



MAIN STREET
ENTREPRENEURS
SEED FUND

2020 COHORT
COMPANY PROFILES





ABOUT THE MAIN STREET ENTREPRENEURS SEED FUND

The Main Street Entrepreneurs Seed Fund supports Georgia State student entrepreneurs, recent alumni and Georgia State community entrepreneurs with seed funding and mentorship to start and grow new ventures. This program was designed to support the creation of 10 new businesses in metro Atlanta by June 2020 and is overseen by the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Institute.

ABOUT THE MARCUS FOUNDATION

The Marcus Foundation is the private philanthropic foundation of Bernie Marcus. Bernie Marcus is a co-founder of The Home Depot. Since his retirement from the company in 2001, he has been a philanthropist and Chairman of The Marcus Foundation. Bernie is a patriot and staunch supporter of American military, veterans, and their families. The Marcus Foundation focuses on five areas: children, Jewish causes, medical research, free enterprise, and community.

#StateStarts



CO HORT

MAIN STREET **ENTREPRENEURS** SEED FUND

Seed Stage

Artehub

Bukhari Tutoring & Health

EcoDrop Technologies

Famous Joint Co

nSpire

Nurtur Skincare

NVRBEENStandard

Observe

Psynchronicity

Quaint Revolt Media

SELF

Startup Stage

Airlift

Angel Assistance

ArtzyBella

Beyond the Classroom

DelivHer Femcare

Kemnu

Natural Leaders Media

SoundCollide

SweatPack

Totem Agency Co.



11

11 early, idea-stage companies

SEED STAGE COMPANIES

ARTEHUB



London Balbosa, Co-Founder & CEO Rhythm Varshney, CTO

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B.B.A. Computer Information Systems '19

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Launched July 2019 | Seed Stage

PROBLEM

The lack of price transparency for fine art, access to art collection programming and education, art authentication and limited exposure art collectors have to new and exclusive fine art categories and mediums

SOLUTION

An eCommerce art discovery platform where aspiring art collectors can purchase fine art

BUSINESS MODEL

Take 5-20% of every sale

TARGET MARKET

High net worth individuals with an income >\$250,000 annually and assets >\$1 million

KEY COMPETITORS

Artsper, Saatichi Art, ArtsXOfficial, Patreon Art, Sotheby's, and IKEA

USE OF FUNDS

60% Marketing and Customer Acquisition, 20% Legal, 20% Talent Recruitment

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

The freedom to create systems that scale and create generational wealth.

What are your future goals for your company?

We aspire to partner and scale across all the major art markets in the U.S., China, Africa and Europe. We want to become the one-stop-shop for interior designers, home decor, corporate and restaurant art installations, art assets management, art storage, artist crowdfunding and sourcing, and art commerce on the blockchain.

Share about your team dynamics.

The art industry as a whole operates completely differently than most industries, one large silo full of politics, the elite and money who control how it's operated. The challenge is convincing art galleries to partner with us as they are afraid we could disrupt their business model. Also, internally our team's momentum fluctuates, but that's normal. The challenge there is keeping everyone motivated and inspired like we were when we started.

What advice can you offer to other entrepreneurs?

Be a seeker of knowledge. Always take on new opportunities as a challenge because you have the chance to make them better than they are now. Be a good listener. Observe people's actions. Keep going. Don't stop until you know it is time to pivot or start something new from what you're already doing.

What role has Atlanta played in your entrepreneurial journey?

Atlanta artists love what we are doing and are giving us a chance to feature their work on our platform in 2020.

ArteHub

DISCOVER NICHE ART

BUKHARI TUTORING & HEALTH



Usama Muta-Ali, Founder

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Launched January 2019 | Seed Stage

PROBLEM

Low graduation rates among students

SOLUTION

An affordable tutoring company to help students further understand the lesson and concepts they are learning in school

BUSINESS MODEL

Paid membership model

TARGET MARKET

9th graders who attend Dekalb County Public Schools

KEY COMPETITORS

Kumon, Varsity Tutors

USE OF FUNDS

60% Furniture and Supplies, 30% Marketing, 10% Talent Recruitment

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

My education at Georgia State has enhanced my understanding of math, reading and science – Which is key to running a successful tutoring company. My experience with the Entrepreneur Club at Georgia State has also introduced me to many different opportunities and has broadened my perspective of entrepreneurship.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Being able to dictate and control your destiny.

What inspired you to launch your company?

It was always my dream to run my own company. Plus, I needed some extra money to pay for the master's degree I am planning to pursue without taking out a loan. My company is all about helping and empowering people, which I love to do most.

How has your company grown?

We have been able to register more students, hire more tutors and add more subjects taught within our tutoring center. Additionally, our organization has become much more stable.

What advice can you offer to entrepreneurs?

Plan accordingly, work hard and execute. Everyone will doubt you, but don't doubt yourself.

Was there ever a moment you wanted to quit entrepreneurship?

Yes, there was a moment I wanted to quit because my board of directors was not committed enough. I decided to make some changes and recruit people who were more motivated and committed.



ECODROP TECHNOLOGIES



Nicole Toole, Co-Founder & CEO

Ishir Vasavada, Co-Founder, Strategy & Finance

B.B.A. Computer Information Systems '22

B.B.A. Finance '19

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Launched July 2019 | Seed Stage

PROBLEM

Declining recycling rates and manual waste management processes along with the lack of incentive and accessibility to recycle on college and corporate campuses

SOLUTION

Automated sorting machines (Reverse-Vending) and a mobile app

BUSINESS MODEL

Annual lease

TARGET MARKET

Educational and Corporate Institutions

KEY COMPETITORS

Rubicon Global, TOMRA, Envipco

USE OF FUNDS

40% Hardware Development, 20% Marketing, 20% Talent, 20% Legal

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

Georgia State has played a massive role in my journey. It has given me and my team a platform to conduct all our organizational activities and interact with our users, who are primarily students. The Entrepreneurship and Innovation Institute (ENI) at Georgia State has been a huge resource as well by being the first seed grant provider through Main Street workshops and mentorship sessions. We hope to launch our pilot service on the Georgia State campus.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Entrepreneurship to me means challenging myself everyday. It is like a sport. I want to keep playing every day of my life.

How did you meet your team?

Digital Learners to Leaders. I was keen on going beyond the classroom to discuss ideas and projects that could solve the problems faced by the society. I found my team during the Digital Learners to Leaders Program. No one knew anyone back then. Since then, we are committed to make the necessary changes in order to execute our idea.

What's your biggest challenge as an entrepreneur?

Patience. It is the most frustrating and yet the most rewarding part of being an entrepreneur. As a student or a fresh graduate, one still has to work a job initially in order to manage finances. That is where time management is put to the test.

What advice can you offer to entrepreneurs?

Be selfish and self-obsessed with your work and yourself in order to create value for others.



FAMOUS JOINT CO



Ishak Yusuf, CEO Hashim Addow, CFO

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B.A. Education '22
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Launched April 2018 | Seed Stage

PROBLEM

It is oftentimes easy to fall into boredom, crime or addiction to unhealthy foods, tobacco or alcohol without a communal space

SOLUTION

A space with healthy and affordable internationally inspired refreshments, smoothies, coffee and juices accompanied by production and digital service-oriented memberships

BUSINESS MODEL

Paid membership

TARGET MARKET

Non-profit organizations designed to support Clarkston's diverse background and history, local educational institutions, artists and entrepreneurs

KEY COMPETITORS

Refuge Coffee, Dunkin Donuts, Sidque Cafe

USE OF FUNDS

50% Licensing and Legal, 35% Marketing and Human Resources, 15% Equipment

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

My entrepreneurial journey is deeply rooted at Georgia State. Had I gone to any other school, I can sincerely say that I would not have had such a positive experience. My first startup ideas, marketing campaigns and dreams took wings at Georgia State. The networking I did from living and working in Atlanta and the Georgia State community continues to serve me to this day.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Caring about the 5 W's (who, what, where, when and why) so much that you will go to the ends of the Earth to create custom solutions and improve the customer experience.

Why did you launch your company?

We volunteered at countless events providing media coverage. Volunteering is rewarding; however, we could not sustain doing projects without pay. We had to regroup and figure out a way to begin charging for production.

How has your company pivoted?

Originally, our plan was to open an organic Women, Infants and Children-approved grocery store because we understand the value of choosing healthy options at home. This location was my mother's grocery store before. We got the licensing from the Department of Agriculture and met all of the requirements, only to discover that the zoning of the city changed to disallow grocery stores at our location. We had to pivot. The goal was always a cafe; however, we wanted to set up the grocery store as the MVP.



NSPIRE



Chidi Okolo, CEO
Timothy Sok, President

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B.B.A. Entrepreneurship '21
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Launched December 2017 | Seed Stage

PROBLEM

College students struggle with organizing their life in a way that prioritizes their short, medium and long-term goals simultaneously

SOLUTION

Nspire helps college students hold themselves accountable for any goal they may have

BUSINESS MODEL

Freemium-based product/service by offering our user base a wider variety of in app tools, features and resources

TARGET MARKET

College students ages 18-24

KEY COMPETITORS

Coach.me, Strides, GoalLoop

USE OF FUNDS

60% Marketing, 30% Product Development, 10% R&D

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

Georgia State has made such a positive impact on my entrepreneurial journey. Being a student entrepreneur isn't easy, but GSU has provided many resources and opportunities that help create so much momentum for startups. Thanks to GSU, we've participated in pitch competitions, been awarded seed funding, received mentorship and connected with a diverse group of people who are all supportive and willing to help us as we continue to grow.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Entrepreneurship means having ambition and being disciplined enough to turn your ambition into a revenue-generating business that offers value.

Why did you launch your company?

We first launched the company so we could offer people incentives for doing the things they knew they should be doing. We had a good idea, and we wanted to turn it into a long-term business.

What advice can you offer to other entrepreneurs?

Always be willing to put yourself in uncomfortable situations, and be prepared to make pivots during your journey.

What inspired the idea behind your company?

It was freshman year, and I was in microeconomics class. We were discussing the importance of incentives in the economy, and I thought that it would be cool to reward people for doing the things they knew they should be doing, like exercising and reading more.



NURTURE SKINCARE



Adesuwa Imafidon, CEO

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Launched May 2019 | Seed Stage

PROBLEM

Lack of skincare companies that clear and repair the skin but also focus on the well-being of the customer

SOLUTION

Provide natural skincare products that clear and improve the health of customers' skin while focusing on their mental, physical and emotional health

BUSINESS MODEL

Direct transactional sales

TARGET MARKET

Men and women between 19 and 28 years old that are health conscious, sustainable, struggle with dry, dehydrated, hyper-pigmented, acne-prone skin

KEY COMPETITORS

Philosophy, LUSH, Youth To The People, ACURE, Mad Hippie

USE OF FUNDS

31% Marketing, 30% Legal/Admin Materials, 25% Branding, 14% Raw Materials

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

Georgia State has supported me greatly throughout my journey, specifically the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Institute (ENI) Department. From holding interactive and informational events to traveling to incubator spaces, they have truly made it evident that it is possible to be an entrepreneur. They have provided me with resources and opportunities that I do not believe I would have gotten at another university.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

The desire to make a difference and the determination to execute it.

What advice can you offer to entrepreneurs?

Your value propositions and customer segments are important. Make sure that you know these like the back of your hand.

What inspired the launch of your company?

What inspired me was the lack of results I found from many products. If I did receive results, then I had other symptoms I needed to seek a solution for. I felt that skincare companies only cared about me purchasing their product and not how my skin affected my mental and physical health. Skincare goes deeper than what I believe other skincare companies demonstrate.

Were you always entrepreneurial?

When I was younger, I used to always find little ways to make money here and there by making bracelets or selling sugar cookies at school. I was always creating something and selling it; however, I was not very focused on solving a problem.



NVRBEEN STANDARD



Micah Ford, Founder & CEO

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Launched March 2018 | Seed Stage

PROBLEM

The lack of motivation
among the youth

SOLUTION

Building positivity through
clothing and messages

BUSINESS MODEL

Ad-based revenue

TARGET MARKET

Urban youth between ages 17-35

KEY COMPETITORS

ENTRPRNR BALR, Nike

LONG-TERM GOALS

To help every artist to operate
efficiently, autonomously and
independently

USE OF FUNDS

20% Marketing, 10% Legal,
20% Equipment, 50% Product
Development

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

I'm a member of the Entrepreneurship Club and the Activities Council at Georgia State where I hosted an entrepreneurial showcase for entrepreneurs. LaunchGSU has played a pivotal role in providing workshops and connections, too.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Entrepreneurship means a life full of freedom, joy and autonomy.

Have you always been entrepreneurial?

I have been entrepreneurial ever since the first grade. Apparently I wrote in a book in which I was a store owner. While in high school, I sold snacks to my peers. My Mom would take me to Sam's Club to buy a whole bunch of snacks, then I would take my duffel bag stuffed with snacks to school to sell. I had teachers and students buying from me.

What's your biggest challenge as an entrepreneur?

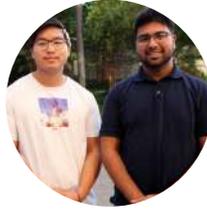
Consistency is the most challenging part. For instance, when you're a one-man show, you can get overwhelmed. That is why it is best to remember your goal, so you can push through.

What is Atlanta's role in your entrepreneurial journey?

Atlanta is a mecca of creativity for me as I keep finding locations to take pictures. Atlanta is a great place to network with like-minded individuals who can help with your business.



OBSERVE



Lawrence Chen, CEO
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B.S. Computer Science '20
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PROBLEM

Students are enrolling into college without knowing what opportunities their degree grants them and then fall into debt when they are unable to find work

SOLUTION

Observe shows students what different jobs are like and how people got theirs through videos, audio and text

BUSINESS MODEL

Our business model follows that of LinkedIn: We charge for job postings

TARGET MARKET

Students entering college, professionals in the work force and recruiters

KEY COMPETITORS

LinkedIn and Instagram

USE OF FUNDS

40% Development and Product Design, 40% Marketing, 20% Legal and Administrative

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

Georgia State has provided mentorship in the way of asking hard questions. Before joining the Main Street program, many ideas of Observe were unwritten. This program forced us to write things down and really explore the details. It has also given us access to a cohort of others facing the same challenges of growing a business. We're not facing this alone.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Entrepreneurship is about having a connection to your product. You are tied to its successes and failures; your fears and perseverance are its lifeblood.

What inspired you to launch your company?

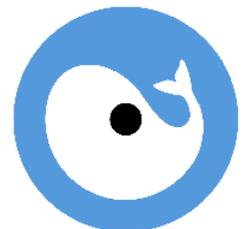
Students are often going into college without knowing much about their major or what opportunities they will have post-graduation. We saw a massive opportunity in benefiting these students, especially considering that student debt amounts to \$1.5 trillion of U.S. debt.

What advice can you offer to other entrepreneurs?

When people start doubting you, you need to believe in yourself.

How did you create a team to launch your company?

Our team is one that naturally formed as a result of seeing the problem first-hand. A major piece of advice is to choose team members based on people you have had major disagreements with, but can still work with.



PSYNCHRONICITY



Amber Lewter, Creator

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Launched September 2019 | Seed Stage

PROBLEM

Reducing the level of attrition and turn-over for tech companies

SOLUTION

Teaching employees how to create work-life balance

BUSINESS MODEL

B2B model with live and remote skill building trainings and therapy through a paid membership site

TARGET MARKET

Medium-sized tech companies with attrition concerns

KEY COMPETITORS

Better Help, Talkspace, Turknett Leadership Group

USE OF FUNDS

70% Tech Development, 20% Marketing, 10% Legal

How has Georgia State influenced your entrepreneurial journey?

The conflict resolution course I took at Georgia State during graduate school truly transformed my life in ways I can't adequately explain. It shifted my perspective of conflict as difficult or painful to an opportunity for progress and unity. I intend to help others learn this empowerment as part of Psynchronicity's services.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Being open to all possibilities all the time without fear and judgment.

What advice can you offer to entrepreneurs?

Know yourself. Know who is a part of your village. Know how to get support for this journey. Be patient with the process and yourself along the way. Perseverance and self-compassion can be equally valuable.

How has your company pivoted?

My initial concept was "Love Acumen," a B2C model that taught relationship skills to individuals. Over time, it became apparent that while there is a huge need for the service, there was a small demand. Most people weren't seeking help with their relationship skills until it was too late. Though the service has stayed mostly the same, the target market shifted. We now serve businesses (B2B) teaching their employees how to create work-life balance.

What is Atlanta's role in your entrepreneurial journey?

I'm an Atlanta native from a family of entrepreneurs.



Psynchronicity

QUAINT REVOLT MEDIA



Sasha-Gay Trusty, Editor-in-Chief

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Launched February 2017 | Seed Stage

PROBLEM

While long-standing publications for creatives are losing their edge, the need for a new, indie voice continues to grow interest

SOLUTION

We offer emerging creatives and industry disruptors a global platform that centers their work and products

BUSINESS MODEL

Freemium model

TARGET MARKET

Men and women ages 21-35
traversing creative life

KEY COMPETITORS

Ouur Media, Essence
Communications, Blavity Inc. and
Hour Media Group

LONG-TERM GOALS

A global publishing house facilitating
arts discourse and visual culture

USE OF FUNDS

50% Marketing, 25% Production, 15%
Operations, 10% Talent

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

My experience at Georgia State gave me a well-rounded foundation to become an entrepreneur. The Journalism and Anthropology departments allowed me to take a variety of core and specialty courses, all of which I still draw on today. It is at GSU that I came into my own as an arts and culture editor with a knack for impactful storytelling and critical writing.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Entrepreneurship means the vision and spirit of a disruptor. In order to create solutions, you must have an imaginative mind and renegade attitude.

Why did you launch your company?

After three years operating as a blog, I decided to go for it and launch as a publication. Quaint Revolt puts a unique spin on publishing because we respectfully disrupt media in our content and business model. I realized that my audience needed an independent voice centering on their work and lifestyle.

How has your company pivoted since launching?

Initially, we pivoted to primarily focusing on print development and wholesaling products. We realized that we were moving too fast, and our audience wanted to connect more with us as a brand. Now we find ourselves going back to developing our digital magazine-shop concept first, then incorporate print as a product line later on.

What advice can you offer to other entrepreneurs?

My advice to other entrepreneurs would be to do it with vigor or not at all. There have been many times where I've covered in the face of opportunity. When you are enthusiastic about your endeavor, you'll always find the courage to keep at it.



STUDENTS EXPRESSING LIFE THROUGH FASHION (SELF)



Gynella Ngounou, Founder & CEO

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Launched July 2018 | Seed Stage

PROBLEM

Many individuals can no longer afford traditional fashion design education

SOLUTION

A demanding curriculum structured around principles of design, unbounded creativity and business of fashion, to prepare students for proactive leadership in the dynamic and ultra-competitive global fashion industry

BUSINESS MODEL

We offer three different membership packages

TARGET MARKET

Sewing enthusiasts, price-conscious and highly sensitive to the latest jobs in fashion, luxury and beauty

USE OF FUNDS

40% Marketing, 40% Supplies/Equipment, 10% Legal, 10% New Hires/Training

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

Georgia State plays a major role in my entrepreneurship journey by welcoming Students Expressing Life through Fashion (SELF) with open arms and providing us with an incubator space to host sewing classes and our first business grant. If not for Georgia State catering to student-entrepreneurs and establishing a 24/7 co-working incubator space (LaunchGSU) for us to work in, SELF would not have rose to newer heights as quickly as it did.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Entrepreneurship means filling a necessary void and making certain you are putting the consumers in the forefront. As long as you win your consumers over, your business wins.

Why did you launch your company?

SELF aims to equip the next generation of designers and sewing hobbyists who cannot afford traditional fashion design education. Whether it is through our design and sewing classes, business of fashion classes, internship and employment outlet, a 24-hour membership-only sewing space, mentorship program and a creative community of joy, we quench the thirst of many seeking an affordable, quality program that caters to their specific design needs.

What advice can you offer to other entrepreneurs?

You must have the IQ, EQ and AQ to be a business leader. The IQ is the intellectual ability through which to handle and manage situations. The EQ is the emotional wherewithal – Your range of emotion and how you handle stress and pressure which always arises. The AQ is the adaptability quotient through which you respond to change and lead through setbacks.





10

10 companies
with business traction

STARTUP STAGE COMPANIES



AIRLIFT



Sheehan Khan Founder & CEO

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PROBLEM

Traditional fulfillment companies use legacy systems to solve this problem which results in a horrible customer experience and sub-par service

SOLUTION

A service that allows online sellers store and ship their inventory

BUSINESS MODEL

Charges on a per package shipped basis

TARGET MARKET

Small businesses doing less than \$1 million in revenue and shipping products themselves

KEY COMPETITORS

Traditional third party fulfillment providers, fulfillment networks like Amazon and Shopify, and tech enabled fulfillment such as Shipbob and Deliverr

USE OF FUNDS

70% Product Development, 15% Marketing/Sales, 15% Operations

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

As a computer science major, I studied highly efficient systems and algorithms in technology that allow you to apply them into real-world scenarios and processes.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Everyone has ideas. An entrepreneur is someone who builds it into a real business incredibly quickly.

What inspired the idea behind your company?

Previously, I ran a small e-commerce business. The biggest issues I faced were inventory storage, shipping and multi-channel fulfillment. I spent most of my time packaging orders and couldn't grow the business. That's why I am building a startup to help something as frustrating as logistics, shipping and fulfillment be as simple as possible.

What advice can you offer to entrepreneurs?

Take care of your health. Whether it's physical fitness, sleep, mental health or diet, be sure to pay attention to it. It's easy to let go and not pay attention to it, but someone with great health will always outperform, outlast and overall have greater resiliency.

How has your company pivoted?

Initially, we wanted to build a full-stack startup where we ran every process, including warehousing. Now we are allowing micro-fulfillment providers to earn income on our platform by storing and shipping inventory. Micro-fulfillment providers can be anyone from a brick-and-mortar retail business with extra space, to someone who wants to start a logistics business. This allows us to scale quickly without burning a lot of cash and not try to innovate in a space that is dominated by large traditional warehousing companies.



ANGEL ASSISTANCE



Savannah Samples, Founder & CEO

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PROBLEM

Modern two-parent households or single entrepreneurs are having difficulty keeping up with the daily to-do's in their personal lives

SOLUTION

Provide affordable assistance through an Angel you trust to tackle the daily chore list for you and your family

BUSINESS MODEL

Percentage commission on clients' monthly package for our services

TARGET MARKET

Busy singles or two-parent households (middle/upper class)

KEY COMPETITORS

Book my Bamboo, Care.com

USE OF FUNDS

40% Legal/Security, 30% Client Benefits, 30% Angel Benefits

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

I took an entrepreneurship course my sophomore year that got my brain churning. I worked with a mom, who was a Georgia State graduate herself as well as an entrepreneur, who helped me push this concept along.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Pursuing your calling through finding affordable and creative solutions for our ever growing society.

What inspired the idea behind your company?

I began as a nanny in college then ventured off to personal assistance. I was assisting and nannying about 12 families, seven days a week. Obviously, one human is limited due to time and hands. One of the moms I worked with made a comment about me possibly taking advantage of my word-of-mouth network by starting a business in the assistance field.

What advice can you offer to entrepreneurs?

Don't start a business because of the money. Start or join a business because you are called to be there. You will naturally be lead by faith-driven hard work.

Was there ever a moment you wanted to quit entrepreneurship?

Yes, and more than one. As a business owner, you hit these walls where you just want to toss in the towel. I've slammed into so many "I don't want to do this anymore" walls, and God always finds a way to show me why I do what I do. Money gets low, clients call with complaints, an Angel quits and leaves multiple clients hanging — those are just a few examples. If you're in the field you are called to be in, God will show you 10 bigger yes's to your big no.



ARTZYBELLA



Ashley Daramola, Owner

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Launched January 2017 | Startup Stage

PROBLEM

More than half of U.S. citizens have untreated mental illness and emotional issues

SOLUTION

Empowering people to use art as an easy, gratifying tool for self-care and coping

BUSINESS MODEL

Commissioned art and art instruction services sales

TARGET MARKET

Businesses and individuals who understand how much art can do to stimulate the mind and help improve one's overall mood

KEY COMPETITORS

Minted.com, Kiwi.co, We Craft Box, Home Made Luxe, The Adults and Craft Crate, Art it Out Therapy

USE OF FUNDS

50% Marketing, 30% Overhead, 10% Equipment and Supplies, 10% Legal and Administrative Tasks

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

When I was a student at Georgia State, I changed my major several times. After doing so, I was able to find a major that fit my interests and passion best. The Interdisciplinary Studies Department was still fairly new at that time. I was able to create my own degree program: Arts Administration, which combined concentrations in Studio Art, Theater, Marketing and Business.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Waking up every day with fear that you transform into fuel to strategically identify and solve the world's problems so that you can generate wealth and live freely.

What inspired you to launch your company?

I launched my company after working a 10-year career in mental health. While at my last job, I was able to use art to work with my clients: sex trafficking survivors. In that work, I was reminded how powerful art had been in helping me process my own emotional issues at different points in my life. I realized that I could offer products and services to teach other people the same thing.

What advice can you offer to entrepreneurs?

If you wait for the perfect moment, you'll never start.

Have you always been entrepreneurial?

Entrepreneurship was always my dream. At 17 years old, I wanted to be an artist and run my own business. Somehow 17 years later, I finally decided to bet on myself and make the leap.



BEYOND THE CLASSROOM



Baiyina Jihad, Founder & CEO

B.A. History '15

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Launched January 2018 | Startup Stage

PROBLEM

Reading deficiency among students contributing to decreased college enrollment and graduation rates

SOLUTION

Customized virtual session through digital books

BUSINESS MODEL

Paid programming for organizations and affordable monthly subscription for families

TARGET MARKET

Parents and after school programs who want their elementary-aged children and students to receive additional reading support and enrichment.

KEY COMPETITORS

Kumon and Acheive3000

USE OF FUNDS

30% Marketing, 30% Talent Recruitment, 20% Software, 20% Paid Resources and Licenses

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

My experience at Georgia State played a crucial role in my path toward education and entrepreneurship. By enrolling in courses that were both challenging and engaging, I gained the necessary tools and resources that prepared me to be an effective educator.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Innovating by listening to others.

Have you always been entrepreneurial?

Growing up, my brother and I sold yeast popcorn. We were only allowed to work in the summers, one day a week. Every Friday for two summers we sold our popcorn at the end of prayer service. Our parents helped with certain things but allowed us to be very hands-on. We selected the flavors, bags and prices for the popcorn. This experience taught my brother and I about sales and customer service.

How did you find your team?

My founding team was developed by attending network events and following up with people who are interested in my venture or have some commonalities. Sharing my vision and process with others allowed me to connect with a variety of different people who wanted to help grow the business.

What is the most challenging aspect of entrepreneurship?

The most challenging aspect of entrepreneurship is the transitioning from thinking like an educator to thinking like a founder and CEO. As an educator, I am pouring knowledge into students to support them. As a founder, I am solving challenges and representing the business.

Share a fun fact about yourself.

I am one of six siblings. Half of them are entrepreneurs.



DELIVHER FEMCARE



Chanté Knox, Founder & CEO
Dia Davis, COO

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B.B.A. Economics & Managerial Science '19

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Launched November 2018 | Startup Stage

PROBLEM

The unmet needs in feminine sanitary care

SOLUTION

An absorbent menstrual cup for use by women during their cycle

BUSINESS MODEL

Direct to consumer

TARGET MARKET

Menstruating women ages 18-45 who currently use or have used menstrual cups

KEY COMPETITORS

Flex Fits Company and other reusable cup manufacturers such as Diva Cup, Lunette and Lily Cup. Tampon manufacturers (legacy players) such as P&G, K-C and JnJ are indirect competitors

USE OF FUNDS

100% Manufacturing

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

Georgia State has played a very significant role in nursing my desire to become a successful entrepreneur

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Entrepreneurship gives me an opportunity to blaze my own trail.

What inspired you to launch your company?

As a woman who experiences heavy flow during her menstrual cycle, I found myself having to make frequent trips to the restroom and was simply not satisfied with the available options. One day, a friend introduced me to menstrual cups, and I instantly fell in love with the collection capacity. However, I found removal messy. Even though I hated the mess, I liked the cups more than tampons. I thought to myself, "Cups would be great, but only if they absorbed the mess." From then on I made it my mission to make cups better.

What advice can you offer to other entrepreneurs?

Keep going!

Share a fun fact about yourself.

I've always colored outside the lines.



KEMNU



Viraj Patel, CEO
Vishwa Mudigonda, CTO

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B.B.A. Computer Information Systems '19
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Launched January 2019 | Startup Stage

PROBLEM

Millennials are the most connected in terms of quantity, yet the loneliest in the quality of relationships

SOLUTION

KemNu is the next generation social networking platform that enables people to easily meet new people and expand their social circle over exciting activities

BUSINESS MODEL

Local businesses pay a monthly subscription fee for personalized advertising to attract KemNu users to “hangout” at their businesses

TARGET MARKET

Generation Z and Millennials

KEY COMPETITORS

Meetup, Facebook, Bumble BFF

USE OF FUNDS

60% Development, 40% Marketing

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

Having a computer science and business background truly helped build the mindset to navigate through various challenges. From writing the business plan to coding, we took care of everything. We were exposed to a lot of projects and presentations in our classes at Georgia State, which helped us maintain a proper discipline to continue working on KemNu.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Entrepreneurship is a mindset that enables an entrepreneur to accept harsh criticism, pivot and learn from failure at every step of the way.

What inspired you to launch your company?

We noticed that a lot of our friends and family were distancing themselves as a result of technology. We wanted to create an app that would bring us together over exciting adventures.

How did you meet your business partner?

We met at a party and shared our past failed startups. More importantly, we talked about what we learned from that experience.

What advice can you offer to other entrepreneurs?

Failure is your biggest asset.

How has your company pivoted?

KemNu started out as an idea on a napkin at California Pizza Kitchen. It was merely a concept that would help people socialize more. We didn't want it to be a dating app or a chatting app. After some customer discovery, we pivoted toward a “hangout” app model based on specific categories (camping, hiking, stargazing, etc.). We added more filters and personalized it to the user.



NATURAL LEADERS MEDIA



Daniel Fitch, CEO
Ron Emile, Creative Director

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B.A. Journalism, Psychology '15
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Launched 2010 | Startup Stage

PROBLEM

Businesses are not satisfied with the ROI and visibility from their previous marketing videos

SOLUTION

Offer engaging video marketing packages and content creation in an inexpensive and efficient manner

BUSINESS MODEL

Transactional revenue model

TARGET MARKET

Small to large businesses, entrepreneurs, artists and brands with little or no video presence

KEY COMPETITORS

Trove Studio, The DVI Group,
J + E Creative

USE OF FUNDS

70% Marketing, 20% Equipment,
10% Scaling

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

Georgia State gave me the foundation, connections, eco-system and knowledge to apply in real-world scenarios. The willingness to guide, give feedback and critique the entrepreneurial process from all of my former Georgia State professors and faculty members is priceless. It's a Georgia State thing. It's a family thing – The State Way.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Entrepreneurship is a pathway to generational wealth.

What inspired you to launch your company?

To increase awareness and ROI for entrepreneurs, artists, brands and businesses using cutting-edge, efficient content creation tools to create your narrative. We want to help businesses grow.

Have you participated in other entrepreneurial programs?

We are currently involved in the Russell Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Accelerator.

What advice can you offer to other entrepreneurs?

Patience, consistency, know-how and customer relations are keys to developing a viable business.

How did you find your team to launch your company?

We are currently a two-man operation. I selected my creative director based on his work ethic from previous projects, hiring him as a freelance contractor. Know the ins and outs of the job you are hiring for. This way, your explanation of the position does not get lost in translation when delivering the details of the position. Go with your intuition. Don't hire someone out of desperation.

SOUND COLLIDE*



Robert Hatcher, CEO

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Launched August 2018 | Startup Stage
**Withdrew from the Main Street program prior to completion*

PROBLEM

We're eliminating distance as a barrier that hinders music artists from accessing each other

SOLUTION

Our solution allows music artists to record with each from anywhere in the world in real-time

BUSINESS MODEL

We charge a commission for every transaction sold on our platform

TARGET MARKET

Independent music artists between the ages of 17-35

KEY COMPETITORS

Avid Technologies, Logic, FL Studio

KEY TECHNOLOGIES

Blockchain

USE OF FUNDS

60% Development, 30% Marketing, 10% Legal

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

The Entrepreneurship and Innovation Institute (ENI) at Georgia State is why I wanted to start a tech company. Before joining ENI, my aspirations were to become an owner of a consulting firm. However, after becoming exposed to the program here, I felt prepared to start my own tech company.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

The liberty to provide a service to the world.

What inspired the idea behind your business?

Working with my brother inspired the idea. He works with artists around the United States. I saw a lot of logistical and production issues when it came to working with people remotely.

Have you participated in other entrepreneurial programs?

Yes, I am fortunate enough to be a part of the "It Takes A Village" pre-accelerator at Atlanta Tech Village, as well as The Farm sponsored by Comcast. Both programs really honed my skills in developing a product based on customer demand and not an idea.

What is Atlanta's role in your entrepreneurial journey?

Atlanta is the mecca of music right now, so it provides a great environment for me to grow my business.

What is your long-term goal?

To help every artist to operate efficiently, autonomously and independently.

SWEATPACK



Umama Kibria, Co-Founder & CEO

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Launched January 2019 | Startup Stage

PROBLEM

67% of Americans spend \$26.8 million on unused gym memberships

SOLUTION

Our marketplace matching solution connects people through weekly fitness and sports teams

BUSINESS MODEL

SweatPack members pay per team

TARGET MARKET

The 47 million people that have a gym membership and don't use it

KEY COMPETITORS

ClassPass, Free Play, Open Sports

USE OF FUNDS

100% Technology Development

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

Georgia State was the best investment in my entrepreneurial career. University Services helped connect me with the unique paid internship experiences with startups and sales organizations that laid down the groundwork for my work ethic, determination and skills. My upper-level business management classes all offered hands-on experiences with running a business. I made key business partner contacts during these exercises.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Entrepreneurship means the freedom to fulfill our purpose in life and make meaningful impact on others.

Why inspired you to launch your company?

The best way to get results with fitness, relationships or work is through community. The feeling of belonging and accountability has been a key driver for my life through my sorority, clubs, sports leagues, founder's life and fitness journey. I had the idea for SweatPack in 2017 after I worked out at 200+ gyms, played recreational sports for 10 years and connected with more than 100,000 people on social media. I knew there had to be a way of bringing the concept of joining a sports team into group fitness classes.

Share a fun fact about yourself.

I've worked out at 430 gyms across the world, connected with over 100,000 globally on social media and have hosted events with over 3,000 guests nationally. I was honored for my passion as Forbes 30 Under 30 and Atlanta Magazine's Fitness Influencer of the Year

What advice can you offer to entrepreneurs?

Take yourself out on a personal date once a week as a reminder of your purpose and strength.



SWEATPACK

TOTEM AGENCY CO.



Ashley Richardson, Co-Founder & CEO
Kate Shaub, Co-Founder & CTO

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Rutgers University, Health Administration '17
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Launched December 2017 | Startup Stage

PROBLEM

A lack of accessible design tools and information that allows users to effectively design themselves without years of training or expensive, complex software

SOLUTION

We are building a platform that helps small businesses create and manage their marketing content easier

BUSINESS MODEL

Ad-based for the basic version of our software and subscription revenue for our premium version

TARGET MARKET

Millennial business owners located in big cities that are minimally tech-savvy

KEY COMPETITORS

Adobe, Canva, Wix, Looka

USE OF FUNDS

50% Development, 30% User Acquisition, 20% Marketing

How has Georgia State supported you as an entrepreneur?

The education I received through Georgia State's Entrepreneurship and Innovation Institute (ENI) allowed me to practice and experience what it was like to be an entrepreneur before fully taking the risk myself. Hearing the experiences of successful entrepreneurs and the challenges they encountered gave me confidence in avoiding common mistakes.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you?

Entrepreneurship means the fearless persistence and guts to believe in and execute on your idea, even when the path is not clear.

How did you meet your co-founder?

We connected through a job site. After working closely together for the first couple of months, we recognized we had remarkable similarities shared by one another. We share similar passions and skillsets and are both committed to building our company full-time. We've grown as individuals and as a company, continually improving our product and our vision.

Was there ever a moment you wanted to quit entrepreneurship?

Yes. Plenty of moments. I went straight into entrepreneurship after I graduated without considering it takes most companies 2-3 years to break even. I kept my side job for six months, then quit to move the company forward faster. I had hefty savings, which the company blew through. I thought we were going to see profitability after the first year, but instead, we ended up pivoting. I say this to say entrepreneurship is very unpredictable. If you are a person with bills, unpredictability isn't your friend. It is important to remember that these are just moments, and moments don't define your entire future. That's what has inspired me to keep going.

TOTEM

CORE TEAM

The Main Street Entrepreneurs Seed Fund Core Team is made up of faculty and staff from the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Institute.



Lyshandra Bennett
Business Manager



Jackie Davis
Associate Director



Dawyn Dumas
Project Coordinator



Musaddeq Khan (MK)
Entrepreneur in Residence



Jamine Moton
Entrepreneur in Residence



Jennifer Sherer
Director

Entrepreneurship & Innovation INSTITUTE

The Entrepreneurship and Innovation Institute (ENI) provides experiential learning to those passionate about creating their own businesses, working for a startup or bringing entrepreneurial skills to an existing organization.

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#StateStarts