisor, Dr. Jeffrey Reinking, the chapter was able to rebuild themselves to a level of success not seen before. After two semesters of having chapter meetings over Zoom, Woolf knew the importance of strong recruitment efforts once they returned to in-person meetings. With the help of his team, they were able to implement several strategies that ultimately grew their membership from an average membership base of 20-40 members pre-COVID, to 80+ this past fall with only growth in sight. During Woolf's time at UCF, he worked hard to grow this chapter as much as possible. Once he graduates, Woolf will spend time developing his pressure washing and handyman business, as well as work towards starting a nonprofit that is a combination of funding for and teaching about prosthetics. Essentially, Woolf hopes to provide educational resources to institutions in developing countries on how to use SolidWorks (a 3D modeling software). From there, he will provide access to 3D printers for the students as a project where they will fabricate prosthetics for those in their community and surrounding communities that would otherwise have no access to them. CEO has had a tremendous impact on Woolf's life both professionally and personally. Professionally, he has been fortunate enough to gain mentors, internships and even several job offers. Personally, this organization has made Woolf's college experience exponentially more enjoyable and memorable. From the lifelong friendships he has fostered, to the incredible trips that the chapter had the opportunities to go on, Woolf couldn't be more grateful for the time he spent with CEO Knights.



1st Place Venture



funded by \$7,000



Jonaie Johnson
University of Missouri Kansas City

The Pitch Experience... in their own words:

“

“I started off my CEO journey by competing in CEO’s 2020 Global Pitch Competition. Although I made it to the Top 20, I did not make it to the Final 8. I used that experience as an opportunity to learn and fuel Interplay’s growth. Making it to the Top 20, at the very early stage I was in with the company at the time, was highly motivating. It provided me with the further validation I needed to continue developing Interplay.

A year later, I pivoted Interplay’s product from a dog crate to a dog crate attachment. This strategic change filled me with confidence as I prepared to compete in CEO’s 2021 Global Pitch Competition. Placing 1st in the competition was a remarkable moment! It provided Interplay with great validation, feedback and momentum.

Following the competition, Interplay has completed beta testing for the Interplay App, developed a prototype for the revised design and placed 1st in AfroTech’s Young Founder’s Pitch Competition. We are on track to launch our Kickstarter campaign within the next three to four months. Being surrounded by like-minded entrepreneurs at CEO motivated me to continue to push the limits and make a difference as I progress with my company, Interplay.”

Collegiate Entrepreneur of the Year

Shaun Gupta
University of Delaware



Backyard Gig

www.backyardgig.com

The Pitch Experience... in their own words:



After seeing many of my peers struggle with the problem of needing to have some extra money but not having the time to get a part-time job during the college semester, I decided to dig deeper into this issue to see if something was there.

I interviewed a few students and found that this was a real problem people had in my community. I remember hearing about households hiring students here and there over the summer to help them out around the house, which sparked an idea in my mind — a platform that could easily connect the two parties so that they could both solve their problems!

After spending months preparing — which included working out the logistics, creating a business model with help from the Horn Program at UD and interviewing households, small business and students — I launched Backyard Gig in the late fall of 2020.

Since then, we have seen steady growth in users and tasks posted on the platform! This momentum allowed us to apply to startup funding competitions and raise capital to help fund Backyard Gig, resulting in over \$26,000 raised to date! We hope to expand to the Greater Philadelphia area in the coming months and other college towns soon thereafter.

When my mentor, Vince DiFelice, told us about the opportunity to apply to the CEO pitch competition, I began working right away! Our team was selected as one of the top finalists and invited to pitch live at the 38th annual CEO conference in Tampa, Florida! Having the chance to pitch in front of serial and other college student entrepreneurs gave me the chance to learn so much more about what it means to be an entrepreneur and the continuous learning path that it entails while still having a great opportunity to network with other like-minded people!

Even though this was my first time going to a CEO conference, the opportunities provided there were very beneficial to me and the other students present. There were many keynote speakers, workshops and networking events available during the conference, allowing me to learn new things and meet other hard-working entrepreneurs.

To students reading this: I encourage you all to take advantage of the resources your university chapters provide. They can help you not only develop your ventures but also build your skill sets and thought processes giving you a competitive edge many other people may not have!

2021 Global Pitch Competition

Pitch Competition Winners:



1st Place and \$7,000 to Interplay, founded by Jonaie Johnson.



2nd Place and \$5,000 to Pure-sipity, founded by Allie Wolfe



3rd Place and \$3,000 to Sprayer-Mods, Co-founded by Blake Esplanad



Impact Highlights from Competition



50% of all competition participants completed a formal business registration process establishing their company as an LLC or Corporation.



Businesses participating in the competition were able to create 56 full-time jobs and 39 part-time jobs during their time of participation.



Businesses participating in the competition successfully raised \$229,350 since the inception of their new venture creation. Of these funds, \$98,875 came from pitch competitions.



During the three months of the competition, student participants clocked 644 meeting hours with mentors and business advisors.



78% of students agree that they have an improved ability to market and sell their product or service.



100% of participants indicated that they plan to continue working on their venture.



79% of participants agree that they are now better prepared to address challenges in their business.



71% of participants would recommend this competition to a colleague or friend.

Reuben Pressman Inducted into CEO Hall of Fame

Reuben Pressman, chief product officer of Modern Campus and founder of Presence, was inducted into the CEO Hall of Fame by the CEO Board of Directors at its recent Global Conference and Pitch Competition.

“We are so thankful for Reuben’s efforts as an entrepreneur,” said James Zebrowski, executive director of CEO. “Reuben is truly a brand disruptor, an innovator and somebody we believe our members would one day aspire to be like.”

Pressman said that participating in the entrepreneurship organization and programs in college had a profound impact on his knowledge, confidence and ultimate success as an entrepreneur.

“CEO empowers students around the world and helps institutions support their aspirations to be the next generation creating solutions for the world’s toughest and most important challenges,” Pressman said. “I’m truly honored to be joining such notable leaders in the Hall of Fame.



Ways to Engage



Corporation

If you are a business or corporation interested in connecting with our global network of 16,500 college students, please connect with CEO's executive director, James Zebrowski. Take a look at our donor roster to see a listing of corporations that support CEO. CEO HQ is continually looking to build further connections with new corporations, enhancing the value provided to its members!



Students

If you are a student at a university or college campus, and interested in an individual or institutional membership, register now! Creating a membership account grants you full access to the online resources provided by CEO, all free of cost (if your campus is a chapter please use your campus link to register).



College & Universities

If you are a university or college representative, and interested in launching a CEO chapter for student entrepreneurs, please connect with CEO's membership coordinator, Jeffrey Russell, to schedule a time for a discovery call. During this conversation we will dive into the status of your on-campus ecosystem and identify ways the CEO network can help elevate your entrepreneurial co-curricular experience.



Business Advisory Committee

This intimate board of corporate sponsors annually supports CEO by way of a sizeable donation. This board of sponsors has the ability to challenge our network to solve a corporate problem. When a sponsor identifies a favorable student solution, they may hire the students/group of students for an intrapreneurial role or fund their ventures.



Board of Directors

In an effort to secure an unending future for CEO, it is working towards expanding its Board of Directors membership to include the formation of a Foundational Committee. These voting board members will focus on the financial future of CEO and will represent a collection of venture capitalist, Young Business Founders, Entrepreneurial Support Organization Leadership and Serial Entrepreneurs.



BizLaunch Week

This new global movement celebrates the entrepreneur on campus. Hundreds of campuses will focus on the co-curricular experiential programming on their campus.

For more details, visit:

bizlaunchweek.com

CEO Headquarters Staffers and Board of Directors

CEO HQ Team:

Giles Hertz, J. D., President – Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization

James N. Zebrowski, Jr. M.S., Executive Director/Corporate Secretary – Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization

Dean Mesick, M.A., Membership Coordinator – Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization

Becky Gann, M.B.A. -Treasurer

Jamie Patterson, M.B.A. Financial Administrator

Board of Directors:

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Rowan University, Rohrer College of Business

Alex F. DeNoble, Ph.D.
San Diego State University, Fowler College of Business

Ms. Becky Gann M.B.A
AACSB International

Giles T. Hertz, J.D.
The University of Tampa, Sykes College of Business

Gerald E. Hills, Ph.D.
Co-Founder, Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization

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