



## 2020 GCEC Award Nomination

### NASDAQ Center of Entrepreneurial Excellence Award

*Respectfully submitted by:*



<b>Name of University:</b>	Miami University   Farmer School of Business
<b>Name of Entrepreneurship Institute:</b>	John W. Altman Institute for Entrepreneurship
<b>Award Category of the Nomination:</b>	NASDAQ Center of Entrepreneurial Excellence Award
<b>Director / Submitter:</b>	Tim R. Holcomb, Ph.D. Director, John W. Altman Institute for Entrepreneurship; Chair, Department of Entrepreneurship; and Farmer School Endres Associate Professor [P] +1 513-529-3665 [E] <a href="mailto:holcomtr@miamioh.edu">holcomtr@miamioh.edu</a>

## **M** National Prestige and Recognition

Miami University counts itself among the top universities in the world with standout entrepreneurship programs that recognize the cross-disciplinary value of the entrepreneurial mindset. Founded in 1809, Miami University is **considered the top public university in the nation** for an “unusually strong commitment to undergraduate teaching” (#1 overall) by the *U.S. News & World Report*—ranked in the Top 5 for undergraduate teaching every year since 2010. Housed in the Farmer School of Business, which is **ranked among the Top 20 business schools in the nation** by *Poets&Quants*, the John W. Altman Institute for Entrepreneurship’s entrepreneurship program is **ranked in the Top 5 in the world among public schools** (#5 overall) by *The Princeton Review*<sup>®</sup> and *Entrepreneur Magazine* and has been ranked among the “Top 10 Public Schools for Undergraduate Entrepreneurship Studies” for **twelve consecutive years**. In 2020, the *U.S. News & World Report* ranked the Altman Institute’s undergraduate entrepreneurship program among the Top 15 Undergraduate Entrepreneurship Programs at National Public Universities (#15 overall) in the U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges Rankings Survey. In addition, the Altman Institute’s entrepreneurship program was **ranked #3 overall in the nation** for “Undergraduates Who Want to be Tech Innovators” by *The Princeton Review*<sup>®</sup> and *Entrepreneur Magazine* in 2015.

The Altman Institute is internationally-recognized for outstanding academic research and immersive, practice-based degree programs in startup and venture capital, social entrepreneurship and impact investing, corporate innovation and technology commercialization, and creativity. Distinguishing features of its undergraduate entrepreneurship program include: (1) an **interdisciplinary focus** that engages students from every undergraduate major across campus, (2) **practice-based and immersive experiential learning** opportunities in every class and co-curricular event, and (3) **integration with entrepreneurial ecosystem builders** across the U.S. Our entrepreneurship faculty have received awards for research and teaching pedagogy from the Academy of Management, Babson College, the Strategic Management Society, the Global Consortium of Entrepreneurship Centers, the Entrepreneurship & Innovation Exchange, among many others.

Of note, the Altman Institute and the programs it supports have earned the following awards (selected list):

- Named an “[Ohio Center of Cultural and Societal Transformation](#)” by Ohio’s Department of Higher Education for in 2012 (the only entrepreneurship institute in the State of Ohio to receive the distinction).
- Received the “[Award for Excellence in Specialty Entrepreneurship Education](#)” from the GCEC in 2011.
- Received the “[Ashoka U Innovation Award in Social Entrepreneurship](#)” in 2011.
- Inaugural winner of the “[Skoll Award in Social Entrepreneurship](#)” for pedagogical innovation in 2010.

## **M** Breadth, Quality, and Longevity of the Program

What began as one entrepreneurship course first offered in 1992, today includes 37 undergraduate courses; 19 co-curricular programs; 1 Institute—the [John W. Altman Institute for Entrepreneurship](#); 2 Centers—the Thomas C. Page Center for Entrepreneurial Studies and the [Center for Social Entrepreneurship](#); a funded research lab—the [Leading the Integration of Faith and Entrepreneurship \(L.I.F.E.\) Research Lab](#); 2 student-led investment funds—[RedHawk Ventures](#), a \$500,000 seed stage venture fund, and the [Arthur D. Collins Social Impact Fund](#), a \$150,000 fund; a funded internship program—the [Altman Summer Scholars Internship Program](#); a startup accelerator—the [RedHawk Launch Accelerator](#); and [World Creativity & Innovation Week and World Creativity & Innovation day \(WCIW/D\)](#), celebrated annually in 50+ countries and recognized by the United Nations; and other resources.

Since 2015, annual student demand for entrepreneurship courses has grown more than 700% in credit hours (to 15,890 credit hours) and almost 450% in student enrollment. In 2020, 3,121 students—18% of Miami’s total undergraduate enrollment of 17,326—took at least one entrepreneurship course, an 11% increase over the previous year, and include students from 117 majors across campus. In addition, the Altman Institute directly engaged 705 startup and business ecosystem professionals—founders, investors, accelerator directors, etc.—in the

classroom and in programs run by the Altman Institute, a 43% increase over the previous year. Finally, 2020 entrepreneurship graduates had the highest total first-year compensation (\$73,000) and highest signing bonus at \$8,500 in the Farmer School and had 100% of its graduates complete at least one internship.

## **M Curriculum Development**

Undergraduate and graduate degree programs in Entrepreneurship include an undergraduate [co-major](#) and [minor](#); undergraduate certificates in [startup entrepreneurship](#), [social entrepreneurship](#), and [creativity](#); a [graduate certificate in gerontology and entrepreneurship](#); and major interdisciplinary entrepreneurship degree programs with the [Scripps Gerontology Center](#), the [Institute for Food](#), the [College of Engineering and Applied Science](#), the [College of Creative Arts](#), and the [College of Education, Health, and Society](#), among others.

Courses designed for the Entrepreneurship Co-Major and Minor include:

- **ESP 103. Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurial Thinking.** This experiential course prepares students to understand two pressing issues: how to recognize and create new business opportunities and how to think more creatively within business environments. The course includes a semester-long project for a Fortune500 client. Previous clients include: P&G, Cleveland Clinic, and Fifth Third Bank.
- **ESP 201. Introduction to Entrepreneurship and Business Models.** This experiential course teaches students to create business ideas using business canvas creation models and the lean canvas. The course includes a semester-long business model design/development project and pitch competition with 50+ founders, investors, incubator/accelerator staff, and other ecosystem builders from across the Midwest as judges.
- **ESP 401. New Ventures/Startup Launch.** This experiential course teaches students how to recognize and assess an opportunity, the process and steps in starting a new venture, the financials of the new business, deal structure and exit strategy, legal and ethical issues, and preparation of an investor pitch deck. The course includes a semester-long startup project and pitch competition 100+ investors as judges.
- **ESP 461. Enterprise Consulting.** As part of this experiential senior capstone course, students learn to integrate and apply their business knowledge to "real-world" settings and to test their strategic/analytical/problem-solving skills. Each team delivers recommendations to executive team members. Previous clients include P&G, Scripps, 84.51<sup>o</sup>, Kroger, Fifth Third Bank, Luxottica, Stryker, and Paycor, among others.
- Other notable courses: Building Entrepreneurial Ecosystems, [Advancing Women in Entrepreneurship Designing Your Life](#), [Entrepreneurship Internship Immersion](#), and [Venture Capital Prep and Immersion](#).

## **M Contributions to Entrepreneurship Research**

The Altman Institute is home to leading research on social and faith-based entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship in developing countries, new venture creation/growth, social movements and collective action, and social and institutional change. To-date, our faculty have published 350+ refereed publications: 75 refereed journal articles (including 32 in FT50 journals), 22 edited book chapters, and 257 refereed conference proceedings and peer reviewed conference papers. Miami entrepreneurship researchers have earned 11 international research awards, including awards from Academy of Management (AoM), Strategic Management Society, and Kauffman Foundation, among others, and 5 University and/or Farmer School research awards. In addition, entrepreneurship faculty serve on editorial boards or as editor for leading academic journals—including Journal of Business Venturing, Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal, Journal of Social Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice, and Journal of Management, among others—and hold/held numerous leadership positions in the AoM, including the Executive Committees of the ENT and STR Divisions and the Research Committees of the OMT and ENT Divisions.

## **M Outreach Activities and Uniqueness**

The Altman Institute has significant partnerships and MOUs with more than 50 public and private organizations, including the [United Nations](#), the [U.S. Department of State](#), the [Inter-University Council \(IUC\) of Ohio](#), [Techstars](#)<sup>®</sup>,

[1871 Chicago](#), [Social Entrepreneur Corps](#), [Faith-Driven Entrepreneur](#) and [Faith-Driven Investor](#), [Wharton Social Impact Initiative](#) and the [Bridges Impact Foundation](#), the [United States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship® \(USASBE\)](#), the [Social Innovation Research Lab \(SIRLab\)](#), [Cintrifuse](#) and [CincyTech USA](#), and [Flywheel Social Enterprise Hub](#), among many others.

### **M Community Collaborations**

The Altman Institute has community collaborations with a wide-range of ecosystem partners that align and integrate curricular and co-curricular programs, including [Flywheel Social Enterprise Hub](#) for the Social Impact Fund, [Social Entrepreneur Corps](#) for international internships and co-ops, [Kroger](#) and [Kroger Zero Hunger | Zero Waste Foundation](#) for Social Innovation Weekend, [Cintrifuse](#) for the RedHawk Launch Accelerator, and [CincyTech USA](#) for RedHawk Ventures and the Venture Capital Immersion Program, among many others.

### **M Special Projects and Accomplishments**

Four selected examples of high impact projects led by the Altman Institute include: (1) A [curriculum partnership established with Chicago-based Uncharted Learning](#) that trained 20,000+ students at 174 high schools in 26 states in the U.S., plus Mexico and Australia; supported 142 INCubatoredu and ACCElertoredu curricular programs; and provided support to 163 INCubatoredu teachers and 3,550 INCubatoredu volunteers in 2019-20; (2) A strategic partnership with [Wharton Social Impact Initiative](#) and the [Bridges Impact Foundation](#) that established the first undergraduate experiential learning program for Social Impact Investing in the nation as part of [The MIINT \(MBA Impact Investing Network & Training\) Program](#); (3) [World Creativity & Innovation Week/Day \(WCIW/D\)](#) program celebrated annually by more than 100 in 58 countries and is recognized as an [International Day of Observance](#) by the [United Nations](#); and (4) the [Altman Summer Scholars Internship Program](#), which has placed hundreds of entrepreneurship co-majors and minors at startups and high growth companies, corporate innovation programs, social enterprises and startup accelerators, and angel groups and venture capital firms across the U.S. since 2010.

### **M University's Commitment and Support**

Listed as one of ten major initiatives in [Miami University's 2019 Strategic Plan](#), the core of the University's Creativity, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship activities takes place in the 5,000 square foot Altman Institute located within the 229,000 square foot Farmer School of Business, the first building on campus to receive the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification.

The Altman Institute is named for John W. Altman, who donated \$5 million to establish the Institute in 2019. With a \$20.9m endowment and another \$1m in expendable funding, many of the Altman Institute's mission-specific programs are named for donors: The Thomas C. Page Center for Entrepreneurial Studies (focuses on interdisciplinary curriculum and degree programs / \$1m gift from the Page family), the Jim and Michelle Ryan Family Scholars program (scholarships for first-generation students and students from underserved populations / \$7m gift from the Ryan Foundation), six endowed chairs and professorships in Entrepreneurship (total of \$7.5m in gifts), the Altman Summer Scholars Internship Program (funds internships for Entrepreneurship co-majors and minors / \$300k gift), the Arthur D. Collins Social Impact Fund (a \$150k gift), and the Kathy Bintz Advancing Women in Entrepreneurship Fund (a \$100k gift), among others.

### **M Commitment to the GCEC.**

The Altman Institute is excited to increase our commitment to the Global Consortium of Entrepreneurship Centers as a member of the 2019-2020 Leadership Circle alongside other elite university partners. We are looking forward to attending and engaging with this year's attendees as we are in the process of expanding our reach across the U.S. and beyond. With the Altman Institute's expanded focus, we look forward to new opportunities to partner in larger capacities and engage with GCEC. Finally, we were very honored to be by the GCEC with the "Award for Excellence in Specialty Entrepreneurship Education" in 2011.

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## Appendix

### Altman Institute Research and Experiential Learning Programs, Student Organizations, and Competitions (Selected List)

- **Advancing Women in Entrepreneurship:** The Advancing Women in Entrepreneurship (AWE) program at Miami University offers programming that affirms and equips future female founders to succeed in different entrepreneurial environments and roles while developing entrepreneurial leadership qualities among its members. AWE offers innovative education and relevant experiences to engage students at their point-of-interest and embeds them in entrepreneurial networks with leading female entrepreneurs and executives around the country.
- **Business Model Road Test Pitch Competition:** Held at the end of the Fall and Spring semesters, the Business Model Road Test Pitch Competition gives undergraduates completing the Institute’s introductory-level Business Model Development course the opportunity to pitch early-stage business ideas for which they have developed and road-tested viable business models. Teams pitch to 50+ investors, incubator/accelerator staff, startup founders, and ecosystem builders in a Demo Day-style format. Students often cite this as their first real entrepreneurial experience and a benchmark for reflecting on their personal growth through the rest of the entrepreneurship program and beyond.
- **Center for Social Entrepreneurship:** Miami University's nationally-acclaimed Center for Social Entrepreneurship creates hands-on, experiential learning opportunities for undergraduates and strives to give students the tools they need to leave their mark on the world. The Center defines social entrepreneurship as “innovative solutions to persistent social problems—particularly to those that are marginalized or poor—that create social value through sustainable, systemic change.” These social problems include a wide range of sectors—financial, educational, environmental, governmental, nutritional, and many others.
- **Distinguished Entrepreneurship Scholar Lecture Series:** The Distinguished Entrepreneurship Scholar Lecture Series is a biannual program that features the best in scholarly thought from eminent scholars in the field of entrepreneurship on an array of topics that cross disciplines and levels including entrepreneurial cognition and action, new venture launch and growth, behavioral economics, the growth of makerspaces, social entrepreneurship and the engines of innovation and sustainability, entrepreneurial strategy and public policy, poverty alleviation, and technology commercialization, among others. Past speakers include:
  - Dr. Howard E. Aldrich, Kenan Professor of Sociology and Adjunct Professor of Strategy and Entrepreneurship at the Kenan Flagler Business School at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s Kenan-Flagler Business School.
  - Dr. Jay B. Barney, Presidential Professor and Chair of the Entrepreneurship and Strategy Department at the University of Utah; Fellow of the Academy of Management; and Past President of the Strategic Management Society.
  - Dr. Robert A. Baron, Regents Professor, Mike & Robbie Holder Chair in Entrepreneurship and William S. Spears Chair at Oklahoma State University; Fellow of the Society of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, the Association for Psychological Science, and the American Psychological Association.
  - Dr. R. Duane Ireland, the University Distinguished Professor and Conn Chair in New Ventures Leadership at the Mays School of Business at Texas A&M University; Past Editor of the Academy of Management Journal; Fellow of the Academy of Management, the Strategic Management Society, and the Global Entrepreneurship Consortium; Past President of the Academy of Management and Strategic Management Society.
  - Michael Lenox, the Tayloe Murphy Professor in Business, Senior Associate Dean and Chief Strategy Officer at the University of Virginia’s Darden School of Business.
  - Dr. Tom Lumpkin, the C.S. Trosper Chair, Professor of Entrepreneurship, and Director of the Tom Love Division of Entrepreneurship and Economic Development in the Michael F. Price College of Business at the University of Oklahoma; Co-Editor of Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal.
  - Dr. Anita McGahan, Professor and Rotman Chair in Management at the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto; Senior Associate at the Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness at

Harvard University; Fellow of the Strategic Management Society and the Academy of Management; Past President of the Academy of Management.

- Dr. Jeffrey S. McMullen, Dale M. Coleman Chair and Professor of Entrepreneurship at the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University; former Editor-in-Chief of Business Horizons; Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Business Venturing.
- Dr. Saras D. Sarasvathy, Paul M. Hammaker Professor in Business Administration in the Darden Graduate School of Business at the University of Virginia; holds Jamuna Raghavan Chair at the Indian Institute of Management in Bangalore, the University Chair from Nankai University in Tianjin, China, and the Jubilee professorship from Chalmers University in Gothenburg, Sweden.
- **Entrepreneurship Living Learning Community (LLC):** The Altman Institute offers a first and second-year Entrepreneurship Living Learning Community (LLC) on-campus for students interested in learning about Entrepreneurship to get special access and first-hand experiences to what the Institute has to offer. This community is open to all students from all backgrounds, passions and majors.
- **Igoodea Creatives:** Igoodea Creatives is the student creativity organization that is dedicated to developing the creative skills and mindsets in everyday life. Members collaborate on problems, host activities and design experiences to help grow creativity on campus. They also work with partners to create major campus experiences, such as the annual *Creativity City* in April. Creativity City is an event that brings students together to design a city in celebration of *World Creativity and Innovation Week*. With the event, students live and share their creativity with games, activities and teachings about applied creativity and innovation.
- **John W. Altman Summer Scholars Internship Program:** The Institute's Altman Summer Scholars Internship Program provides immersive, practice-based learning for students in startups and high growth companies, angel groups and venture capital firms, tech startup accelerators, social ventures, and corporate innovation groups across the U.S.. Unlike traditional internship programs, the Altman Institute's Altman Summer Scholars Internship Program wraps course curriculum and content around the internship to enhance the learning experience for students. Students complete internship preparation courses in technology, innovation techniques and soft skills training prior to their internship period, and students receive coaching from entrepreneurship faculty, visit innovative companies, and create a portfolio of completed projects and outcomes throughout the entirety of their internship experience.
- **Leading the Integration of Faith and Entrepreneurship (L.I.F.E.) Research Lab:** Established at Miami University in 2018 and led by the Altman Institute's Center for Social Entrepreneurship, the Leading the Integration of Faith and Entrepreneurship (L.I.F.E.) Research Lab was founded to provide practically-relevant knowledge at the intersection of faith and entrepreneurship. L.I.F.E.'s research, open to all faiths and inter-faith examinations, builds on Miami University's leadership position in interdisciplinary, practice-based entrepreneurship education and in the areas of social entrepreneurship and impact investing. Increasing interest in this area from schools, such as Princeton University's faith and work initiative, and entrepreneurial organizations, such as OCEAN's faith-based startup accelerator, affirm the early stages of an important movement.
- **RedHawk Launch Accelerator:** RedHawk Launch Accelerator, based in Union Hall in Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine district, is the Institute's seed stage startup accelerator for student-led startups with high growth potential and provides seed funding to startups in each cohort. RedHawk Launch Accelerator's 2019 Cohort consisted of seven student-led businesses: AddMe, Akinda Mayanna, CydeKick, FLEXPIT, KCD Cosmetics, ModBox Tool Systems, and Zandaland.
- **RedHawk VentureOn Podcast:** The RedHawk VentureOn Podcast is a bi-weekly resource for Junior and Senior Entrepreneurship students at all universities. Its purpose is to offer observations, insights and data from recent graduates about how to successfully transition from college-life to the entrepreneurial world. Faculty interview Miami University entrepreneurship graduates with less than five years work experience and discuss what actions they specifically have taken to achieve early success. VentureOn is available on Spotify and iTunes.
- **RedHawk Venture Pitch Competition:** Held bi-annually at the end of the Fall and Spring semesters, the \$20,000 RedHawk Venture Pitch Competition provides student-founders completing our RedHawk Launch Accelerator

Program as well as our Startup Launch and Technology Commercialization courses an opportunity to pitch startups to angel investors, venture capitalists, and accelerator directors in a Demo Day-style format. In 2019-20, almost 200 angel investors, VCs, accelerator directors, and ecosystem builders from 20 states across the U.S. participated in RedHawk Venture Pitch Competitions held at the end of the Fall and Spring semesters. Over the past five years, hundreds of students have pitched almost 200 startups to investors, accelerator directors, and ecosystem builders. Five startups landed spots in nationally-ranked tech startup accelerators, and ten startups have raised more than \$15 million in venture funding.

- **Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) Trek Program:** Miami University's Altman Institute is one of 20 internationally-renowned university entrepreneurship and innovation partner programs to participate in Silicon Valley Bank's (SVB) SVB Trek Program. The SVB Trek Program is a four-day intensive immersion into the San Francisco and Silicon Valley venture capital ecosystem held in the Bay Area that connects a small group of undergraduate, masters, and doctoral students (limited to 25 students in total) from a select list of top business schools and entrepreneurship programs with successful founders and institutional investors to help students expand their professional networks and to inspire entrepreneurship among the group.
- **Social Entrepreneurship Club:** The Social Entrepreneurship Club is a student-led organization focused on the role entrepreneurship can play in solving society's most pressing problems. The Social Entrepreneurship Club learns about careers in the social entrepreneurship sector, educating themselves and the community of social problems and how to use an entrepreneurial mindset to solve some of the world's most pressing issues. Their mission is to educate, connect, and act upon opportunities with an entrepreneurial approach that helps solve social issues with a market-based solution.
- **Social Innovation Weekend:** The Institute's Social Innovation Weekend is a partnership with Miami University's Global Health Studies and Social Work Programs. Social Innovation Weekend is a 48-hour weekend event that integrates key public and private stakeholder organizations at the state, county, and local city-level with students to solve significant societal issues like infant mortality and opioid addiction. Moving forward, SIW is extending its reach to partner with other programs across campus such as Miami University's Institute for Sustainability and the Environment and the Institute for Food, and with ecosystem partners like Flywheel Social Accelerator.
- **Techstars® Startup Weekend Miami:** Sponsored by Techstars®, the largest accelerator network in the world, Startup Weekend Miami is a 48-hour weekend event, during which 150+ student-founders, developers, managers, marketing experts, engineers and more pitch ideas for new startup companies, form teams around those ideas, and work to develop a working prototype, demo, or presentation by Sunday afternoon. Miami University is the only university in the nation that integrates Startup Weekend into its core curriculum.
- **Technology Innovation and Commercialization Program:** Miami University, the Office for the Advancement of Research and Scholarship (OARS), and the Institute for Entrepreneurship collaborates with the Wright Brothers Institute (WBI) and the University of Dayton to identify technologies from an Air Force Research Lab (AFRL) portfolio of more than 1,000 patents that have potential commercial use for public good. Technological advances include innovations in energy storage, healthcare monitoring, and advanced manufacturing go far beyond military sciences. The agreement established the Miami University–AFRL Research Technology Commercialization Accelerator, a collaboration that provides Miami University faculty, staff, and students support in reviewing and accessing the lab's entire open portfolio of patents and patent applications.

## Appendix

### Altman Institute Advisory Board Directors



**AMY ALTMAN (AUSTIN): COO at Reliant Immune Diagnostics**

Holds a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in Microbiology from Miami University and a Ph.D. in Molecular Biology from Vanderbilt University.



**CAMERON CUMMINS (CHICAGO): Co-Founder/CEO at Pivotal Growth Partners and Founder/CEO at inHOUSE Marketing**

Holds a bachelor's degree in finance from Miami University.



**LISA DALLMER (AUSTIN): COO at Dimensional Fund Advisors, former COO at BlackRock**

Twice recognized by Financial News as "100 Most Influential Women for European Financial Services". Holds a bachelor's degree in Finance from Miami University and an MBA from University of Chicago.



**STUART FRANKEL (CHICAGO): Founder/CEO at Narrative Science**

Twice recognized by EY as a finalist for the EY Entrepreneur of the Year (2015 and 2016) and named to Crain's Chicago 2015 Tech 50 List. Holds a bachelor's degree in accounting from Miami University and a JD from Vanderbilt University.



**DAVID HERCZE (CINCINNATI): Chairman at Enerfab, Board Chair of Cincinnati Works**

Twice recognized by EY as the EY Entrepreneur of the Year for Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky (1996 and 2008). Holds a bachelor's degree in accounting from Miami University.



**JEFFREY KADLIC (CLEVELAND): Founder/Managing Partner at Evolution Capital Partners**

Recognized by EY as a finalist for the EY Entrepreneur of the Year for Northeast Ohio in 2013 and named to Crain's Business Forty Under 40 List. Holds a bachelor's degree in business and finance from Miami University.



**WENDY LEA (BOULDER): Board Member at Techstars, Former CEO at Cintrifuse, and Former Co-Founder and CEO of The Sales Consultancy (sold to Siebel Systems)**

An accomplished Silicon Valley executive, holds a bachelor's degree in business administration and marketing from the School of Business Administration at University of Mississippi.



**ROD ROBINSON (CINCINNATI): Founder/CEO at ConnXus, Board Member at Techstars Foundation, Former Chief Procurement Officer at Cincinnati Bell**

Recognized by EY as a finalist for Entrepreneur of the Year. Holds a bachelor's in accounting from West Virginia University and an MBA from The Wharton School.



**TODD SCHWARZINGER (SAN FRANCISCO): Venture Partner at Refinery Ventures, Former Managing Director of Life Sciences and Healthcare at Silicon Valley Bank**

Todd holds a bachelor's in Finance from Miami University and received his MBA from the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University.



**TIM SPENCE (CINCINNATI): EVP and Head of Consumer Banking, Payments, and Strategy at Fifth Third Bank**

Named American Banker's 2018 Digital Banker of the Year. Holds a bachelor's in English Literature and Economics from Colgate University.



**BRIAN TOME (CINCINNATI): Founder and Senior Pastor at Crossroads Church**

Brian Tome is the founding and Senior Pastor of Crossroads, considered the fastest growing church in America with the nation's fourth largest congregation. Studied Theology at Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary.



**GREG VAN KIRK (NEW YORK): Founder/CEO at Social Entrepreneur Corps**

Greg is an Ashoka Lemelson Fellow and was recognized as Schwab Foundation "Social Entrepreneur of the Year" for 2012 by the World Economic Forum. He holds a bachelor's in Business Administration, Marketing, and Economics from Miami University.

# Cincinnati university lands among top 10 in U.S. for entrepreneurship

By Erin Caproni – Digital Producer, Cincinnati Business Courier  
Nov 13, 2019, 6:04am EST **Updated** Nov 13, 2019, 6:27am EST

A Greater Cincinnati university has been ranked among the best in the world for entrepreneurship.

Miami University's John W. Altman Institute for Entrepreneurship is No. 11 on the 2020 Princeton Review and Entrepreneur magazine list of the Top 50 Best Undergrad Programs for Entrepreneurs. The institute is No. 10 among U.S. colleges and universities and No. 5 among public undergraduate institutions.

The entrepreneurship program within Miami's Farmer School of Business has been ranked among the nation's top 10 on the annual list for 12 straight years, but this is its highest ranking yet.

The list is based on a survey that includes more than 40 data points such as percentage of faculty, students and alumni involved in entrepreneurial endeavors, number and reach of mentorship programs, number of scholarships and grants for entrepreneurial studies and level of support for school-sponsored business plan competitions.

The only other Ohio institution to receive a spot on the list was the University of Dayton at No. 34. To see the full ranking, [click here](#).

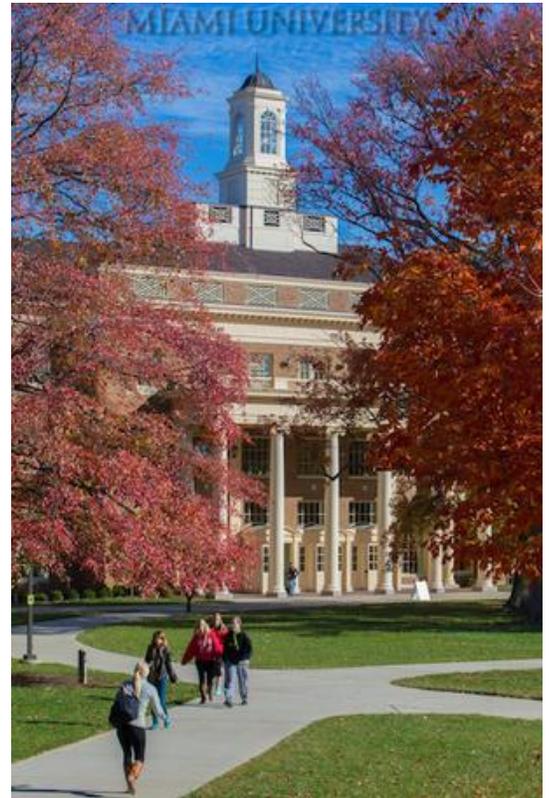
“Central to the design of Miami University's undergraduate entrepreneurship program is a belief in the transformative power of learning by doing inside and outside the classroom. What sets our program apart from others is our commitment to graduate students who are ‘job-ready, day one,’” institute director Tim Holcomb said in a statement.

The Altman Institute for Entrepreneurship engages 2,800 students, or more than 15% of the university's total undergraduate population. It offers partnerships with more than 400 business and entrepreneurship professionals and numerous opportunities to gain practical, hands-on experience including Techstars Startup Weekend Miami, RedHawk Venture Pitch Competition, the Altman Summer Scholar Internship Program and two student-led investment funds, RedHawk Ventures and the Social Impact Fund. More than 1,000 students participate in 19 co-curricular programs each year.

“The diverse, talented faculty at Miami have crafted the right formula of academic and experiential learning to produce world-class students,” CincyTech CEO Mike Venerable said of the institute. “It's important for our success to have this asset in the Cincinnati region.”

That learning has led to more than 600 Miami graduates leading 112 venture-backed companies that have raised \$6.1 billion in funding through 237 venture deals in the past decade.

Miami is Greater Cincinnati's second-largest university with local enrollment of 24,162, according to *Courier* research.



## John Altman honored as Institute for Entrepreneurship named for him

### Altman associated with Miami for nearly 60 years



May 16, 2019

Like many momentous events, John Altman's life changed with a phone call. "It was an early summer afternoon in 1992 when Dr. James Robeson, then dean of Miami's business school, called and asked me how my retirement was going. I told him my golf game was lousy, getting worse, and I was bored. To my surprise, he said 'Why don't you come back to Oxford and give me a hand?'" Altman recalled. "Teach what?' I asked. 'I've only taught second-year ancient Greek in seminary.' Jim said, 'I want you to teach the same thing here, but we'll call it entrepreneurship.'"

That started a decades-long relationship between Altman and what would become the Farmer School of Business, culminating in the school's Institute for Entrepreneurship being **named for Altman**, who has been owner, founder, and/or partner in six different businesses since graduating from Miami University in 1960.

"The start of our program was a bit like 'Saving Private Ryan.' It took me too long to realize it was about finite resources, a new untested discipline, and a new pig at the trough," Altman remarked. "It was also about not doing the research and communicating to my colleagues."

Altman said that once he began doing more research on entrepreneurship, it didn't take long to see the depth of its impact. "Roughly \$8.5 trillion of gross domestic product is generated in the entrepreneurial sector, not to mention creating jobs as the Fortune 1000 was self-destructing," he explained. "Only 18,500 of our six billion American businesses are considered large, many of them public, many of them were started by one or two persons. In roughly 22 million individually-run small businesses, you see the magnitude of entrepreneurship."

“As time went by, I realized I had fallen in love with teaching. My life soon centered on my students. I taught summers in Luxembourg and seminars in Singapore,” Altman said. “A senior Fulbright allowed me to preach the gospel of entrepreneurship worldwide. Many of my students went on to create hundreds of exciting businesses including Skype, begin their own families, and visit us every year at Lake Tahoe.”

“My Miami years have come full circle, as 59 years of service to my alma mater ceremoniously ends today and on our board of trustees next month. Never have I served with so many who practice the mantra of Miami first,” Altman said. “I hope people will always remember that this world-class Ohio Center of Excellence, this John W Altman Institute for Entrepreneurship, was always and so remains a team effort. I started with ‘Saving Private Ryan’ as a metaphor for our startup. My part was simple -- I took the beach. When my days of battle come to an end, perhaps my epitaph might read like many gathered here this evening, ‘A teacher affects eternity. He can never tell where his influence will stop.’”

[Check out more images from the event here](#)



## RedHawk Ventures plans for \$1.5 million fund



By [Skyler Black The Miami Student](#)  
September 24, 2019 | 5:00am EDT

Miami's student-led business organization RedHawk Ventures announced in early August plans to raise a \$1.5 million fund this school year. RedHawk Ventures allows students to invest in start-up businesses, helping them get off the ground using venture capital (the practice of funding early stage firms based on high growth potential).

Seniors Laura Mena and Andy Newman, co-managers of RedHawk Ventures, hope to use the new fund to educate new members and invest in start-ups in collaboration with their new board of advisors.

RedHawk Ventures receives gifts from investors, and that money is then invested in start-ups. Any returns on investment are placed back into the fund for future students.

The organization began in 1997 with an initial fund of \$500,000 from Procter & Gamble, and was formally set up in 2008. RedHawk Ventures has decided to raise the second fund due to an increased interest in the organization and the first fund allocation is nearly gone.

“As we've grown our marketing efforts and overall as a firm, we have more startups wanting to work with us, more partnerships with venture capital firms across the country, and a never-ending interest from students wanting to join our organization,” Newman said.

Dr. Tim Holcomb, director of the John W. Altman Institute for Entrepreneurship and RedHawk Ventures' faculty advisor, said the additional funding will be used to make investments in early, seed-stage startups (companies that have just launched) led by Miami students and/or alumni.

RedHawk Ventures previously gave each new start-up checks for \$25,000 as a base, but now they are looking to raise that investment to \$50,000 on an as-needed basis.

Mena said she also aims to use the fund for the organization's recently-developed new member education program. Incoming RedHawk Venture members now undergo a required, intensive five-week curriculum that teaches the basics of venture capital and start-up financing.

RedHawk Ventures has helped companies such as [OROS](#), a performance clothing company based in Portland, and [Digs](#), a Chicago-based company that helps renters save money for home ownership.

Ultimately, the objective in investing is to give students experience in venture capital.

Mena said RedHawk Ventures hopes to receive donations from large corporations or interested Miami alumni who are willing to donate back to entrepreneurship efforts.

"If you invest or donate into this fund, we are going to continue to crank out students who are educated on a space that isn't seen at an undergraduate level," Mena said. "We will be able to get Miami students the tools necessary for them to go learn about venture capital and be successful."

## Miami University, Uncharted Learning Announce Partnership for Early Business Education

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By Mark Payne  
June 24, 2019, 04:00am EDT

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Miami University's Institute for Entrepreneurship has announced a partnership with an Illinois-based nonprofit that offers entrepreneurial education. The goal? To bring business courses to area high school students.

The nonprofit in question is [Uncharted Learning](#), which established the [INCubatoredu entrepreneurship program](#) in 2013. Its goal was to help students learn business best practices by creating their own companies. In the six years of its existence, it has worked with more than 11,000 students and 120 schools, and will only increase that number when it debuts in the region.

“More and more we’re seeing high schools across the nation take on entrepreneurship courses as a means to engage students beyond standardized testing,” said Institute for Entrepreneurship Director Dr. Timothy Holcomb. “[INCubatoredu] really allows high schools in particular to teach students how to apply the technical skills they’re learning.”

The program's curriculum is similar to courses taught at Miami, where students engage in immersive, interdisciplinary lessons. They aim to build participants' creativity and problem-solving skills — those that will serve as a strong foundation for further learning in business classes after high school.

“We believe enhancing creativity and front-end innovation is critical for all students as early as possible,” said Holcomb added. “So, instead of waiting for them to come to college, we are infusing our creative curriculum into INCubatoredu’s outstanding program.”

The Uncharted Learning team echoed Miami's excitement over the collaboration.

“This partnership will help us augment our stack of programs from elementary to high school, which provides a pathway for students to progressively develop their entrepreneurial mindset to solve real challenges,” said Ashley Blackburn, its director of programs.