

Innovation & Entrepreneurship: Stevens' Legacy, Society's Future The Stevens Indicator, Fall 2017

The University's founding family established a legacy of technological innovation and entrepreneurship that persists in our academic culture many decades later. It inspires our research, it contributes to the stellar outcomes of our graduates, and it undoubtedly distinguishes Stevens as an institution that has had a significant impact on industry and society.

Today, perhaps more than at any time in our history, technological innovation and entrepreneurship are critical to economic growth and competitiveness, and universities play an essential role in advancing these priorities. First, universities produce the highly educated and highly skilled technical talent that is in demand across many industry sectors. In addition, through technology transfer, these universities bring cutting-edge research and new technologies from the laboratory to the marketplace. Where Stevens maintains a competitive advantage, however, is in its distinctive curriculum, which embeds innovation and entrepreneurship as integral elements of its technical education. This differentiator positions Stevens and its graduates to have a transformative and profound impact on the economy—present and future.

Stevens' unique ecosystem of innovation and entrepreneurship has educated generations of graduates over many decades whose small start-ups have grown into multi-national enterprises. Today, students gain experience as early as their freshman year creating a business concept and transforming it into a viable venture in a required course on entrepreneurial thinking. An eight-semester "design spine" further infuses entrepreneurship into design courses throughout the undergraduate experience. Students may choose to hone these skills through a minor in entrepreneurship, and as a result of the required senior design capstone course, many put these skills to the test by filing for patents or launching new businesses.

Stevens provides other tools to promote entrepreneurship as well, including the Stevens Venture Center. Established in 2016 and located just a few blocks from the campus, the SVC provides member companies with experience-based guidance and education by a group of entrepreneurs-in-residence, access to a network of industry leaders, legal and accounting services, as well as office space and a design and prototyping center. Students also learn from successful thought leaders in innovation and entrepreneurship throughout the year in the President's Distinguished Lecture Series, the Thomas H. Scholl Lecture Series for Visiting Entrepreneurs, and the Stevens Venture Center Speaker Series.

Whether they launch a start-up company of their own or begin their corporate career with an entrepreneurial mindset, Stevens graduates enter the workforce with a solid academic foundation and real-world experience in entrepreneurship. And, because economic vitality will depend on technological innovation and entrepreneurship for the foreseeable future, Stevens graduates are an essential national resource. As the University executes on its ambitious strategic plan, increases enrollment, and further strengthens its educational offerings, facilities, and research, our impact will only increase in the coming years.

Per aspera ad astra,

Nariman Farvardin President, Stevens Institute of Technology