Whether it is “Startup Weekend” or “Maker Week”, student inventors and entrepreneurs in Michigan are developing business start-ups at a rapid rate. At the University of Michigan, Startup Weekend by Google for Entrepreneurs, managed by the U-M student organization, MPowered, launched an amazing “startup-athon” of innovation and creation. U-M students, researchers, and entrepreneurs are collaborating to develop community focused, real-world solutions that are leading to game-changing economic opportunities in Michigan and beyond.

Lawrence Molnar will discuss the projects, initiatives and incubation studies that U-M conducts to support entrepreneurship, new venture innovation, technology transfer and commercialization. He will also detail the programs that support entrepreneurship for students in K-12 systems, undergraduate and graduate university programs.

Nancy Benovich Gilby will discuss the University of Michigan School of Information Entrepreneurship Program that is helping students to develop an entrepreneurial mindset with solutions to establishing their own businesses and work opportunities.

Jeff Smith, of the Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) and Tom Donaldson, Michigan Small Business Development Center will share the adventure of a Startup Weekend: Maker Edition: seven days of events at venues across the Lansing region, in 2014. The students shared ideas, formed teams, designed products, built prototypes and launched businesses—all in 54 hours. This convergence of technology and creativity happened at LCC’s West Campus tech center as students accessed its electronics labs, CAD systems, 3D printers, metal and woodworking tools.

The University of Michigan and Lansing LEAP have partnered in efforts involving business incubation, the First Customer Program for discovering new customer base, and LCC students have modeled TechArb programs at U-M.

Please join us for this enlightening and dynamic presentation as our panel of speakers share the many ways in which students are creating innovation and collaborating on entrepreneurial and economically enriching ventures!

More About the Speakers

Lawrence A. Molnar is the Associate Director of the University of Michigan Institute for Research on Labor, Employment, and the Economy, (IRLEE), President of the Educational Association of University Centers, and President of the Michigan Business Incubator Association. He has a B.A. in Journalism and an M.A. in Telecommunication/Management from Michigan State University, and a doctorate from the University of Michigan, School of Information. During his 27 years at the University of Michigan, Molnar has been involved in numerous economic development activities, including his leadership of the EDA-funded Community Economic Adjustment Program working with communities in the upper Midwest. He led an EDA-funded research study of the Business Incubation Industry in the United States that correlated incubator best practices with the success of companies after they leave the incubator.

Nancy Benovich Gilby is the school’s first Ehrenberg Director of Entrepreneurship. In this position, she is developing the school’s entrepreneurial curriculum for the new Bachelor of Science in Information program. In addition to coordinating entrepreneurial partnerships with other departments and schools at the university, she will be expanding the school’s participation in events such as national competitions, startup treks, networking opportunities and client engagement. Nancy received both her BSE and MSE in computer engineering from the University of Michigan. In 2007 she received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the department of Computer Science and Engineering. She has been involved in major roles in information technology companies since 1987, including Apollo Computer, Firefly Network, Component Software, Wildfire, ON Technology, Asurion Mobile Applications Division, A2O Mobile, and several others.

Jeff Smith is Director of the New Economy Division of the Lansing Economic Area Partnership (Leap, Inc.). The division’s mission is to create and support the culture of entrepreneurship and innovation in the Lansing Region, thru Business Incubation, Acceleration, Programs and Events. Jeff has been involved in the launch of the East Lansing Technology Innovation Center, The Hatch, Lansing Startup Weekend, Runway Lansing, Ignite Lansing, The Hatching, The DirtyFeat Adventure Race, Launched, and Pointillism. He has co-founded startups and non-profits, and continues to develop new programs and events to help the Lansing Region become a hub for entrepreneurs. Smith has served as a board member on the Entrepreneur Institute of Mid-Michigan, the Downtown Lansing YMCA, Prima Civitas Foundation, and the Capitol Collective. He received the Lansing “10 Over the Next Ten” award and has served as instructor for Michigan State University and Baker College.

Tom Donaldson is Regional Director for the Michigan Small Business Development Center at Lansing Community College. Prior to his role as Regional Director, he served as Senior Business Consultant for SBDC. As a business owner or executive for 20-plus years at companies in Michigan, Florida, and Arizona, Tom is a seasoned business pro with broad knowledge of all aspects of small business management including marketing, operations, finance, and strategic planning.
Please join us for the following 2015 University of Michigan Wolverine Caucus Forums

Forums will be held at the Christman/MML Building, 208 N. Capitol Avenue, Lansing, MI 48933, or at a location in downtown Lansing, MI

Michigan and the Internet Past, Present and Future
Featured speaker: Professor Douglas Van Houweling and UM School of Information faculty

Wednesday, March 25, 2015
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Christman Building, 1st Floor

Watson Comes to the Classroom
Featured speaker: Dr. David Chesney, UM Lecturer in Computer Science and Engineering

Tuesday, April 28, 2015
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Christman Building, 1st Floor

Let’s Play Ball!
Featured speaker: Carol S. Hutchins, Head Softball Coach of the University of Michigan

Wednesday, September 23, 2015
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Christman Building, 1st Floor

Preserving Our Great Lakes
Featured speaker: John Callewaert, Ph.D., Integrated Assessment Center Director, UM Graham Sustainability Institute; Nicole Berg, Planet Blue Ambassador (PBA) Program Coordinator, at the UM Graham Sustainability Institute

Tuesday, October 20, 2015
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Christman Building, 1st Floor

More About the Wolverine Caucus

University of Michigan Alumni and friends who work in and around the State Capitol are welcome to participate in the Wolverine Caucus. Our mission is to provide diverse forums at which University of Michigan friends can meet one another, enjoy fellowship, exchange views, and learn from the world-class talents of the University of Michigan.

To receive announcements of upcoming programs, call the UM Lansing Service Center at (517) 372-7801 or email veronicj@umich.edu or amccullu@umich.edu and ask us to add your name or the names of associates.

Follow us on Social Networks!

UM Lansing Service Center: http://www.govrel.umich.edu/caucus.html
Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/pages/Wolverine-Causc/157511511865
Twitter: https://twitter.com/UMLansing