



Commitment to Community Engagement

ALFRED LERNER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

Bruce Weber, Dean

Community Engagement & Opportunity, Inc.

Outreach to the business community is an integral element of the University of Delaware's Alfred Lerner College of Business and Economics. UD started business instruction 100 years ago, in 1917, to meet the needs of the Delaware business community. The Lerner College continues

to honor these roots by engaging with Delaware, national and global communities to create new business knowledge, to help companies implement this knowledge, to expand experiential learning and professional opportunities for our students and to invigorate economic development for broad social benefit.

Community engagement allows Lerner College faculty and students to study how businesses operate in an environment of scarce resources, rapid change, global competition and advancing technology, and to develop imaginative, entrepreneurial solutions for this challenging environment.

We see community engagement as an opportunity for interaction with our business, government and societal partners, making engagement a key part of Lerner's identity statement: "Opportunity, Inc."

Lerner's Community Engagement in Action

Lerner's community engagement takes four principal forms:

- 1. Research in Action** – Lerner scholars conduct research that can change how businesses operate. Our four research centers extend our research to key stakeholders:
 - The Center for Applied Business & Economic Research (CABER)
 - The Center for Economic Education & Entrepreneurship (CEEE)
 - The Institute for Financial Services Analytics (IFSA)
 - Hospitality Associates for Research & Training (HART)

Lerner's research and centers play a central role in our efforts to improve the state of business knowledge and practice and to generate new ideas to drive the region's economy.

Examples of our research in action include:

- IFSA Faculty are working to figure out how to use big data to predict the fraudulent transactions that put inconvenient holds on consumers' credit cards. Working with leaders from Barclay's, Citibank, JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America and Capital One, the researchers aim to use big data to "identify more, decline less and find more fraud."
- Kyle Emich, assistant professor of management, partnered with the United States Military Academy to understand how gender bias keeps women looking up at the glass ceiling. Emich studied how "voice" – when a team member speaks up with a proposed change – impacts who emerges as a team leader. He found that speaking up helped men become candidates for team leadership while it did not help women become candidates. His research helps

organizations understand this dynamic so they can benefit from both male and female team leaders.

- Associate professor of operations management Adam Fleischhacker's research is helping companies use big data to improve their processes and better serve their customers. Through industry collaborations with Fortune 500 companies like Frito Lay, Clorox and General Motors, Fleischhacker focuses on the value information has prior to its collection, the best way to cluster data for actionable insight and how to visualize it to prompt changes in company behavior.
 - Associate professor of management Wendy Smith and assistant professor of management Mandi Bullough of the business administration department are leading the Lerner Women in Business initiative. While women make up 47 percent of the U.S. workforce, and nearly 40 percent of Lerner's undergraduate enrollment, only 32 (6 percent) of the CEOs in the Fortune 500 are women. Through a Registered Student Organization (Lerner Women in Business), educational programs and networking events, Lerner is promoting better gender balance in leadership roles.
- 2. Degrees in Demand** – Lerner refreshes its degrees to match market demand with input from its business advisory boards and based on its faculty's research. If new degrees are needed, Lerner creates them:
- When the Delaware Bankers Association noticed that too few students were entering the wealth management field and too many wealth managers were retiring, it partnered with Lerner to create a new and unique trust management minor for undergraduates. Now a talent pipeline exists for the niche, job-producing wealth management sector in Delaware.
 - Lerner launched the MBA major and concentration in healthcare management, since the healthcare industry is on pace to become the nation's largest job sector. These programs offer opportunities for professionals in healthcare to develop their business and leadership skills in the extremely nuanced and specialized healthcare field, making those with that highly sought-after acumen extremely marketable.
- 3. Entrepreneurial Thinking** – Our students' imaginations launch new products, services and processes to meet market demand and societal need. Both established and start-up companies benefit from our student's new bright ideas.
- Each year, our students compete in the Hen Hatch startup funding competition for new ventures, sponsored by UD's Horn Program in Entrepreneurship. This year, for example, our students dreamed up an app to help people find a purpose for clothing they no longer wear rather than throwing it out and an app to bring a business' digital data to customers when they enter a business' geography. Past projects have included an innovative book reselling solution and vibrating therapeutic apparel for amputees.
 - Design thinking is a familiar word for Lerner MBA students majoring or concentrating in entrepreneurship. Each student is required to take a creativity course, and one option is Design Thinking and Innovation, but it doesn't end there. Design thinking is employed in virtually every entrepreneurship course and in projects with organizations outside of class as well.
- 4. Knowledge Partnerships** – Our knowledge partnerships help organizations leverage our research, our relevant degrees and our students.
- Our JPMorgan Chase Innovation Center serves as a model of knowledge-based partnership. Built as part of the strategic JPMorgan Chase–University of Delaware collaboration established in December 2009, the center creates a vital pipeline of technology talent through UD curriculum, enriching internships and joint research projects to drive innovation.
 - Lerner partners with Christiana Care Health System to develop its future leaders and boost its doctors' business acumen. Each year, Lerner provides Christiana Care with a Certificate in Healthcare Leadership to prepare rising leaders for new roles in the system. Lerner also worked with Christiana Care to create the new CCHS PocketMBA to meet the health system's need for doctors with a deeper understanding of the business and policy side of the healthcare industry.
 - Lerner partners with the Delaware State Judiciary to improve court processes. Lerner faculty and students have helped the states' courts improve case management processes in order to save the state money, free up labor and ultimately make the justice system more agile.

In short, Lerner's community engagement leads to discovery, innovation and economic development. The opportunity for engagement does more than sharpen skills and accelerate careers – it strengthens companies, shapes communities and inspires each of us to reach our full potential.
