Demystifying Start-Ups & Social Enterprise Panel 1/24/15, 1:30PM, MacMillan 117

Alan Harlam - Brown University Swearer Center, Director of Social Entrepreneurship
Alan is the Director of Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship at Brown’s Swearer Center for Public Service. Through this role, he has developed programs to support students who are learning about social innovation, launching their own ventures, and crafting lives and careers that fulfill Brown’s mission to “serve the community, the nation, and the world.” Harlam founded Brown’s Social Innovation Initiative (SII) along with a group of visionary students in 2007, which now reaches hundreds of students and alumni each year. He developed a course on social entrepreneurship that introduces students to the transformative impact that social entrepreneurs have in society, as well as the Social Innovation Fellowship, which has supported more than 120 students with the funding, skill development, mentoring and peer community to build a social venture. Harlam spearheaded the application and acceptance of Brown University as an Ashoka U Changemaker Campus. He has also served as a key designer of campus-wide initiatives at Brown such as TRI-Lab, a social innovation platform for teaching, research, and impact that brings students, faculty, and community leaders together to study a critical social issue and develop new solutions; and the Program in Engaged Scholarship, which recognizes students who design their studies to fully integrate their learning inside and outside their classroom.

Harlam’s work as a social entrepreneur is informed by 20 years as a consultant, turnaround manager, and community volunteer. Before coming to Brown, he consulted to Amos House to launch More Than A Meal, a catering micro-business that provides employment training and opportunity to individuals rebuilding their lives as they return to their community after being incarcerated or sustain their recovery from addiction and other difficulties. Harlam currently serves on the boards of City Year Rhode Island and Social Enterprise Greenhouse.

Tim Dingman 2011, 2012M – Castle, Co-Founder & COO
Tim is the Co-Founder & COO at Castle, the world’s first scalable property management company. Hailing from Sudbury, Massachusetts, Tim studied Engineering Physics) and Electrical Engineering (Masters) at Brown. During his time on College Hill, Tim was on the Steering Committee of emPOWER and the Planning Committee for A Better World by Design 2010 + 2011, spending the rest of his free time on ultimate Frisbee.

After Brown, Tim joined Venture For America, a two-year program that places top college graduates at startups in redeveloping cities across the nation. Through VFA, Tim moved to Detroit and worked for a wind power startup called Accio Energy. In 2013, Tim and three other VFA Fellows founded Rebirth Realty, an initiative to restore an abandoned house in Detroit. They bought their house for $8,200 and have spent the last year rehabbing it. In 2014, two of those Fellows joined Tim in founding Castle.

Campus Affiliation: Transfer Student

Nabeel Gillani 2012 – Coursolve, Co-founder
Nabeel graduated from Brown (ScB applied mathematics and computer science) in 2012. At Brown, he co-founded Learning Exchange, an afterschool STEM program to help middle schoolers engage in creative problem solving. After two summers as a Program Manager at Microsoft, Nabeel was given a Rhodes scholarship to unite his interests in education and software development, completing a Master’s in Education and Technology at the University of Oxford. His research in Machine Learning and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) was supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and used computational methods to explore how learners interact and communicate in online courses. While at Oxford, he helped launch Coursolve (http://coursolve.org), an online platform that connects learners and organizations around the world through digital internships.
Sidney Kushner 2013 – CCChampions, Executive Director & Founder
Sidney is the founder of CCChampions. He graduated from Brown in 2013, and when he was a sophomore, met a young cancer patient named Andy who changed his life forever. Andy LOVES baseball. Any time you mention baseball to Andy, there would be such magic in his eyes. You could tell in that moment, he totally forgot about cancer - and was just a kid again. Andy was the inspiration to start CCChampions. The organization helps kids with cancer, through 6-month-long friendships with the most inspirational people in the community - athletes, artists, policemen, (and everyone in between)! Since 2011, CCChampions has helped 150 kids, been featured in the Harvard Business Review and Forbes, named a Top 100 student entrepreneur in the country by Stanford, and honored as a Hero Among Us by the Boston Celtics.

Matthew Paul 2009 - Electrolites Footwear, CEO
Matthew is an entrepreneur in the retail sector. Co-founding both Electrolites Footwear and Mooda Vending, He has been working in startups since 2008. Matthew graduated from Brown in 2009 and earned a J.D. from Fordham University in 2013. Matthew lives in Brooklyn, New York.

Andy Posner 2009M, Capital Good Fund, Founder & Executive Director
Andy founded Capital Good Fund while getting his Master of Arts in Environmental Studies at Brown University, where he was studying financing mechanisms for clean energy. After reading Banker to the Poor by Dr. Muhammad Yunus, the 'Father of Microfinance' and Founder of Grameen Bank, he quickly realized that equitable financial services could unlock the potential of the poor just as they could do the same for clean energy technologies. At the same time, as the financial crisis of 2008 began to unravel the economy and devastate low-income communities, Andy decided to take action. He created Capital Good Fund with an eye toward using financial services to tackle endemic poverty, first in Rhode Island, and then nationwide.

Andy is a co-founder of Lend for America and a member of its advisory committee. He has published his ideas in the Huffington Post, Treehugger.com and the Stanford Social Innovation Review, to name a few examples. He was also selected as a 2013 American Express Emerging Innovator (one of 45 globally). When pressed to describe himself, he'll say that he is a pragmatic idealist who believes that creative business models, advanced data analytics, and a mix of market and mission-centered forces can lead to dramatic social change. When not at work, Andy likes to blog, write poetry, read and bike ride; in fact, in 2005 rode his bicycle 3,800 miles across the United States.