



# ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACHES TO COMPLEX SOCIAL PROBLEMS

ANNUAL REPORT | 2018-2019



**SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
AND INNOVATION LAB**  
*Washington University In St. Louis*

# **Mission**

**Co-create an entrepreneurial and impact-focused culture of innovation with campus and community members, to spark new ways of tackling complex social problems.**



**Dean Mary McKay**  
Neidorff Family and  
Centene Corporation Dean  
Brown School

Since its launch, the Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation Lab (SEIL) has been providing a critically needed vehicle for the creative, ambitious and entrepreneurial spirit of Washington University students and local residents. The SEIL serves as a needed incubator for the creation of new ideas that can advance positive social change as well as generate revenue. Additionally, working collaboratively with Olin Business School allows for the best minds in business to work side by side with leading social work, public health and social policy students and scholars at the Brown School. This partnership offers the campus and local community incredible opportunities to apply the principles of social entrepreneurship to advance social, economic and health equity.

I am grateful to Professor Cameron for her leadership and commitment to building racial equity and economic power within disadvantaged communities. The work of SEIL is a shining example of the Brown School's dedication to equity and commitment to impact.



**Dean Mark P. Taylor**  
Olin Business School

At Olin, we're cultivating business leaders who have a strong analytical base complemented by a global outlook and an entrepreneurial world-view. We're equipping leaders who understand the responsibility they hold to create a better world, to create social impact. As Olin's vision has evolved and adapted with changing times, so have our student experiences. Innovative thinking has always served as the foundation for Olin's diverse initiatives, and the Social Entrepreneurship & Innovation Lab is one such collaborative venture. The Lab offers experiential learning opportunities to students from interdisciplinary backgrounds to enhance their entrepreneurial mindset. It's an opportunity for Olin to share our entrepreneurial acumen with the St. Louis community and international actors. It serves as an innovative thinking hub that offers our students new possibilities for research opportunities and social entrepreneurship ventures. I'm enthused by the accomplishments of the Lab and welcome you to engage with us and be part of this exciting venture.



**Heather Cameron**  
Michael B. Kaufman Professor of Practice  
Inaugural Academic Director of SEIL  
Brown School

I'm delighted to be building on many years of development of social entrepreneurship here at Washington University in St. Louis. The Brown School's expertise in evidence-based programming and impact assessment, and Olin Business School's focus on data driven decision making for change for good is coming together in the form of this accelerator. We have global and local challenges that require diverse skill sets and innovative perspectives. The Lab is equipping students and faculty alike to address these challenges with a focus on proven impact and innovative business models that offer sustainability. Working with local and global partners we can put our knowledge to work. I invite people from the campus and wider community to join us in this exciting initiative.

# Activity Overview



## RECRUITMENT & OUTREACH | 5

Build up the St. Louis social entrepreneurship and innovation community through capacity building at local incubators and learning events to share expertise.

Develop entrepreneurial and impact-oriented thinking at WashU through research, academic courses, and international programming.

## RECRUITMENT AND OUTREACH

### CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMMUNITY SOCIAL IMPACT ECOSYSTEM IN ST. LOUIS

- Capacity building at local incubators
- Learning events to share expertise

### DEVELOPING ENTREPRENEURIAL AND IMPACT-ORIENTED THINKING AT WASHU

- Events for students, faculty, and alumni
- Social Entrepreneur in residence program
- National and international research and programming

## IDEA TO MVP

Design thinking online class + three community incubator workshops



Students and community innovators

## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING | 8

MVP to revenue generation: graduate class for students and community teams working on high impact revenue generating enterprises.

Social innovation initiative: graduate class does a social innovation challenge.



## APPLIED LEARNING | 16

Student practica or paid internship for graduate and undergraduates.



### EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

#### MVP TO REVENUE GENERATION

Graduate class for students and community teams working on high impact revenue generating enterprises



Community impact enterprises and students interested in Social Entrepreneurship

#### SOCIAL INNOVATION INITIATIVE

Graduate class on specific innovation challenges (e.g. 2018 Disruptive innovation in transportation to end infant mortality)



Community impact initiatives and students interested in Social Entrepreneurship

### APPLIED LEARNING

#### PAID STUDENT PRACTICA OR INTERNSHIP

Community organizations can apply for a student intern and student founders can apply for funding to work on their own venture

International and national placements available

### EXIT

#### INVESTMENT READINESS/EXIT

e.g. from impact investing fund, Missouri Foundation for Health or Centene

Merge into an existing NGO

#### COHORT ACTIVITIES

-Coworking with partner incubators  
-Coaching

## EXIT | 19

Investment readiness program for social enterprises ready to receive impact VC funding or merge into an existing nonprofit.

Cohort activities such as coworking with partner incubators, coaching, and networking.





# Recruitment & Outreach

Build up the St. Louis social entrepreneurship and innovation community through capacity building at local incubators and learning events to share expertise.

Develop entrepreneurial and impact-oriented thinking at WashU through research, academic courses, and international programming.



**GSG Impact Summit**  
**New Delhi, India | October 8-9, 2018**

The Global Steering Group for Impact Investment (GSGII) hosted its 2018 Impact Investing Conference in New Delhi, India. With over 150 speakers from 30 countries, the conference was centered around “The Power of Impact.” The SEI Lab was invited to attend the conference.

**VISION Small Business Innovation Symposium**  
**October 19, 2018**

Hosted at UMSL and featuring diverse professionals, small business owners, entrepreneurs, startups and corporations, the VISION Conference is an opportunity for interested entrepreneurs to start and grow their business. The SEI Lab hosted a table at the conference, meeting and connecting with a wide range of individuals interested in learning more about social enterprises and their impact on communities. Students, working professionals, small business owners - the conference had resources for everyone. With Arlan Hamilton as the keynote speaker, the conference inspired the 250 attending individuals to build and grow STEM ventures in our local communities.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Friday, October 19, 2018**  
 8:00am - 5:30pm

**J.C. Penney Conference Center**  
 at University of Missouri - St. Louis

**VISION**  
 SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION SYMPOSIUM  
 Forging a Strong, Equitable Path in Innovation and Inclusion

VISION is St. Louis' annual conference aimed at building a wholly-inclusive, diverse innovation community. VISION is for anyone wanting to learn more information about the many small business and entrepreneurship opportunities in the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields.

For more information, visit: [visionstlouis.com](http://visionstlouis.com) or call 314.880.8877 @VisionStLouis

You do not have to be a rocket scientist, coding expert or master craftsperson to build a business around St. Louis' STEM strengths. Whether you have a business idea you want to test out, or an already-established company you are looking to grow, VISION will help you achieve your business goals!

Keynote Conversation with **ARLAN HAMILTON**  
 the Founder and Managing Partner of Backstage Capital, a venture capital fund dedicated to minimizing disparities in tech by investing in founders of color, women, and/or LGBT. Arlan started Backstage from scratch in 2015 while she was homeless and has now invested nearly \$5M into over 80 startup companies led by underrepresented founders.

Sponsored By: BKSTL, CET, CIC, POWER

Organized by: AAACC, BICSTL, CET, H, UEB, St. Louis Community College, SEI Lab, WEPower

**BACKSTAGE**  
**CAPITAL**

**Arlan Hamilton, Founder + Managing Partner at Backstage Capital | October 18, 2018**



Less than 10% of all venture capital deals go to women, people of color, and LGBT founders. Arlan Hamilton founded Backstage Capital to change the status quo. Within four years she went from having to rely on food stamps to investing in 100 startup companies led by women, people of color and LGBTQ founders. The SEI Lab hosted a session with Arlan giving students, staff, faculty and community members the opportunity to learn from her experiences. Arlan shared openly about the challenges of running a venture fund—particularly one that aims to level the playing field. She emphasized the value of grit and determination, and how working through the struggle of managing such a large fund can gradually change the industry for the better. Today, Backstage Capital has invested more than \$4M in companies led by underrepresented founders.

▲ Arlan Hamilton discusses the challenges of running a venture fund for Backstage Capital with Dr. Cameron.

# FOCUS St. Louis

## FOCUS Impact Fellows Coaching 2018 and 2019 November 16, 2018

The SEI Lab was invited to brief the 2018 cohort of Focus STL Impact Fellows, a group of regional leaders who work together to advance health care initiatives in the community. The presentation, “Crafting Innovative Solutions to Social Issues: Leveraging an Entrepreneurship Model,” introduced the fellows to an innovative approach to problem-solving as they considered projects to complete as a cohort. Dr. Cameron served in an advising capacity throughout the fellows’ tenure as well.



## Ashoka U Exchange'19 February 21-23, 2019

The Ashoka U Exchange is a three-day learning lab, testing ground, space for celebrating innovation, and spark for the collaboration of 700 educators, students, and other higher education professionals from across the world. It’s a home for creative problem solvers, learners, listeners, and visionaries. Dr. Cameron was invited to present a Big Ideas Talk titled “Leveling the Playing Field (Community Banks & The Federal Reserve for Student-led Impact Investing)”.



*Dr. Cameron presented a Big Ideas Talk to attendees at the Ashoka Exchange on impact investing.*





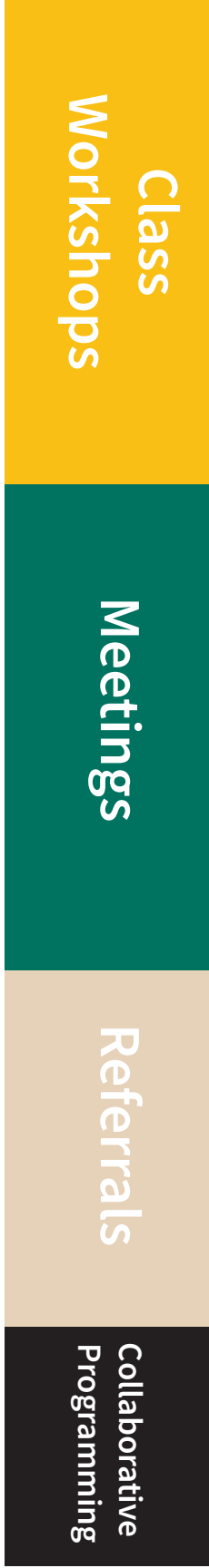
# Experiential Learning

**MVP to Revenue Generation:** Graduate class for students and community teams working on high impact revenue generating enterprises.

**Social Innovation Initiative:** graduate class completes a social innovation challenge.



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# Courses

We kicked off the academic year with a mixer hosted by the SEI Lab. Our class sizes grew this year, with the Social Entrepreneurship class doubling in intake! As the classes grew, so did the diversity of projects that the student teams worked in. From the Office of Sustainability to identifying resources for digital growth in Africa, they tackled a wide range of problems.

## Undergraduate Courses

### Introduction to Social Entrepreneurship

The course caters to students interested in creating positive social change through market-based strategies. It is structured to attend to the diversity of backgrounds, and to emulate the interdisciplinary nature of social entrepreneurship. Using existing social enterprises as examples, we learn how social entrepreneurs react to social challenges and adapt to overcome new hurdles to create the most impact.

### Social Impact: Planning, Measuring, and Building

This course shifts focus towards the intricacies and challenges of impact measurement. The core of it deals with the theory and technical skills related to social impact planning and measurement. It allows students to understand and gauge the hurdles faced by social enterprises as they try to reliably measure their impact. As part of the class, students also chose a social enterprise to evaluate as a potential impact investing opportunity.

## Graduate Courses

### Social Entrepreneurship

The Social Entrepreneurship class brings together graduate students from Social Work, Public Health, Business, Law, and Engineering to collaborate and learn together. While learning about the essentials of social entrepreneurship – the emergence, the challenges, and the opportunities – students work in teams to support community and student projects. They test the feasibility of the business models and conduct market research to further develop the venture plans. Past projects have included organizations like Magnificent Creations, a Social Enterprise of Unleashing Potential, and Artscope. This year the class worked with Better Family Life and Justine Petersen.

### Social Innovation

Through the Social Innovation class, the SEI Lab pairs WashU students with community partners working on the biggest challenges in our region. In Spring 2019, a transdisciplinary seminar of graduate students collaborated with Missouri Foundation for Health to design strategies aimed at increasing the census count in hard-to-count communities across Missouri.



## Guest Speakers

**Gulcan Yayla**  
Monitoring and Evaluation  
Malala Fund

**Ed Bryant**  
VP of Stakeholder Engagement  
United Way of Greater St. Louis

**Michael Meara**  
Managing Partner  
Community Capital Advisors

**Tracy Greever-Rice**  
Assistant Research Professor  
in Child Health, MU School of Med

**Andrew Glantz**  
Founder and CEO  
GiftaMeal

**David Nehrt-Flores**  
Director  
Deaconess

**Alexandra Rankin**  
Government Affairs Manager  
Missouri Foundation for Health

**DeMarco Davidson**  
Advocate and Organizer  
Metro Congregated United

**Alison Gee**  
VP of Government  
& Community Engagement  
Parents as Teachers

**Theresa Le**  
Partnership Specialist  
US Census Bureau, Chicago

▲ From left to right: Yayla, Meara, Glantz, Rankin, Gee, Bryant, Greever-Rice, Nehrt-Flores, Davidson (Le not pictured).

# Class Workshops



## LaunchCode

LaunchCode helps jobseekers enter the tech field by first providing them with direct training and education, and then connecting them with apprenticeship opportunities. When faced with rising attrition rates, LaunchCode wanted to identify the key levers that influenced dropout rates as well as recommendations to combat them. The undergraduate student team worked through the compiled data - combing through it to recognize key indicators linked with attrition. The students also compiled a comprehensive list of recommendations to help LaunchCode lower the attrition rates.



## Paraquad

Paraquad empowers people with disabilities to increase their independence through choice and opportunity. Offering multiple food and beverage options, they started the Bloom Cafe to provide job training for people with disabilities. The program allows them to formally train in a kitchen, gain soft skills and then do a paid internship to build experience.



As the Bloom Cafe gained more recognition, they received more programming and made plans to build out the cafe in new locations. The undergraduate student team worked on analyzing different models of information sharing to see which would work best with Paraquad's current structure. They evaluated the opportunities, costs and challenges that each model would offer.



## Campfire

Through storytelling, discussion, and reflection, Campfire helps you discover, share, and use your wisdom in the moments when you need it most. The Campfire team was tasked with an expansion plan that brought the work into a more sustainable path with paid staff and regular programming.



Federal Ministry  
for Economic Cooperation  
and Development

## Strategic Partnership Digital Africa

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) launched the Strategic Partnership Digital Africa with the goal to harness digitalization opportunities to drive Africa's development – in partnership with German and European companies that may simultaneously gain new revenue streams. It is a network made up of BMZ, companies and associations. Under the guidance of Dr. Cameron, two undergraduate teams worked on compiling reports that would be part of a larger submission.

They focused on two issues - Women in Tech Entrepreneurship and Digital Business Opportunities. Their focus was on countries with growing economies or those that started implementing projects to increase the number of women in tech. They evaluated the current industry -its barriers to entry, outreach, partnerships and networks - and identified untapped opportunities. They analyzed financial viability, taking into consideration the opportunity cost as well the impact of women on economies.

## Different Dynamics

Different Dynamics is a music program that enriches the lives of youth with special needs and their families through adaptive music programming founded by an employee of the St. Louis Symphony. They serve families with children ages 3-5 and youth ages 6-17, who have a special need and a strong love of music. This is done by offering private music lessons, group music classes, music therapy, and sensory-friendly events for children and youth with special needs.

Different Dynamics moved from the initial phase to the class. Their founder built a team during this process and began pilot programming. One of the most critical aspects of their engagement was adapting to phased roll out of programming to enable the current volunteer-oriented team to build within their capacity.





### WashU Sustainability Office

The Office of Sustainability leads Washington University in St. Louis' efforts to transform our campus into a living learning laboratory that connects teaching and research directly to sustainable campus operations. From spearheading sustainability projects across campus to facilitating outreach amongst the campus community, the Office of Sustainability works to promote their mission.

### Composting

One of the many ongoing projects was the implementation of composting across the Business School. Overhauling the waste management system requires considerable effort involving analysis of existing systems, stakeholder buy in as well as a consideration of the costs incurred. The undergraduate team built a proposal around the work done by the Sustainability Team, going from the results of the pilot program to expand their recommendations with considerations for the needs of the stakeholders.

### Shared Economy

With the arrival of LimeBike and Bird, the WashU campus saw an influx of bikes and e-scooters. However, there was still a lack of awareness around the rules behind their use, as well as ride sharing etiquette. The undergraduate team used existing ridesharing-university collaborations to benchmark successful practices. They put together a recommendation with proposed changes to increase awareness as well as partner-models to work with these apps to combat the parking situation on campus.



EST. 2018

# WEPOWER

## WEPOWER

WEPOWER engages changemakers, risk-takers, and the leaders of tomorrow to co-create opportunities, reimagine policies, and build entirely new solutions – all in areas that impact the lives of Black & Latinx people daily. They envision a nation where we all have the power to lead change so that every community prospers.

The WePower team was tasked with identifying a sustainable business model with other organizations around the country with similar goals. The team identified faith-based membership, federally funded CSBG organizations and mixed models and the most common funding sources. The group also provided recommendations around picking the most important things and doing those well.

## GiftAMeal

Over 40 million people in the United States are food insecure, meaning they do not know where they will find their next meal. GiftAMeal uses the power of social media to provide a meal to someone in need through a local pantry.

The GiftAMeal team was charged with creating a system for identifying expansion markets and a top tier of cities. The team accomplished this and identified Minneapolis and Raleigh/Durham as the top two expansion cities. The team also encouraged a local advocate model for expansion versus internal sales staff.



## Missouri Foundation for Health - CENSUS 2020

The Missouri Foundation for Health (MFH) approached the lab for assistance in crafting innovative interventions to promote an accurate state count in the upcoming 2020 Census. The topic became the focus of the Spring 2019 Social Innovation class, in which an interdisciplinary team of students generated ideas to increase the census count's accuracy in hard-to-count communities across Missouri, with a specific focus on rural communities and other marginalized groups.







# Applied Learning

Student practica or paid internships for graduate and undergraduate students.

# Students Working with the Lab

The Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation Lab (SEIL) serves as a needed incubator for the creation of new ideas that can advance positive social change and generate revenue to create new pathways for social change in St. Louis and beyond. The following are students who assisted the lab in various activities.



**Alexis Barab**

Graduate Research Assistant

Lexi has an MPH from UC Berkeley and is finishing her MSW in International Social and Economic Development at the Brown School. Lexi has been working with the Lab for the last academic year doing grant writing, copy editing, and project scoping and coordination for CampGroup and Boxgirls International.



**Julia Hughes**

Program Manager

Julia brings a breadth of knowledge from an eclectic background through her career from teaching to therapy and technology repair. She provides digital media and design support for the Lab and its affiliated projects' presence online. She completes her dual degree in May 2019.



**Lucy Ingazia**

Graduate Research Assistant

Lucy is a first year MPH candidate specializing in Global health/epidemiology and biostatistics. She is currently working on her practicum with the CamP group on the project "Girls in the Lead," focusing on impact assessment and communicating best practices through impact reporting.



**Sojourner White**

Graduate Research Assistant

Sojourner is a first-year MSW student. Her concentration is in International Social and Economic Development, specializing in Social Entrepreneurship. She works on the digital platform "Girls in the Lead," which aims to connect international organizations who advocate for women's and girls' empowerment. She has also done marketing, content creation, research, and communications.



### **Miriam Joelson**

Graduate Research Assistant

Miriam Joelson is a student at the Brown School of Social Work, where she is studying Mental Health. A native German speaker, Miriam spent her time at the Lab writing and translating papers and reports for Dr. Cameron. She was particularly excited to collaborate on a report for the GIZ in Berlin. Miriam received her BA from Brown University and holds an MSc from the University of Oxford.



### **Megan Worden**

Graduate Research Assistant

Megan is a first-year Master of Social Work candidate and a Masters Research Fellow. With the Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation Lab, Megan supported the Social Innovation course, which focused on the 2020 Census, and collaborated with the course's community partner, The Missouri Foundation for Health. Megan's other work for the lab includes supporting events with community partners and assisting with other lab initiatives.



### **Christina Lu**

Graphic Designer

Christina is an undergraduate senior pursuing a BFA in Communication Design and Psychology in 2019. She is responsible for assisting with the annual report and creating any additional graphics to help communicate the Social Entrepreneurship Lab's mission in promoting social change in businesses.



### **Theodore Floros**

Program Manager



### **Mike Kramer**

Graduate Research Assistant



# Exit

Investment readiness program for social enterprises ready to receive impact VC funding or merge into an existing nonprofit.

Cohort activities such as coworking with partner incubators, coaching, and networking.



## Impact Investment Paper

The Social Entrepreneurship & Innovation Lab, in collaboration with the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, is proud to present a report on the Innovative Approaches to Impact Investing in St. Louis. The report is the culmination of months of effort by students, faculty, community and financial organizations across the greater St. Louis region. Bringing together varied perspectives, the report aims to raise awareness around the potential St. Louis has to grow and sustain meaningful impact investing. The SEI Lab team included students from the Brown School and Olin School of Business, who worked over months to research and interview thought leaders across this field to collect their insights and shape the report.

*“We are grateful for collaborating with the Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation Lab on the new report, ‘Innovative Approaches to Investing with Impact in St. Louis.’ As a result of this partnership, both retail and institutional investors have greater insight into the opportunities of aligning values with investment capital to benefit the St. Louis community.”*

— Michael Eggleston, Community Development Advisor, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis



▲ From left to right: Dr. Cameron with the panelists Chris Fowle (Head of Americas, Principles of Responsible Investing), Victoria Gonzalez (Impact Investment Fund Manager, Justine Petersen) and Michael Eggleston (Community Development Advisor, Federal Reserve of St. Louis).

## 4th Annual Impact Investing Symposium

At the 4th Annual Impact Investing Symposium hosted at Olin School of Business, Dr. Cameron moderated a panel on Measuring & Reporting Investment Activities: From global investment to local disinvestment. Panelists discussed how innovation and the SDGs are shaping the future of reporting outcomes at a global level, and how leading Community Development Financial Institutions and their allies work locally to report on and respond to disinvestment.

# Next Steps

## **Strengthen transdisciplinary networks and efforts across the WashU Campus**

- Offer courses across student levels
- Host community projects and initiatives that leverage skills and resources across the WashU community
- Connect students at the lab with community partners
- Partner with career centres at the Business and Social Work schools

## **Build out the social engagement pipeline by involving**

- Students, faculty, alumni and leaders at community incubators
- Intrapreneurs at community agencies
- Local social entrepreneurs from our communities
- Corporate entities from the St. Louis region looking to innovate

## **Grow internal capacity**

- Provide opportunities for students to gain work experience in the field of social impact
- Create collaborative workspaces for students from across campus

## **Outreach**

- Rolling out communications efforts to strengthen existing presence while targeting increased national awareness

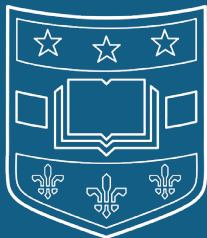
### **Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation Lab**

One Brookings Drive, St. Louis, MO 63130  
Goldfarb Hall, Room 32

<https://sei-lab.wustl.edu/>



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