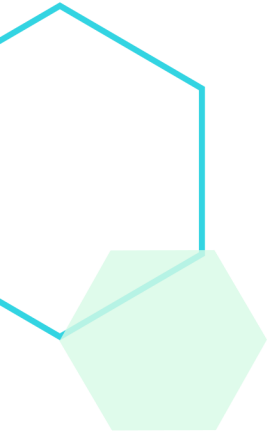
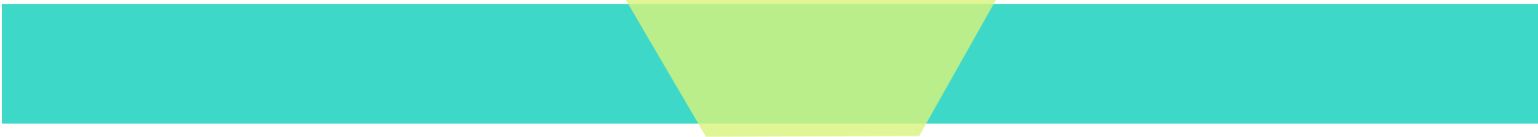




ANNUAL REPORT

JAY HURT HUB FOR INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP AT DAVIDSON COLLEGE

FISCAL YEAR 2023



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A LETTER FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Celebrating Purposeful Serendipity and ‘Prosperity for All’

At the Hurt Hub, we **celebrate purposeful serendipity** as we bring together our campus and community intentionally. I’m sure my English professors are chiding me for the oxymoron, but there is no better way to describe the vibe, the environment, and what happens in our community than purposefully serendipitous. Purposeful as we have built on the original vision from 2018 and evolved it through a global pandemic, with an acute focus on what our community needs first. In living our values of freedom, integrity, and inclusion, we incorporate the tenets of [“human-centered design”](#) into how we approach our own work by beginning first with research and observation to gain a better understanding of our audiences, developing empathy for their life experiences. Serendipitous as we create an inclusive space where everyone feels welcome and you never know whom you’ll meet while sipping Summit Coffee in our Social Commons. Those serendipitous sparks ignite new ideas, new friendships, and new connections as we strive to provide access and exposure to innovation and entrepreneurship for all.

We believe that an innovation mindset, one that focuses first on deeply understanding the humans we intend to serve, listening to their needs and challenges, and then co-creating new ways to solve these challenges, will support anyone in the pursuit of leading lives of leadership and service.

Innovation knows no industry boundaries and arises at the intersection of empathy, technical or topical expertise, and an urgency to create a solution. Entrepreneurship thrives in a culture that believes ideas can come from anyone and provides ample support to take the next step - a culture imbued with a "social awareness that impels to action."

In order to achieve our vision, we offer our audiences skills-based training, high-impact experiential learning opportunities, mentorship, access to startup capital, consulting services, and an inspirational working space. These offerings are aligned to where our constituents are in their innovation and entrepreneurial pursuits, their learning styles, and level of commitment they are willing to make.

In this report, we have shared the incredible stories from Davidson students, faculty, staff, alumni, Hurt Hub coworking members, and entrepreneurs and innovators across Greater Charlotte. They are the heroes in the arena whom we have the pleasure to serve daily as they drive economic mobility and development in our communities.

In the last year, not only have we focused on connections in our Davidson community, but we have also engaged intentionally in the broader Charlotte region.

We recognize the importance of collaboration with other local colleges and universities, entrepreneurial support organizations, local government entities, and economic development organizations. In particular, we were honored to participate in the recent research and strategic planning sessions with the Centralina Regional Council to develop the next [5-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy \(CEDS\)](#).

The focus for 2023-2028 is “Prosperity for All” which aligns squarely with the Hurt Hub’s vision. This strategy is expressed through a Regional Prosperity Framework with goals of:

- 1 Expanding Economic Opportunity
- 2 Building Community Supportive Infrastructure
- 3 Strengthening Regional Resilience and Global Competitiveness, Resilience, Community, and Mobility.

As we plan for the next five years of the Hurt Hub’s mission and vision, we intend to cultivate deeper relationships with organizations in our region focused on entrepreneurship and innovation as pathways for economic growth and mobility. We will continue to embrace our ethos of “having fun doing the impossible” and incorporating experimentation in our daily work. For only as innovators ourselves, can we illustrate to others the power of innovation at work.



OUR VISION, VALUES, AND MISSION

VISION

We facilitate access and exposure to innovation and entrepreneurship for all.



We believe innovation is born out of Freedom, Integrity, and Inclusion.

- Freedom to take risks. Freedom to fail and to succeed.
- Integrity is our expectation.
- Inclusion is the foundation of everything we do.

VALUES

FREEDOM
INTEGRITY
INCLUSION





The Hurt Hub@Davidson convenes innovators and entrepreneurs in the Davidson College community and the Charlotte region to catalyze innovative solutions to critical problems through educational programming, experiential learning in a safe environment, an inclusive coworking space, a robust mentor network, access to startup capital, and innovation consulting.

"To develop humane instincts and disciplined and creative minds for lives of leadership and service in an interconnected and rapidly changing world."

**Davidson
College's
Statement
of Purpose**

THE TEAM

HURT HUB LEADERSHIP TEAM



BETH ADAMS

*Innovation
Project Manager*



LIZ BRIGHAM

*W. Spencer Mitchem '59
Director of Innovation
and Entrepreneurship*



KARA BROWN

*Community
Manager*



AMY GASCON

*Educational
Program Manager*



ZEE HOLMES

*Marketing
Manager*



MARQUIA HUMPHRIES

*Arts & Innovation
Fellow*



WENDY JOHNSON

Facilities Custodian



STEVE KALISKI

*Cornelson Faculty
Innovator in
Residence*



JULIE LEDBETTER

*Conference and
Events Manager*



ERIN MOREAU

*Operations
Manager*



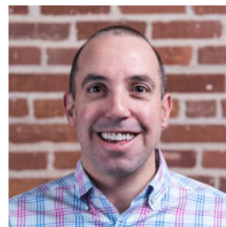
MADELEINE PAGE

*Innovation
Instructional
Designer*



DONNA PETERS

*Alumni Innovator in
Residence*



EVAN ROZANTES

*Innovation Portfolio
Manager*



KEITH VARRIALE

*Program
Coordinator,
Gig - Hub*



KELLY WEAVER

*Program Manager,
Gig - Hub*

*Not pictured: Kevin Cook '09 who supported Student Funding Programs in FY23

STUDENT TEAM MEMBERS

Community & Events Ambassadors:

- Louis Onoratini '23
- Heidi Meyer '23
- Jenny Ruvalcaba '23
- Ben Laumakis '24
- Einstein Nhara '24
- Abby Woodward '24
- Akshan Agarwal '26
- Grace Catan '26

Marketing:

- D'Mycal Foreman '25
- Grace Kuechler (Gardner Webb University '23)
- Ben Patte '26
- Emily Schmitt '23

edX:

- Owen Drometer '23
- Paige Pakenas '26

Student Research Assistants:

- Heidi Meyer '23
- Prithvi Rai '24
- Isabella Acosta Jimenez '24
- Naman Poddar '26



IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

451 Unique In-person Learners*

535 Total In-person Learners*

25 Educational Programs

47 Startups/Small Businesses Supported

** Includes 200 elementary school students whom we engaged through STEAMFest at Woodlawn School.*



GIG-HUB

62

Student Gig-Hub Consultants
(84% from underrepresented populations)

91

Gigs

52

Clients
(71% from underrepresented populations)

2,300+

Gig-Hub Consulting Hours Delivered



MENTORSHIP

65

ventures mentored through LaunchCLT

130

active mentors, including 13 Davidson alumni

30

Davidson student or alumni ventures mentored

Experience across **25+** industries & functions

CONSULTING

- 5 successful consulting engagements working with 3 startups and 2 publicly-traded global companies
- 4 unique business problem solutions provided

INCLUSIVE COWORKING

- 175+ members over 9 membership levels
- 125+ unique businesses represented
- 20 unique Industries / Sectors represented
- 11 Coworking Members who hired Gig-Hub consultants

ACCESS TO STARTUP CAPITAL

- \$95,000+ awarded in grants, equity investments, and prize packages
- 27 students received Try It Fund grants
- 7 students received Avinger Impact Fund grants
- 3 students received Nisbet Venture Fund grants & equity investments
- 3 underrepresented founders in our local community received CATS Pitch grants
- 1 student awarded the Yoder Applied Research Summer Fellowship

DIGITAL LEARNING: DAVIDSONX

- 127,900 self-paced online learners
- Awarded highly-competitive \$100,000 grant to develop 2 new courses
- 3 new courses launched:
 - Building a Lean Startup
 - Applied Storytelling
 - Just Be Yourself: The Art of Acting in the Workplace





EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

Throughout the year, our educational programming made a significant impact by engaging more than 450 individuals through 25 learning initiatives. The breadth of topics ranged from fundamental entrepreneurship principles, to fostering mindfulness and resilience, to delving into the trends of AI and ChatGPT. To accommodate learning styles, instruction came in many forms including classes, workshops, lunch & learns, discussion groups, and project-based learning.

We proudly served not only the Davidson College community but also our Hurt Hub coworkers and individuals from the Lake Norman and Charlotte region through free, low-cost, or scholarship-based programming. Tapping into our esteemed networks, our learners benefited from instruction and guidance from Davidson's alumni, faculty, and staff, as well as from our community partners such as LaunchCLT.

Of note, about 200 of our learners came from our engagement with elementary school students and their families at STEAMFest through the Woodlawn School. While elementary school-aged students are not our primary target audience, it was a great opportunity to deeply engage with our local community.





Students engage with Davidson alumni mentors during the inaugural Hack@Davidson Hackathon

ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMS

As part of our FY23 education strategy, we developed a set of learning outcomes to guide our programming decisions as they relate to supporting entrepreneurs and the entrepreneurially-minded. After completing our programs, learners:

1. Are prepared to critically analyze situations in order to develop viable solutions and screen opportunities.
2. Are able to evaluate and develop the major components of a new business strategy.
3. Understand how to locate resources and community networks to address challenges within a business.
4. Demonstrate effective written and oral presentation skills to persuade and educate on potential or existing venture opportunities.
5. Are able to evaluate the potential ethical impact of business decisions within the context of inclusion, environmental, social, and/or economic conditions.

With these outcomes in mind, we continued to offer foundational learning opportunities such as our Building a Lean Startup Course taught by Rebecca Weeks Watson, a re-introduction of our Raising Equity Capital for Entrepreneurs course taught by Chris Langford, and a re-tooling of our Nisbet Venture Fund spring workshop series.

We experimented with the introduction of new programming including monthly Startup Ethics Roundtable discussions, a Presentations for Impact series taught by Steve Kaliski '07, and a Market Research Fundamentals class taught by Liz Brigham '04. The value of these courses can best be expressed through reflections from our learners:

"I started the class seven weeks ago with an idea I've had and had been thinking about/working on for almost a year and this class completely blew it all up in the most amazing way! I am so grateful that I was able to have this experience. In seven weeks, I learned more than I have in the past year as it relates to startups and building a successful and profitable company. All of the guest speakers were awesome and I especially appreciate that they are people that are in the weeds of their early startups and were able to give some real time advice and guidance to the class. Rebecca is one of one, and if I could I would take the class all over again!"

**- Building a Lean Startup
Community Learner**

"This class was a bit like divine intervention for me. Market validation can feel abstract, and I was struggling to hone my approach. Liz and the Hurt Hub provided a great mix of strategic instruction and tactical preparation that has me feeling ready (and excited!) to go out and tackle customer discovery."

**- Market Research
Fundamentals Learner**



Malavika Kalani & Samuel Waithira

"I wish I took this course at the beginning of my journey as it would have saved me lots of time! Chris was an incredible storyteller and facilitator, clearly sharing his expertise. I would recommend this course to any founder anticipating an equity capital raise."

**- Raising Equity Capital
Community Learner**

We continue to encourage learners to self-select which programs make the most sense for their entrepreneurial journey. However, in order to aid and acknowledge those who want to accomplish all five learning outcomes in a more structured path, we developed the [Applied Entrepreneurship Badge](#) this year for those seeking a digital credential.

PARTNER PROGRAMS

In addition to the programs that we independently developed, we were pleased to partner with 10 student groups, college departments, or community organizations to co-create educational experiences in the name of innovation or entrepreneurship. A few highlights include:

- Supporting the student-led organization, Hack@Davidson, with the launch of an inaugural Hackathon competition at the Hurt Hub. This program yielded 90 initial registrations and a total of 12 teams submitting final projects over the course of a weekend. Two of those teams then went on to compete in the Nisbet Venture Fund.
- Davidson College cross-departmental collaborations including a Makerspace event with the Library, a Mindfulness and Technology series with Davidson's Chaplain of Buddhist programs Ivan Mayerhofer, and a ChatGPT series instructed by Davidson's Technology and Innovation's Matt Jackson.
- Introducing Design Thinking concepts to a young audience at the annual STEAMfest event hosted at Woodlawn school. Over 200 children and family members engaged with our prototyping table.

As we conclude another successful year of educational programming, we take great pride in the accomplishments and positive feedback received from our learners. Their insights demonstrate the transformative impact of our courses and initiatives. We are also delighted to have collaborated with various student groups, college departments, and community organizations, expanding our reach and enriching educational experiences beyond our independent programs. Looking ahead, we remain committed to providing exceptional educational opportunities that continue to inspire and empower individuals, fostering a community of innovative thinkers and doers.

Speed Mentoring for Nisbet Venture Fund Finalists



DIGITAL LEARNING

Maddy Page '20 joined the Digital Learning team full time as the lead Instructional Designer partnering with the project manager to complete course development procedures for edX courses. In this role, Maddy successfully supported the pre-filming and post-production efforts for three new courses. Prior to joining the Hurt Hub team, Maddy served as a Digital Learning Fellow and Student Technology Consultant at Davidson College. The addition of Maddy allows us to more efficiently optimize existing courses and build new courses at an improved pace. We are both excited and fortunate to have Maddy aboard.

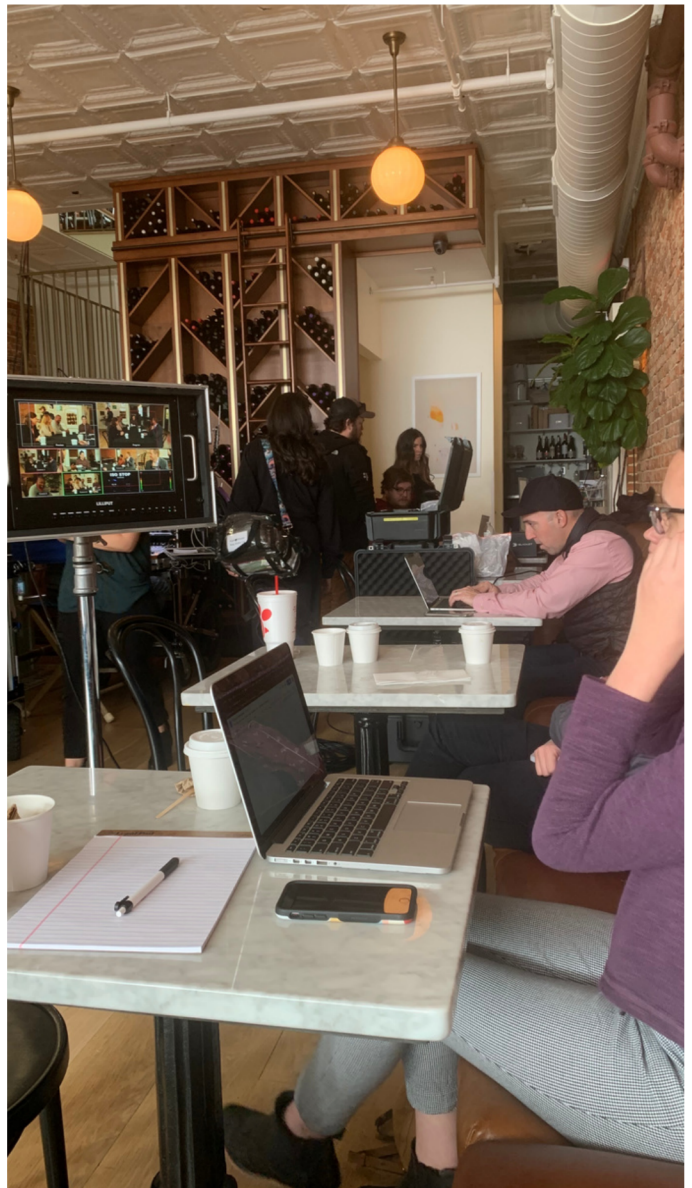
Since the founding of the current Digital Learning team in April 2022, we have engaged with **over 127,900 learners from over 186 countries across the world**, providing access to open education for ALL. Over 90% of learners accessed the courses at no cost.

Our goals for FY23 were:

- Launch 3 new courses to bring previously committed projects to successful completion.
- Optimize the edX portfolio to strengthen assets for the future.
- Engage in conversations and negotiations with potential platform partners to expand our digital offerings beyond edX.
- Partner with the library to assess faculty sentiment on online learning, producing a report for the College's leadership team and gaining insights to support faculty in a post-pandemic environment.

We optimized legacy courses and produced three new courses. Optimization efforts included adjustments to course summary pages to improve search engine optimization (SEO) and making alterations within existing course content to elevate the learners experience. We established a successful new course production process at lower than historical costs, with a focus on innovating our format and learner engagement, and with high consideration for our verified track (paid) learners.

Behind-The-Scenes of edX Filming





Rebecca Weeks Watson & Abi Oloukeye from Jumpstart Into Entrepreneurship

DIGITAL LEARNING

The team employs a scientific approach by conducting experiments to test hypotheses. This year's experiments included an A/B pricing test, creating a social setting on Slack for instructors and students to communicate, and facilitating study buddy groups to foster collaboration among students. Additionally, the team explored various course formats, such as roundtable discussions, one-on-one interviews with subject matter experts, and different variants of final projects, with the aim of building portfolio pieces. These portfolio pieces provide students with opportunities to advance their professional endeavors.

The Digital Learning team embraced a data-driven approach to inform resource allocation decisions. Additionally, we implemented a new course experimentation process to evaluate demand for new courses before incurring production expenses.

Moreover, we are reinvesting in refreshing content and enhancing production quality for the two most successful courses, ensuring a sustained success in the long run.

After conducting thorough due diligence, including numerous virtual and in-person meetings with their respective teams, we have concluded that we do not align with the vision of multiple online platforms. Consequently, we have chosen not to pursue them as partners in our platform diversification strategy. Instead, we have shifted our focus towards exploring the possibility of hosting full or partial courses on a low barrier platform, such as Udemy, in the future.

Of note, Davidson exceeded 300,000 aggregate enrollments in 2023 since inception on edX in 2014.



Donna Peters '89, Cameron Hardesty '07 and Jessica Straus Fuchs '07

NISBET LECTURE

This year we pivoted the format of our annual Nisbet Lecture from a larger auditorium-style lecture to a more intimate dinner and fireside discussion, honoring the students who have deeply engaged with our programming and were finalists for our pitch competitions. The Nisbet Lecture was established in 2014 with generous support from Marian Nisbet and Chip Nisbet '86. Our Alumni Innovator in Residence, Donna Peters '89, interviewed Davidson alumnae entrepreneurs Cameron Hardesty '07, Founder and CEO of Poppy Flowers, and Jessica Straus Fuchs '07, COO of Poppy Flowers in front of about 60 guests including students, faculty, staff, and many Hurt Hub supporters.

Poppy Flowers is an innovative, fast-growing startup focused on making wedding flowers more affordable by disrupting the supply chain, supporting women florists and designers, and providing a delightful, tech-enabled guest experience. Cameron and Jessica, both English majors at Davidson, were on campus immediately after the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank with whom they banked, making the conversation even more relevant for our student entrepreneurs seeing it in the headlines.

They shared an in-depth look at how they work together - they're best friends - how they keep the business growing, and how they have an unwavering commitment to their purpose. Many students in attendance commented that it was one of the best experiences of their Davidson careers as the speakers shared honest reflections of what it means to be "in the arena" as an entrepreneur. We are grateful to have cultivated relationships like this with our alumni and look forward to continuing this format in years to come.



HIGH-IMPACT EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING



GIG-HUB PROGRAM

Our [Gig-Hub Program](#) continues to offer Davidson students the opportunity to build their skills through short-term, project-based internships with startups and small businesses around the world. This year, **62 unique Gig-Hub student consultants worked 91 gigs, engaging with 52 clients, totalling over 2,300 hours of work** supporting businesses across many industries.

On average, students worked about 30 hours per gig and engaged in projects such as designing a library of Canva templates for marketing purposes, producing promotional videos for a product launch, and researching growth strategies for new businesses.



Julia Franklin, Chief Learning Officer of Enabled Play, Sarah Todd Hammer '24 and Team

Gig-Hub clients play an integral role in preparing students for the future. Julia Franklin, Chief Learning Officer of Enabled Play, and co-working member, hired student consultant, Sarah Todd Hammer '24, to collaborate with her company. Julia remarked about Sarah, "She couldn't have been any more of a perfect fit for our team and project. We look forward to working with her again in the future." These ongoing relationships provide value to the client and student as they grow their professional relationship and complete projects.

Sarah Todd noted, "The team at Enabled Play are all fabulous people with a wonderful vision, working to improve accessibility of the digital world for all. I am so thankful the Hurt Hub connected us."



Gig-Hub Consultant, Taw Meh '25

Gig-Hub student consultant, Taw Meh '25, noted, "Working as a Gig-Hub consultant was beneficial. I appreciated how it pushed me to be more communicative and to manage my time more wisely." Taw Meh's comment demonstrates the dual value of the program to refine tangible skills and overall professional development. She also remarked, "The professional working world can be intimidating, but the Hurt Hub@Davidson has been a great help in preparing me well for what's to come!"

As with any growing program, we constantly seek feedback. During the previous academic year we received feedback from clients that while students have web design skills, the skills are not advanced enough for the requested website-building gigs. Recognizing the need to consistently deliver high quality Gig-Hub projects, and meet this client need, we collaborated with Davidson faculty to speak directly with students in their classes. Specifically, we spoke with students enrolled in Critical Web Design (DIG 245), taught by Associate Professor of the Practice, Owen Mundy.

Dr. Mundy's class teaches students to "conceptualize, design, and program responsive websites as both an applied and creative practice. Through a combination of technical topics in interface design and development such as usability, coding in HTML, CSS, Javascript and jQuery." Additionally, Data Science, in relation to data analysis projects, is another area identified for growth. Dr. Laurie Heyer, Associate Dean for Data and Computing and Kimbrough Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science, teaches Data Science and Society and invited us to speak directly to her students.

As the former Faculty Director at the Hurt Hub, Dr. Heyer is familiar with the Gig-Hub program and skill sets students need to be proficient. Dr. Heyer knows students in her class are honing the skills clients seek through Gig-Hub. Outreach to these classes, as well as others taught by members of the Hurt Hub Advisory Council and Data CATS faculty advisors, resulted in new Gig-Hub student applications and overall interest in

the program as reflected by more students attending Gig-Hub 101 sessions and applying for gigs.

Over the past year, we continued to develop programs to meet the goal of providing access to all. Since launching the Tech Impact Fund in March 2021, through generous support from Whitney A. White, Davidson Belk Scholar '08 and founder of Afara Global & creator of Take Back Your Time, we have offered women and minority-owned businesses almost 2,000 hours of pro bono Gig-Hub consultant time. These hours have been distributed across 39 clients and 45 student Gig-Hub consultants.



One client who received funding through Tech Impact was Dee Iraca, founder of Eat Well Chef. Dee shared, "Having an intern who's much more savvy about social media and marketing has helped my business and me tremendously. Natalie helped me rebrand and created a new logo, she created several marketing flyers for me to publicize my cooking classes, and she revamped my website. I am so grateful!"

Natalie Leonard '23, Eat Well Chef's Gig-Hub student consultant, remarked, "I was able to explore my interest in graphic design and added this experience to my portfolio. I'm so thankful...because it allowed me to explore a new career path which I am currently pursuing." After graduating, Natalie started a new career as an Integrated Marketing intern at Lippe Taylor, a PR & Marketing Agency, in New York City.

Jalyssa Hobbs '25 presenting at NEXT Level Gig-a-bration



Building on past partnership success, the Hurt Hub teamed up with the Matthews Center for Career Development to implement the NEXT (Network Engage eXplore Together) Level program for first-generation sophomore students. The collaboration began Spring of 2023, with the first cohort of 12 students and 11 client partners.

Students were matched with a company or entrepreneur in the Davidson area that provided a paid short-term project through the Gig-Hub program. Over eight weeks, working five hours a week, students completed their projects. NEXT Level students met with their client once a week to discuss progress on the project and engage in a mentoring session. The inaugural session of the NEXT Level program was funded through the NC IDEA Ecosystem grant and Tech Impact fund.



Bob Catherman and Hurt Hub Gig-Hub Consultants

Client partner, Bob Catherman of GeoTours, commented, “The students I worked with on our walking audio tour project contributed well-researched narratives and approached the study topics from unique points of view. In addition, they offered suggestions for use of up-to-date technology applications that I, as their mentor, was not familiar with. The end result was that both the students and I learned new skills, used new tools and expanded each other’s perspective and understanding of the world we live in daily.” Jazlyn Mook ‘25 was one of two students who worked on the audio tour project and noted, “My involvement with the Hurt Hub has increased my professional confidence and perception of myself as a qualified asset. As a first-generation student that did not always have grand expectations for my life path, my experience as a Gig-Hub consultant and NEXT level mentee taught me that I am not only capable of working alongside entrepreneurs, but can actually become an integral part of their team.” The Davidson audio tour has been recognized by the Town of Davidson and is available to the public.

In addition to project based work, students participated in experiential learning sessions. Sessions were conducted by campus partners including Academic Access & Disability services to discuss time management techniques and Steve Kaliski ‘07, Visiting Assistant Professor of Theatre and Writing and Hurt Hub Cornelson Faculty Innovator in Residence, to showcase presentation skills and tools to utilize when speaking to an audience. Toffy Chen ‘25, remarked, “I appreciated that there is an opportunity for first-gen students to learn about business and have a mentor. I love the lectures we had; I felt loved and cared for.”

During the 2023 - 2024 academic year, the NEXT Level program will be conducted during the fall and spring semesters thanks to generous support from Charlie Hinnant ‘72, Wells Fargo Community Fund, and the Tech Impact Fund.

IN THE CLASSROOM:

INDUSTRIAL-ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY PRACTICUM (PSY 291)



Dr. John Kello and Liz Brigham '04 with their students

In Fall 2022, we partnered with Davidson alumni Tim Frizzell '04, Vice President, Human Resources - Northeast Division, and Sheila Núñez '19, Organizational Development Specialist at Vulcan Materials Company, a recognized leader in the aggregates industry, and Professor of Psychology Emeritus John Kello to offer four Davidson Psychology majors the opportunity to serve as strategic consultants through the Psychology Practicum (291). Sophia DeMayo '23, Claire Pearce '23, Shelby Stanley '23, and Sam Uwoghiren '23 conducted qualitative research, interviewing over 40 employees at various quarry locations to analyze the employee onboarding process.

The students analyzed the data and made strategic recommendations for onboarding workflow efficiencies, documentation, and data collection to support continuous process improvement. At the conclusion of the class, these students presented their research and recommendations to a team of senior HR leaders in the Southeast Division.

These leaders praised the students' ability to deeply understand the organization's needs in a short period of time and how actionable their recommendations were.

"The student team gained real-world exposure to workforce challenges that translate across many industries. Our team was impressed by their professionalism, analytical thinking, problem solving, and relationship-building skills, all of which helped them formulate relevant and actionable suggestions in a short project timeframe."



Sheila Núñez '19,
Organizational
Development Specialist
@Vulcan Materials
Company

In Spring 2023, we built on the successes from the Fall and partnered with MSC Industrial Supply, whose second headquarters is in Davidson. MSC Industrial Supply, Inc. (MSC) is recognized as a North American leader in the distribution of metalworking, maintenance, repair, and operations (MRO) products and services. They are focused on helping their customers grow their businesses through greater productivity, efficiency, and safety in their operations by offering over 2M products, inventory management and supply chain solutions, and expertise across a variety of industries. With over 80 years in business, they are a public company (NYSE: NSM) with over 6,500 associates and 3,000 suppliers serving customers of all sizes.

Morgan O'Brien '24, Campbell Walker '25, Natalie Leonard '23, and Toffy Chen '25 were tasked with analyzing the current training, onboarding, and mentoring strategies that are implemented as associates move from entry level sales and service positions into field sales.

The team conducted qualitative research, interviewing 38 employees, attending a local sales training with over 60 associates, and completing ride-alongs to experience a day-in-the-life of a sales associate. At the end of the project, the team presented their thematic analysis and recommendations to MSC executives in HR, Sales, and Service roles, under the sponsorship of Beth Bledsoe, SVP, Chief People Officer at MSC.



Beth Bledsoe, SVP, Chief People Officer, MSC

"MSC presented the team with a problem statement that was impacting our talent pipeline but needed additional bandwidth to address. The Davidson team was able to quickly familiarize themselves with our organizational structure and connected with internal leaders to assess current processes. We were pleased to have their external perspective surface opportunities to accelerate internal career paths and reduce attrition. The team handed off their recommendations and MSC is now actioning those improvements. It was truly a collaborative experience with return on investment for both the college and the company."

- **Beth Bledsoe,**
SVP, Chief People Officer, MSC



IN THE CLASSROOM:

"A BIT ABOUT ME" (WRITING 270)

Also in Fall 2022, Visiting Assistant Professor and Inaugural Cornelson Faculty Innovator-in-Residence Steve Kaliski '07 piloted a brand new class on the Davidson curriculum: "A Bit About Me: Writing and Speaking about Yourself." The course explored all of the scenarios in which we're called upon to tell stories about ourselves, from job interviews to website copy to grant-writing.

Experiential vs. theoretical in nature while also blending acting, presenting, and writing, the course seemed a natural fit for the innovative programming at the Hurt Hub. Steve also wanted to ensure that students could apply their learning outcomes to real-life situations, so he partnered everyone in the class with a professionally-aligned mentor from the Hurt Hub's extended network.

Even though the course had never run at Davidson before, it completely filled its 16 slots with students from all years and disciplines. Responses suggested that "A Bit About Me" was one of the most useful classes many had taken at the college.

"I just had an interview for a study abroad program, and I wanted to tell you that this class helped so much with it. I had a couple of (bad) interviews before college and this one went SO much better than those. It sounds so much better to tell stories for the questions instead of just listing back everything from my application. I just wanted to say thank you! Your class has been the first one that I have been able to apply in my real life, and I think Davidson should make everyone take it."



SXSW 2023 Conference - Davidson College Student Participants

TREK TO SXSW

In partnership with The Betty and B. Frank Matthews II '49 Center for Career Development, in March 2023, during Spring Break, we took 10 Davidson College students to the South by Southwest (SXSW) Conference in Austin, TX. This conference had over 10 tracks for students to choose from including health and med tech, advertising and brand experience and startups. What encouraged this Trek was experiential learning. We wanted to give Liberal Arts students an opportunity to learn, experience, and connect with individuals in industries they are interested in, for their future careers that they would otherwise not have access to.

The students completed an application and interview process to be considered for this one-of-a-kind Trek. The 10 students selected varied across majors and class years, from English to Biology, and sophomores to seniors. Not only did the students enjoy this experience, but they got to know fellow colleagues and make new connections.

"There were so many moments at the conference that gave me a new sense of self and vigor. My life was completely shaped by this trip; I still have their words and messages in my head."

- D'Mycal Forman '25

"As one of the younger people at the conference, I'm finding that professionals in fields I'm interested in are eager to answer my questions and give me advice - and it's so much easier to make a connection after hearing someone speak or at a networking event than randomly connecting on LinkedIn or over email."

- Emily Schmitt '23

"I spoke with the founder of PicCollage and director of Forbes and heard their stories while getting advice from them about tech, computer science, their fields, and how to navigate the professional world."

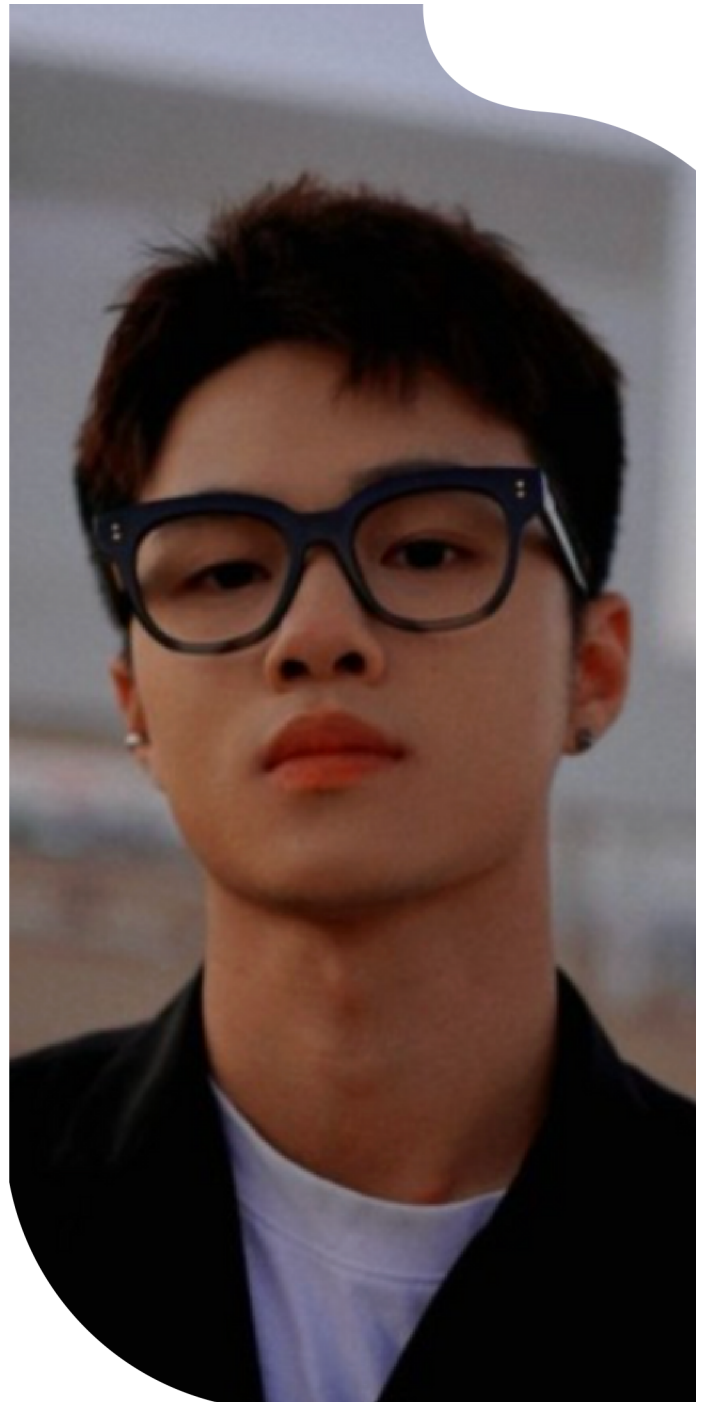
- Isaac Bynum '24

R. CRAIG AND SHEILA YODER APPLIED RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

The R. Craig and Sheila Yoder Applied Research Fellowship supports one student each summer for research with a faculty member and an external mentor. The Yoder fellowship, administered by the Hurt Hub, seeks proposals for projects that have, as a significant component of the application or development of new processes, products or services with potential for commercialization.

In summer 2023, Donald (Xin) Lin '24 proposed a research study focused on "exploring potential vulnerabilities in leading AI chess agents," namely Leela Chess Zero (Lc0) and Stockfish. Donald worked with his faculty mentor, Dr. Raghu Ramanujan, Chair and Associate Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science, and mentor, Phillippe Loher, Director of Machine Learning at Thomas Jefferson University, to conduct a literature review to better understand previous research and then completed over 100,000 simulations to identify and expose the potential weaknesses of these agents.

Donald shared that through this research, "our findings seemed to contradict the conventional understanding of reinforcement learning." Donald and Dr. Ramanujan were so fascinated by the outcomes of their research that they have decided to continue their work together investigating how their learnings can "improve other applications of reinforcement learning," particularly those used in other applications like self-driving cars.



Donald (Xin) Lin '24, Yoder Fellowship recipient

Donald shared that "the experience has been a wonderful blend of knowledge, skill acquisition, and problem-solving," leading him to a great project for his senior year.





ACCESS TO CAPITAL

The Hurt Hub offers Davidson students, young alumni, and local entrepreneurs access to start-up capital through several signature programs:

- **Try It Fund**
(students only) - up to \$1,000 in grant funding
- **Avinger Impact Fund**
(students only) - grant awards of up to \$10,000 each; \$30,000 awarded annually
- **Nisbet Venture Fund**
(students and young alumni up to 5 years past graduation) -
 - Acceleration track - winner receives a \$25,000 equity investment that is managed through Davidson's endowment in partnership with the Hurt Hub
 - Incubation track - winner receives a \$2,500 grant
 - People's Choice award - winner receives a \$5,000 grant
- **CATS Pitch** (local entrepreneurs) - winners receive \$2,500 funding, pro-bono Gig Hub hours, mentoring through LaunchCLT, and a coworking package

The Hurt Hub awarded \$95,500 in startup capital across 30 unique student and non-student ventures. Compared to the previous year, startup funding provided increased about 35% and the number of ventures supported increased by 75%. Much like previous years, the 30 ventures spanned many industries, such as: emerging technologies in AI, app development for summer camps, shoe manufacturing, storytelling platforms for children, podcasts for college students looking for career advice, copyright protection through blockchain application, mental health support, digital marketing, agribusinesses in Africa, and more.



TRY IT FUND

We awarded 27 Try It Fund grants in total - a 170% increase over FY22 - for ideas ranging from agribusinesses in Ghana, AI apps for doctors and medical practices, jewelry creation, music production, photography and visual art companies, and new products for women's health. Five out of the 27 grant recipients also went on to apply for the Avinger Impact Fund, eight were finalists in the Nisbet Venture Fund, and all participated in other educational programming at the Hurt Hub throughout the year.

STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

Spencer Mobley '23



Spencer Mobley '23, Founder of Manatee Clothing Company

"I applied for the Try It Fund with the idea of creating better fitting t-shirts for men. Over time, it became not only a way for men to gain access to better fitting t-shirts, but also a solution to combat the inefficiencies of online shopping. . . . The idea that won Try It Fund funding used long-standing anatomy science to reinvent t-shirt sizing, taking the guesswork out of online shopping and creating the first body positive men's t-shirt.

Six months later, Manatee Clothing Company is a registered business that recently competed for \$25,000 in the Nisbet Venture Fund. The Try It Fund was a key first step on that journey, both in providing funding necessary to begin bringing the idea to life and as validation of the idea itself. The \$1,000 received was used to invest in company supplies, fund customer research, and create a prototype shirt."

STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

Anna Kate Daunt '23 & Katie Stewart '23 Co-Founders of Mystery Schmystery

"On a particularly bleak day during the pandemic, we started brainstorming all of the ways we could have fun once it was safe to do so. One of our more zany ideas was to throw a live action role playing murder mystery party. Once restrictions lifted we committed to this idea and threw a very successful event for our friends. While we initially tried to buy a murder mystery party, we found them to be expensive and not catered towards our group size or age group. In the end we decided we'd have to make one ourselves. After throwing our second successful party, we were reminiscing on this and realized that now we had a similar product in a market that wasn't fully at its potential. Mystery Schmystery was born.

Anna Kate Daunt '23



Katie Stewart '23

With the Try It Fund money we had the motivation and resources to launch a successful Etsy shop. As of writing this we have 16 sales, have garnered \$320 in revenue, and are releasing a third game at the end of the month. So many things would not have been possible without the Try It Fund's support: we would not have advertising money to gain our first few sales, we would not be an LLC, and we would not have a professionally designed logo. It is because of the Try It Fund that we are able to present ourselves as a polished small business rather than just another barely viewed Etsy storefront. Not all of our advertising attempts were successful, but with this money we were able to figure out what worked and what didn't work."

AVINGER IMPACT FUND

Avinger Impact Fund Dinner



The Avinger Impact Fund fuels the vision, qualities, and passions of an innovator, giving evidence of creativity, energy, and initiative that will lead to success in future endeavors. This year, we offered an opportunity in the fall and spring for Davidson College students with new business ideas to apply for grants of up to \$10,000. All students were required to submit an application with a budget and then pitch their company to a panel of judges. Ultimately, the judges selected six student entrepreneur teams to be funded at \$2,500, \$5,000 and \$7,500.

Avinger Impact Fund Winners Included:

- Lily Korir '23
- Christos Koumpotis '23
- Kishan Vyas '24
- Cameron Abernethy '23 & Tahmid Awal '24
- Heidi Meyer '23
- Constantine Desjardins '24



Odysseas Koufos '25, Lily Korir '23 and Chloe Boissy Stauffer '24 captured by D'Mycal Foreman '25

NISBET VENTURE FUND

The Nisbet Venture Fund was established in 2014 through generous support from Marian Nisbet and Chip Nisbet '86 and runs annually each spring. While known for culminating in an exciting pitch competition at the end of April, the Nisbet Venture Fund prepares student and alumni teams through a comprehensive educational and mentorship program as well.

This year our finalists prepared for the competition with cohort instruction facilitated by Rebecca Weeks Watson, mentorship from 19 alumni and community mentors, and a workshop provided by sponsoring legal partner, McIntosh Law Firm.

In total, eleven student teams participated on two tracks. In addition to the two awards determined by our judging panel at the live competition, finalists also prepared a recorded pitch for a week-long audience vote hosted on our website.

The \$5000 winning venture of the audience vote was The Farm, an urban chicken farm in Greece, founded by Odysseas Koufos '25. The Incubation track, which had six teams compete and awarded a \$2,500 grant prize, is designed to encourage idea-stage and new venture teams to participate. The winning venture of the Incubation Track was Modern Myths, a children's product brand, founded by Chloe Boissy Stauffer '24.

The Acceleration Track, which awarded a \$25,000 equity investment, had four finalist teams compete. These ventures were established businesses, having generated over \$5,000 in revenue or capital raised at the time of application.

Lily Korir '23 was named the Nisbet Venture Fund Acceleration Track winner who founded KK Dairy Solutions, a company that revolutionizes small scale dairy farming in Kenya by providing small scale farmers with direct access to quality dairy farming inputs and competitive markets.



Ahriana Edwards, Founder Vaila Shoes

CATS PITCH

CATS (Capital, Advisors, Talent, Space) Pitch, our first community pitch competition for underrepresented founders of for-profit businesses, launched in Fall 2022 and yielded three winners thanks to NC IDEA Foundation support. Founders received startup capital, pro bono Gig-Hub hours, coworking space, and connections with mentors through LaunchCLT to accelerate their entrepreneurial pursuit.

Our 2022 winners include GoghNow (founders Chance Smith & Ajalon Elliott), an app that brings musicians to your private spaces at the tap of a button; Vaila Shoes (founder Ahriana Edwards), an inclusive footwear startup that creates luxurious and stylish shoes for women (sizes 9-14) to wear for the workplace and after-hours; and Young Dragonslayers (founder Katie Lear), an online social club for geek-minded kids and teens that uses creativity and structure to forge meaningful friendships through online gaming.

Award Impact of Each Business and The Community They Serve:

GoghNow has significantly expedited decision-making processes within their business, leading to enhanced efficiency and productivity. They're actively engaged in initiating their pre-seed fundraising round and are boosting brand visibility and awareness across social media platforms thanks to the help of their Gig-Hub student.

Young Dragonslayers has almost doubled revenue and shifted perspective on what the business can offer, both for the kids served and for the founder herself. The enthusiasm from client families and the rapid growth they've experienced has prompted exploration into additional ways to offer more therapeutic content for kids that incorporates "geek" culture.

Vaila

Ahriana Edwards, Founder Vaila Shoes

Thanks to the mentorship network with LaunchCLT, Vaila Shoes has been able to set up systems to successfully recruit talent and develop their company culture. Mentors in Supply Chain and Procurement assisted in boosting their operational structure in order to support scale.

“This award has encouraged me to think bigger when it comes to my business. It was great that we had so much traction, but this program taught me two things: you can get further with community, and your company base must be strong before scaling. Now, I'm always brainstorming how our operations can run smoothly, how our actions affect our company culture, and how we can utilize data to position ourselves to win. These were thoughts and conversations that I wasn't prioritizing prior to the program.”

**- Ahriana Edwards,
Founder Vaila Shoes**





MENTORSHIP



MENTOR NETWORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LAUNCHCLT

In July 2022, LaunchLKN, a local community of mentors, entrepreneurs and community leaders dedicated to sharing knowledge and motivating growth of startups in Greater Charlotte, acquired the Innovate Charlotte Venture Mentor Program, prompting a rebrand of the organization to LaunchCLT. We have continued to deepen our partnership with LaunchCLT through its expansion, hosting mentor meetings every other month at the Hurt Hub, offering space and supporting the launch of the Co.Starters educational programs. LaunchCLT has offered structured mentorship to over 65 ventures with nearly 130 mentors with experience across 25 industries and functional areas. Seven of these ventures are led by either current Davidson students or Davidson alumni.

In 2023, we began collaborating with LaunchCLT to establish the "Mentor Moments" program, a mentor training initiative. By analyzing insights extracted from live mentor meetings, we'll create a library of recurring learning opportunities. These will inform content for the wider mentor group, enhancing their collective knowledge to better serve mentees.

LaunchCLT has officially launched a new venture capital fund, The CLT Fund, to back founders in the Charlotte metro area. The \$7M fund has already made 14 investments locally through a partnership with Creative Co Venture Capital firm.

The fund strategy is to invest 80% of its capital into later-stage companies with at least a \$100M valuation and the other 20% into seed-stage companies. The fund is structured so that more than half of the profits generated (after returning capital to investors) will flow to LaunchCLT to support the local startup ecosystem and form the foundation for the follow-on fund.

A wonderful illustration of our deep partnership has led to the CLT Fund investing in one of the Hurt Hub's original startups, Lucid Bots (formerly Lucid Drone), led by CEO Andrew Asher '19. We are thrilled at this "full-circle" moment, especially given that several of the executive staff at Lucid Bots are also mentors in the LaunchCLT program and for the Nisbet Venture Fund competition.

Exercises in Ideation Workshop



INNOVATOR IN RESIDENCE

In Fall 2022, we welcomed our second Innovator in Residence (IIR), Donna Peters '89. The IIR role is an opportunity for a Davidson alum who is working as an entrepreneur and innovator to grow their venture while employing Davidson students, teaching workshops, engaging with our Hurt Hub co-workers, and/or providing mentorship for the broader Davidson community.

Donna's background as a retired strategy consulting partner and three-time entrepreneur brought both business and career advisory to our Davidson community in differentiating ways. In support of Hurt Hub programming, Donna served as a moderator for two signature events, the Nisbet Lecture and the Nisbet Venture Fund competition. She participated as a mentor-coach for the Nisbet Venture Fund finalists and facilitator of Hurt Hub leadership team planning meetings.

Donna also led career training at the Hurt Hub for Davidson's Women in Business Club, participated in multiple Matthews Center for Career Development programs, and continues to serve on the Davidson Arts and Creative Engagement (DACE) board.

As a former professional actor with a Davidson Theatre minor, Donna worked in partnership with the Hurt Hub Fellow, Marquia Humphries, to deliver a panel for the DACE board on careers in the Arts. Donna supported faculty priorities in the English and Psychology departments and networked extensively with local community entrepreneurs and Davidson alums to raise awareness of the Hurt Hub.



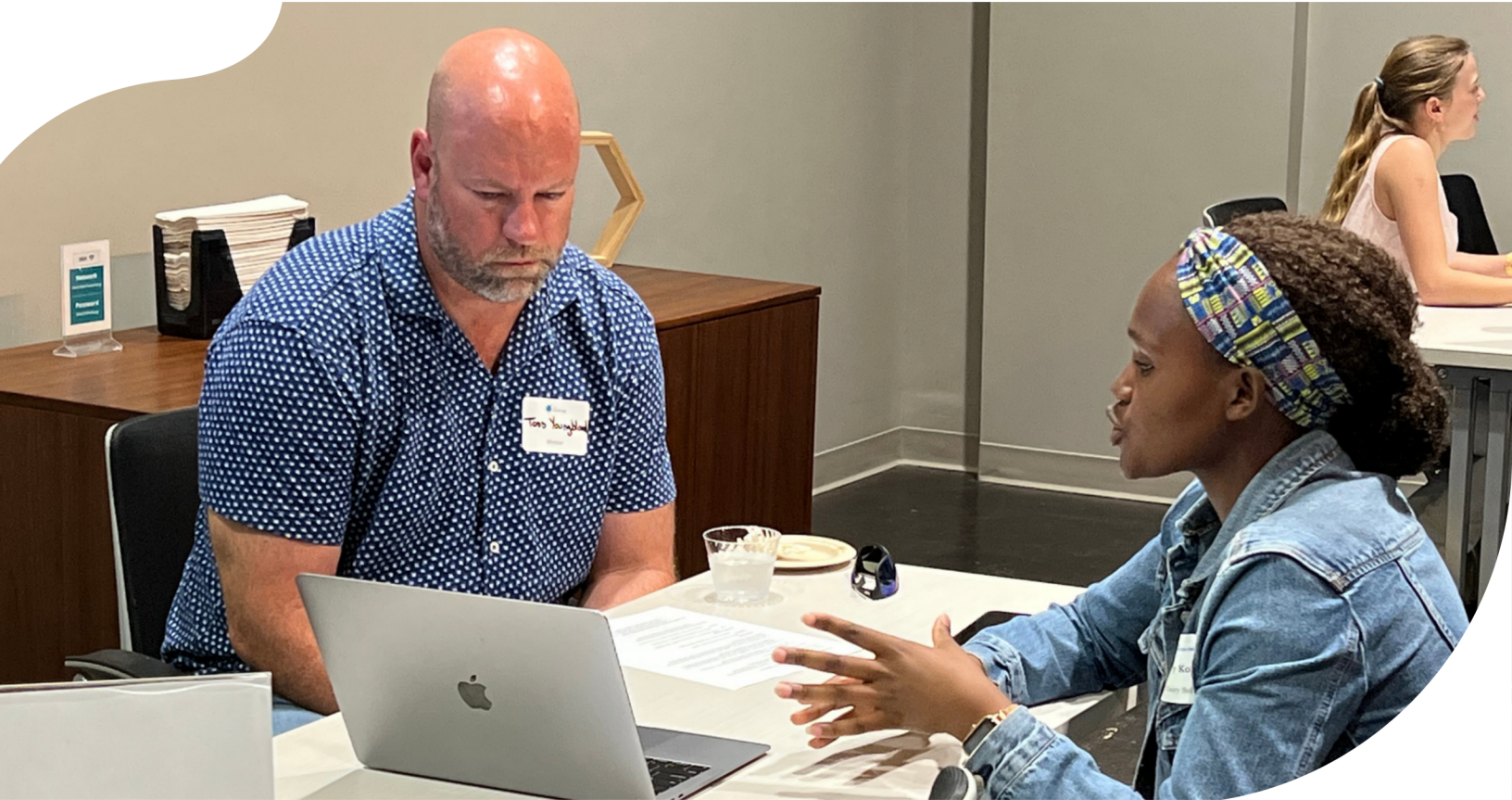
Donna Peters '89 captured by Chris Record in the Hurt Hub@Davidson

She holds "Ask Me Anything" office hours for students and alums seeking business and career coaching.

As the IIR, Donna hired two Davidson students through the Gig-Hub program to work in her latest, four-year-old venture, The Me-Suite. The Me-Suite provides executive and career coaching services with emphasis on authentic, purpose-driven, and inclusive leadership. As a four-time, medal-winning author and internationally ranked podcaster, Donna focused the students on identifying growth opportunities in the crowded coaching market through podcast monetization and keynote speaking.

We are grateful to have Donna, recent recipient of *Career & Leadership Expert of the Year*, giving back to our Davidson community in such a meaningful way. We are thrilled to announce that Donna will continue in a second term as our Innovator in Residence where she will advise on the expansion of Hurt Hub consulting services.

NISBET VENTURE FUND MENTORSHIP



Mentor Todd Youngblood and Nisbet Venture Fund finalist, Lily Korir '23, engage during speed mentoring

A cornerstone of the Nisbet Venture Fund program is a robust mentor and consultant network provided to the finalists throughout the competition season. For 2023, each venture team was assigned 1-2 dedicated mentors, totaling 12 professionals, 6 of whom were Davidson alumni, who were available for weekly check-ins leading up to the final pitch. In addition to this resource, we coordinated a speed mentoring event for the finalists to practice their pitches through a rotation of seven Charlotte or alumni-based entrepreneurs and business executives. Mentorship is a key ingredient to entrepreneurial success.

In the new year, we will continue to focus on recruiting and retaining more diverse mentors and mentees through our partnership with LaunchCLT, through the launch of the Davidson Entrepreneurs Network (D.E.N.), and across our programming as we strive to provide access and exposure to entrepreneurship for all in our community.

DAVIDSON ENTREPRENEURS NETWORK (D.E.N.)

Thomas Athey '24

In April 2023, we launched the Davidson Entrepreneurs Network (D.E.N) through our first “Unconference,” a conference model wherein the attendees determine the session topics. We developed D.E.N. to provide a more formal structure to our Davidson alumni, friends of the College, and local community participating in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, including those in venture capital and private equity, attorneys and other business services professionals who support entrepreneurs and mentors. Previously, we had been making one-to-one connections when a student or community member came to us seeking assistance or connections to further their business ventures. Similarly, we frequently heard from alumni that they wanted more structured ways to engage with our programs and students. We launched the “Unconference” and had about 50 people attend, which was a fantastic turnout for our first event. We received positive feedback and a desire from our attendees to host these types of meetings twice annually.

Our longer-term goal is to collaborate with the Davidson Alumni and Family Engagement office to establish this group as a recognized affinity group and host annual meetups to strengthen the ties amongst these alumni, local residents, current students, faculty, and staff. Our new Funding & Mentorship Programs Manager will oversee the development and expansion of this initiative.





COWORKING

As we emerged from COVID and lifted the mask mandate at the start of FY23, we saw increased attendance and re-engagement by our coworking community in terms of daily usage, conference room rentals, and participation in Hub Club programming and social events. As memberships increased and our waiting lists for both Dedicated Offices and Desks grew, we have evaluated new ways to serve those demands in FY24. Our roster of external clients requesting corporate retreats or event space has continued to increase, contributing nearly 20% of our revenue. Year-over-year, we recorded 19% growth in coworking memberships, increasing from 150 to 175+ coworking members, representing 125 unique companies.





**WE HAVE A FULL ROSTER OF OFFICEHOLDERS
THAT CALL THE HURT HUB HOME:**

Building/Construction/Real Estate

Elite Roof and Solar
Nicole Perri Architecture

Consulting

Aesculus Group
Matthew J Hill Consulting
NISSA Consulting

Environment/Sustainability

The Recycling Partnership

Financial Services

Pacernote Capital

Food/Beverage

Boomerang Water

Hospitality / Travel

Earthshine Lodge

Marketing

Sweet Relish

Technology/Software and Services

Everblue
GatherWare, Inc.
Opticrib
Proctor Free
Purple Dot
Quoin Software
Satelogic

A number of community members also served as speakers across a variety of events and programs, as well as mentors to our Nisbet Venture Fund finalists. Eleven of our coworking members and businesses also hired students through our Gig-Hub program throughout FY23, including:

- **Efficio, Inc**
- **The Molo Group**
- **Reesmarx**
- **Everblue**
- **Jeff Nelson**
- **Elite Roof and Solar**
- **BenCo Productions**
- **Enabled Play**
- **Harbour Grove**
- **YogaFitTribe**
- **Vestal Immigration Law**

As we move into the next fiscal year, our objectives will be to grow our robust and innovative coworking community, while continuing to focus on creating opportunities such as increased access to capital and awards through pitch competitions and grants. As always, we will work diligently at creating exceptional services and experiences for our entire business community.

Our student Community & Event Ambassadors are a vital part of our first impression and ongoing reputation as a professional and engaging workplace, as they are usually the first point of contact for new clients and coworking members.



They are responsible for greeting all guests, maintaining the front lobby and coffee station, preparing various meeting spaces for clients and corporate bookings, and being an ongoing resource to students, faculty, coworking members, and external clients. Additionally, they serve as representatives of the Hurt Hub on campus, tabling at the Union, and sharing our messaging and offerings with their student groups.

In partnership with Davidson College Admissions, we implemented a new campus tour option to allow Prospective Students the opportunity to learn about the Hurt Hub. Adding a supplemental tour option to the traditional campus tours sign-up page, yielded over 160 Prospective Student tour requests in the spring semester alone. Moreover, through a partnership with Davidson Athletics coaches, our team also provided over 25 tours to student-athlete recruits, their families, and existing athletic teams on campus. We anticipate a consistent demand for Hurt Hub tours this summer and into the next academic year.



INNOVATION CONSULTING

In FY 2023, the emerging innovation consulting practice adopted a learn-by-doing approach to establish processes and build expertise, while creating successful case studies for future marketing purposes. We successfully engaged three local companies, providing a range of innovation consulting services. At a pediatric healthcare company, we implemented a project management system and supported the development of a vision and mission statement which they used to solidify their culture and improve talent recruiting. We assisted an aspiring entrepreneur in the career and personal development industry by establishing a methodology to test a go-to-market strategy. Most recently, we aided a local financial planning company in their staff augmentation process, enabling the founding principal to focus on working on the business rather than in it.

These pilot engagements facilitated our integration within the local business community and served as a foundation for expanding the innovation consulting business in the upcoming year. Our goals for next year include:

- Act as a spark for innovation and host multiple events at the Hurt Hub in collaboration with College faculty and staff.
- Successfully project manage the Hurt Hub's engagement with the Town of Davidson focused on supporting small business growth locally.
- Initiate multiple innovation consulting engagements to experiment, learn, and establish a foundation for future growth in a consulting practice.

In addition to the aforementioned initiatives, our innovation consulting engagements encompassed various other endeavors. One notable project involved the creation of an immersive and interactive case study program nicknamed as "Propel." This program provided our team with customized practical simulations that closely mirrored real-life business challenges. By immersing participants in these simulations, we aimed to enhance our collective problem-solving skills and prepare ourselves for current and relevant obstacles.

To leverage the power of artificial intelligence, we integrated Large Language Models into our workflows. This integration allowed us to streamline content development, conduct data analysis more efficiently, and benefit from AI-powered research assistance. By harnessing the capabilities of these models, we sought to optimize our processes and enhance the overall quality of our deliverables. Furthermore, we took a collaborative approach to foster AI innovation. In partnership with the Library and Technology & Innovation (T&I), we founded an AI Community of Practice at Davidson College to serve as a platform for sharing knowledge, exchanging ideas, and promoting collaboration among AI enthusiasts. By establishing this community, we aim to foster a supportive environment that encourages learning, experimentation, and the advancement of AI-related initiatives within the College.

Through our work, we aim to provide value-added solutions, leverage cutting-edge technologies, and foster a culture of collaboration and innovation. By staying at the forefront of industry trends and utilizing emerging technologies, we strive to deliver impactful outcomes and drive positive change.





OPERATIONS



TEAM GROWTH

The last year brought us the opportunity to expand our team to support Gig-Hub by bringing on Keith Varriale, optimizing our edX platform with instructional designer Maddy Page '20, enriching our space through the Arts & Innovation program with our fellow Marquia Humphries '22, and expanding our conferences & events offerings with Julie Ledbetter. We also supported the expansion of our partnership with LaunchCLT (formerly LaunchLKN) for the mentorship program and new Co.Starters entrepreneurial curriculum to supplement the educational offerings we have at the Hurt Hub. The Co.Starters program brought new entrepreneurs into our space and supported Davidson student and alumni startups in their business development journeys.

MARKETING

In fiscal year 2023, we aimed to increase awareness of the Hurt Hub as the place where campus and community come to generate, test, and launch new ideas. We proposed to design, develop, and execute multi-channel marketing plans for all of the core pillars at the Hurt Hub rooted in sharing the success stories of our audiences and especially underrepresented founders that rarely get the spotlight.

The marketing team assessed the data on one of our existing marketing channels, the newsletter, which reaches over 3,300 subscribers, and conducted research on how we can better engage and connect our brand with our audience. We ran the Champion and Challenger test, testing an old layout of the newsletter - the Champion, surrounding mostly events, against the Challenger, with a different layout that began with storytelling and ended with events at the end of the newsletter.





Building a Lean Startup Class

Through this research, we realized that establishing an emotional connection through storytelling has led to more engagement with our audience from our newsletter. The stories we have shared are from the student and community entrepreneurs involved in the Hurt Hub through Gig-Hub (Client and Student), Coworking, Pitch Competitions, and more.

Another major project from FY23 we delivered is our first-ever video commercial, working with Davidson Alum and coworking member Ben Allison '11. This evergreen commercial ad was placed in Davidson's local theater, Our Town Cinemas, in December 2022. The advertisement focuses on the culture we have cultivated in the space for innovators and entrepreneurs and the resources we provide to them. Some of the clips show access to Davidson College students through our Gig-Hub program, coworking and meeting space for their daily professional endeavors, and the daily interaction between coworking members.

The ad played in all of Our Town Cinemas theaters for six months, ending its cycle in May 2023. The commercial can also be found on the Hurt Hub's website and youtube channel.

Moving into FY24, our goal is to continue to increase awareness of the Hurt Hub as the place to start when you are getting started with new ideas and businesses. Our strategy will be deeply focused on telling the stories of those engaged with our programming and their "wins" and "learnings" on their entrepreneurial journeys.





Patio Space at The Hurt Hub

COMMUNITY SERVICES & SPACE ENHANCEMENTS

In FY23, we invested significantly in enriching our physical space and providing value-added services to our local community that support our values of inclusion and offer new opportunities for engagement. For example, we completed a redesign of our patio to include a sunshade and updated furniture extending the usage of our building outside and providing a new space for us to rent for meetings and events. Similarly, based on feedback from a design thinking workshop we hosted during Innovation Week, we converted an underutilized space in the Van Deman Innovation Lab into a new podcasting studio. We are in the process of launching this space and service as another revenue-driving area, meeting the needs of not only our coworkers, but also our local community.

We have also added notary services, monthly office hours with local CPAs and attorneys, and “Ask Me Anything” Hours with nearly all our staff. We believe that investing in these upgrades and services will continue to differentiate us in our local market and attract and retain clients.

Community Workspace at The Hurt Hub



ARTS & INNOVATION



Art Exhibitions Curated by Marquia Humphries '22

We established a new Arts & Innovation fellowship position on our team in collaboration with Davidson Arts and Community Engagement (DACE) to inspire our guests through rotational art shows and educational programming. Over the past year, we have received extremely positive feedback and have welcomed new guests into the space because of this initiative. We believe that a strong connection between creativity and the arts in our space will foster innovation in ways previously not seen.

Moreover, in our quest to provide access and exposure to innovation and entrepreneurship for all, we see bringing more creative entrepreneurs into our community as a way to realize that vision. We intend to secure sustained funding for this fellowship position after our initial two-year pilot.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

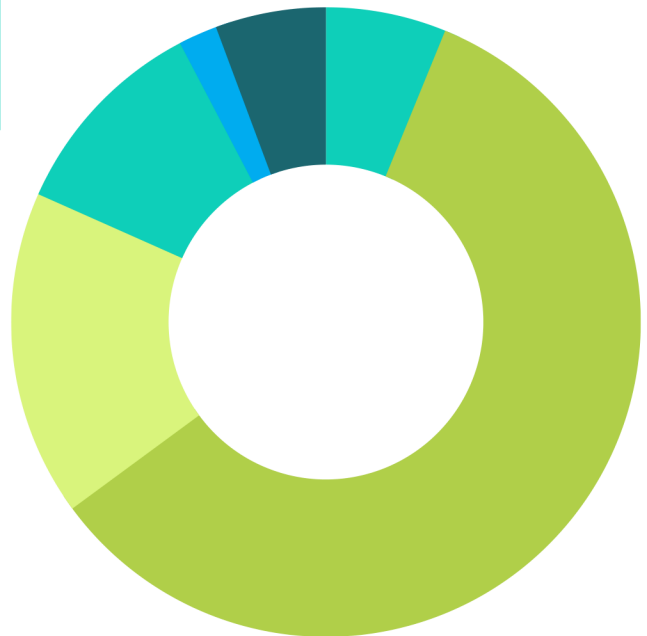
FY 2023 REVENUE



- Philanthropic (gifts, grants)
- Corporate Sponsorships
- Coworking Operations
- Meetings & Events
- Programming

FY 2023 EXPENSES

- Building
- Personnel
- Programming
- Philanthropic (awards & programming)
- Technology
- Operating



MAJOR GIFTS, SPONSORSHIPS, AND GRANTS



The Hurt Hub continues to see incredible philanthropic support from alumni and friends. This year, the Hurt Hub received over \$150,000 in unrestricted operating funding from nearly 60 donors. We also won a \$50,000 grant from the Town of Davidson for a two-year project to support the expansion of workforce development educational programming focusing on skills building, consulting, and subsidized access to talent through our Gig-Hub program for the Town's small businesses and entrepreneurs.

We began our work on the Town of Davidson grant in Spring 2023, completing 16 interviews with small business owners and operators in Davidson. After this qualitative research, we conducted a town-wide survey and received 84 qualified responses. The survey itself was designed to gather essential demographic information while capturing the unique perspectives of two distinct groups:

(1) individuals who expressed an interest in potentially opening a business within two years, and (2) individuals who currently own or operate their businesses. We will continue the development of new solutions to support the growth of local businesses in the Town of Davidson into FY24 and beyond.

We are also grateful for the continued support from other companies and organizations invested in entrepreneurship in our community as a pathway to economic mobility. We received over \$50,000 (including gifts in-kind) in program-specific support from DualBoot Partners, Forest Systems, Goldman Sachs Private Wealth, Jackrabbit Technologies, McIntosh Law Firm, MSC Industrial, NC IDEA, Northwestern Mutual, Trane, Vulcan Materials, and Wells Fargo Community Fund to expand community engagement programs, and facilitate high-impact experiential learning opportunities for students.

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

A huge thank you to our donors, corporate sponsors, and partners, without whom we could not realize our vision of providing access and exposure to entrepreneurship and innovation for all.

Annie Adams '92

Chris Allen '80 and Rob Lukow

Vicky and Peter Andrews '59

Paulette Kurani Ashlin '86 and Bill Ashlin

Jane Avinger

Brittany Narr Barr '09 and Bryant Barr '10

Renee Miller Barr '02 and Christopher Barr

Alaina Beach '04 and Patrick Chaffin

Sarah and Bill Boehmler

Demarest and Si Boney '78

Maurya MacNeil Boyd '87 and Bob Boyd '88

Mary and Vincent Brockman

Frances and Cal Calcote '51

Ann Cornelson

Rosie and Dave Donahower '83

Banu and Paul Elizondo '93

Michelle Ashlin Fagan '18

Jen and Doug Fowler '99

Gretchen Morgan Frizzell '05

Tim Frizzell '04

Laurie Gomer '03

Ed Gorman

Alex Thompson '10 and Matt Guerrieri '11

Bob Guth

Kristina and Jim Hamilton '60

Emily and Mac Hardcastle '89

Spencer Hawkins '23

Schuyler and Charlie Hinnant '72

Pat and Jim Houser Jr. '67

Jay Hurt '88

Remy Jennings '17

Virginia Kaul

Stephanie Morr Kazama '00 and Andy Kazama '00

Brooke Basinger and Andrew Kelleher '14

Beth Corrigan Kelley '04 and Zeb Kelley '04

Nancy and Mike Kota

Maria Corriher Leo '11 and Dane Leo

Andrew Leventhal '03

Jimmy Lewis '88

Karen and Paul Marciano '88

Kristi Mitchem '92 and Thomas Mawhinney

Michael Murphy

Lori and Kenny Nazemetz '90

Dany and Chip Nisbet '86

Marian Nisbet

Sheila Nunez '19

Sara Lyn Goodman Pascal '95 and Bob Pascal '94

Martha and Jim Patterson '89

Annie Porges '86 and Julio Ramirez

Michael Presnell

Caroline Queen '14

Lee Raney '79

Laura Rizzo '04

Steven Rogelberg

Anne and John Rogers '63

Blair and Ivon Rohrer '64

Chris Rollins '11

Kristina and Michael Savona '94

Mac Speed '17

Alex Thompson '10 and Matt Guerrieri '11

Sabra and Dave Thompson '96

Ashley Maner Tonidandel '97 and Scott Tonidandel '96

Danielle Lokaj Tussing '09 and Andrew Tussing

Nancie Fimbel and Ed Van Deman '69

Chris Waller '87

Jane and Bennet Waters '94

Lea Williams '13 and Max Henry '14

Sheila and Craig Yoder '74

Bold denotes life-time giving

STAY CONNECTED

The best way to stay updated and to get involved in the Hurt Hub Community is by following us on social media, subscribing to our newsletter, and coming in person to take a tour!

Social Media



@HurtHubDavidson

Website

<https://hurthub.davidson.edu/>

Newsletter

<https://hurthub.davidson.edu/#news-letter>

A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2022-2023 SPONSORS





NISBET VENTURE FUND 1001
Date 4/19/23
Pay to the Order Of Modern Myths \$ 2,500.⁰⁰
Twenty-five hundred 00/100 Dollars
For _____
Davidson College
Authorized Signature

⑆ 234 56 78 ⑆ 00 ⑆ 234 56 78 9⑆ ⑆ 00 ⑆

