



2021-2022

ANNUAL REPORT

UF | Innovation Academy
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



Celebrating 10 years of UF Innovation Academy (IA) this past year was exciting and an opportunity for us to reflect on all the fantastic work the faculty, staff, and students have accomplished while continuing to lean into the future. In the early years of IA, we grew with each incoming cohort of students until we reached 1,100+ students. This growth brought more faculty, staff, offices, and the building of an active learning classroom, “The McGrogan Active Learning Center,” with a generous donation from UF alum and serial entrepreneur, Sue McGrogan. Additionally, we developed more co-curricular offerings such as our speaker series, Ignite program, local fall internship and study abroad programs, and IA graduation medallion. We enhanced the curriculum with updates that included 3D printing, laser cutting, and Arduino micro-controllers, and we added an artificial intelligence track for the Innovation minor. As we look ahead to the next 10 years, we look forward to developing more innovation leaders, ensuring our students’ success, expanding our community partnerships, growing our resources, and engaging our growing alumni.

This past year, we continued to deliver another exciting year of our innovative curriculum and co-curricular experiences for our students. We started this year with a new partnership with San Felasco Tech City. Our incoming students, faculty, and staff toured this new live, work, and play sustainable community to assist in developing solutions for the community. We brought four IA alumni to campus to speak with our students and share their accomplishments and advice on leveraging the skills learned in IA in the global economy. We re-engaged with our Amicon student immersion program to south Florida, awarded the Suss family scholarship to a deserving innovative student, and had another banner Gator Giving Day with over 40+ donors giving to IA. We also boast that one of our enterprising students is starting up a new mental health app, Eufinity, which has hired 70 interns from eight different universities, is incubating at the Gator Hatchery and ONESIXONE accelerator (another IA student company) and earned a top spot in a recent pitch competition.

We are excited to expand on the momentum gained over our first 10 years in anticipation of making the future of the IA program stronger, better, and more prominent. I invite you to read more about these accomplishments in the following pages and help us celebrate our students, faculty, and staff. I hope you enjoy learning about our many additions and endeavors over the past yearGo Gators,



*“If you’re not prepared to be wrong,
you’ll never come up with anything
original.”*

Sir Ken Robinson
Speaker, Author, Innovator

Jeff Citty, Ed.D.
Director, Innovation Academy



IA BY THE NUMBERS

1198

IA STUDENTS

7

PARTICIPATING COLLEGES

28

MAJORS OFFERED

176

PROTOTYPES BUILT
& PITCHED

690

INDIVIDUAL ADVISING
SESSIONS

183

STUDENTS EARNED
THE IA MINOR

43

INDIVIDUAL DONORS
FOR THE YEAR

354

INCOMING CLASS
OF 2023

170

LEAD GENERATOR
RESULTS

41

STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN
"THE INNOVATION MINDSET"
COURSE

14

CO-CURRICULAR
OPPORTUNITIES/EVENTS FOR
IA STUDENTS

235

STUDENTS AND THEIR
FAMILIES ATTENDED
DISCOVER IA

10 Year Anniversary

IA's celebration of 10 years of Innovation

This year the UF Innovation Academy celebrated 10 years of innovation and dedication to student success. Founded in 2013 as a pilot program to enroll and support academically talented students through an exclusive Innovation minor, today the UF Innovation Academy is a community of 1,000+ students with a network of 2,500+ alumni around the country and the world.

Shortly after the first cohort of 300 students were enrolled in the spring of 2013, IA set up its permanent offices on the third floor of the UF Infirmary building. By the spring of 2016, IA enrolled four cohorts at UF, totaling 1,054 students on campus learning about innovation. As 2018 approached, IA also added curricular updates that included 3D printing and continued to build co-curricular experiences such as the Ignite program, Speaker Series, and a local fall internship.

In 2020-2021, during the height of the pandemic, IA seamlessly transitioned all courses to online delivery, employed new innovative teaching tools, continued to build partnerships



around the state and the country with schools and private industry, and cultivated a record-setting Gator Giving Day.

Additionally, IA expanded its total available square footage in preparation for adding a state-of-the-art student business incubator, pitch studio, and sophisticated prototyping and fabrication lab. IA also built and launched an additional academic track in artificial intelligence. This year, IA staff, faculty, students, and community partners joined together to celebrate these milestones and are looking forward to IA's future accomplishments.



San Felasco Tech City

A Live/Work/Play Community

IA students visited San Felasco Tech City (SFTC) in Alachua, FL to gain insight on live/work/play communities. This tied into the Catalyst challenge: *How might we effectively engage residents in a 21st century live/work/play community?* Mitch Glaeser, CEO of Emory Group, gave an exclusive tour of the facilities. The Innovation Ecosystem in the Greater Gainesville area is flourishing with new companies that bring many community engagement opportunities for IA students.

Catalyst

IA's Annual Innovation Showcase

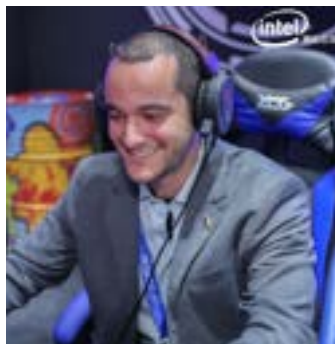
In-person for the first time since 2019, the Catalyst events are the Innovation Academy's summer showcase that serve as a launching point for first-year IA students to take their ideas beyond the classroom and apply their innovative solutions to the communities they live in. IA partnered with San Felasco Tech City (SFTC) in Alachua, Florida, and centered this year's challenge on the question: *How might we effectively engage residents in a 21st century live/work/play community?* At the most electrifying event of the year in IA, 50+ IA student teams addressed this challenge with their unique solutions. Judges from the Gainesville community evaluated these prototypes, pitches, and presentations. Only six awards were given at each event, creating a highly competitive environment for IA students. Attendees and judges were also given "IA Bucks" to invest in the prototypes that "wowed" them. The team with the most "IA Bucks" won the People's Choice Award. IA was honored to welcome Mitch Glaeser, Hallie Zimmerman, and David Nassau as speakers at these events.



Alumni Highlight

David Nassau

David graduated from UF in 2016 with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and Marketing and a minor in Innovation. Shortly after graduating, David joined Intel where he is now a Senior Product Marketing & Strategy Manager with Discrete



Graphics & Gaming. Gaming. David is also the Founder and President of 501c (3) non-profit organization Hopping 4 A Cure, which raises awareness of multiple sclerosis (MS) and offers scholarships for individuals with M S. A widely involved student during his time at UF, David has returned as an active IA alum dedicated to student success. This year he joined current IA staff and faculty, community members, and judges at the 2022 Catalyst Summer A event, the first Catalyst event in-person in two years, to speak to current IA students about the importance of building baseline skills, following your interests, uncovering intersections, and taking a shot.

Alumni Highlight

Hallie Zimmerman



Since graduating Magna Cum Laude from UF with a Bachelor of Science in Sustainability and a minor in Innovation, Hallie, a member of the second IA cohort, has worked in data analytics. With a focus on improving business intelligence reporting systems and facilitating collaboration between technical functions and

stakeholders for companies, Hallie has held positions at companies including CBRE, 360i, and G2 Ops, Inc. When the Covid-19 pandemic struck, it was her experience as an IA student that allowed Hallie to adapt to unusual working conditions and continue to pursue career goals. Deeply involved during her own time in the UF Innovation Academy, Hallie is dedicated to continuing to support IA students as they go above and beyond, while also working to build an IA alumni community focused on research and academic excellence. She was a guest speaker at the Catalyst Summer B event and offered current IA students valuable insight.

She is currently a Graduate Research Assistant at William & Mary in the Raymond A. Mason School of Business in Williamsburg, VA where she is pursuing a Master of Science in Business Analytics.

ADVISING DATA

Top Reasons Why Students Come to IA Advisors



General Advising

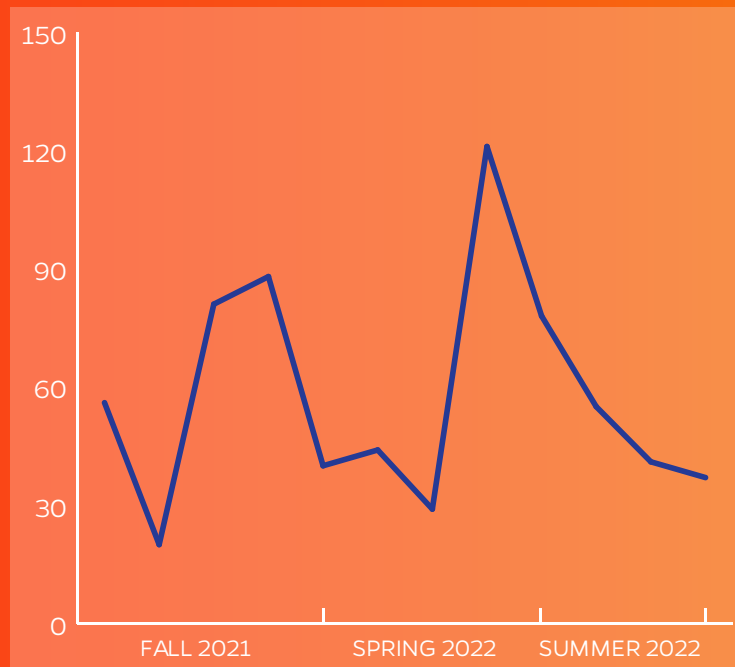


Academic Planning/
Course Scheduling



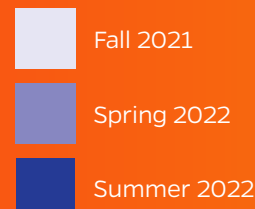
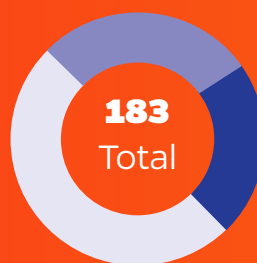
Major Change

Advising Traffic



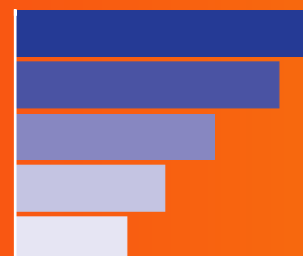
= **690** Students

Innovation Minor Completion



Top 5 Majors of IA

1. Biology
2. Psychology
3. Business Administration
4. Political Science
5. Computer Science



ACADEMIC & FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Partnered with San Felasco Tech City (SFTC) in Alachua, FL, for summer 2022 Catalyst events. Led eight field trips to SFTC in Summer 2022 to expose all IDS 1359 students to the site.
- Partnered with researchers in the Loss Prevention Research Council (LPRC) at the UF Innovation Hub for Spring 2022 senior design thinking project: *How might we redesign self-checkout areas to increase associate visibility of the scan area, increase retailers' opportunities to sale at self-checkout, and increase store associates' ability to see when customers need assistance so they can more quickly assist them?*
- Partnered with researchers in the LPRC at the UF Innovation Hub for Summer 2022 senior design thinking project: 1) *How might we develop ways to detect active assailant threats against retailers?* 2) *How might we develop tools to alert retail employees and guests, and/or guide employees and guests away from an active assailant in a public area?*
- Piloted Pitch Vantage with Senior Project students to practice pitching and public speaking through a virtual simulation.
- Technical Assistants continue to enhance the student experience in the first two minor courses through support with Fusion 360, Arduino, Adobe Illustrator, laser cutting, and project feedback. For Spring and Summer 2022, TAS had 1,676 visits from 313 students.



- **Diane Porter-Roberts, PhD**
 - Received UF Institute of Higher Education 2022 Outstanding Graduate award.
 - Served on IA Suss Scholarship Committee.
 - Actively mentored five doctoral students through various stages of dissertation proposals to defense.
 - Had four photographs accepted for Mobile Photography Exhibition at Appleton Museum at College of Central Florida (Summer 2022).
- **Charlie Cummings, MFA**
 - Hired, trained, and supervised six IA Technical Assistants.
 - Had artwork on display in "At the Crossroads: Artists of Indiana" at the Fort Wayne Museum of Art in Fort Wayne, IN. (Summer 2022).

Student Highlight

Aashi Faldu



From an early age, I knew I wanted to be in the field of medicine to bring change and leave an impact. However, I also quickly realized I would encounter dozens of obstacles before achieving my goal. Without a license, I could not engage much in the field of medicine throughout high school. Yet, I began by advocating for organ and tissue donation before starting the Donate Life Club. Together, my team and I fundraised \$1,200 and participated in a 5K for the cause. Shortly after, I completed my training and licensing to become an EMT.

Since university began, I faced new challenges due to the side effects of the pandemic. However, through the Innovation Academy (IA), I learned how to see problems as possibilities. Unable to volunteer during the pandemic, I joined a virtual internship at Dive Chat, a group messaging app, and worked with Hopping 4 A Cure—a non-profit organization that spreads awareness for multiple sclerosis. My IA classes allowed me to both land the internship with Dive as well as advance to a manager position within months. Although this internship was not relevant to the goal of pursuing medicine, what I learned from Dive is invaluable. With David Nassau, a UF IA alum and founder of Hopping 4 A Cure, as my mentor, I continued to pursue my passion for bringing change and awareness in the local community.

The obstacles I experienced during the pandemic inspired me to start an app platform with my friends—Eufinity. The project aims to address daily mental health challenges. Our desire to share the platform encouraged the Eufinity team to launch an internship program in the summer of 2021. After interviewing over 150 students, we selected 70 interns from eight different universities across the country, as well as a few international students, to complete our first successful semester as a startup. By the fall of 2021, Eufinity became part of the Gator Hatchery and the ONESIXONE accelerator. We also earned a \$10,000 prize in a local pitch competition.

I am currently on track to complete my major in Biology with a minor in Innovation and a specialization in Artificial Intelligence on a pre-medical track. I intend to pursue a career as a physician and promote mental health awareness. Life is unpredictable and I recognize the only constant is change. I hope to inspire my peers to see every challenge as an opportunity and approach those challenges from different perspectives to find the next step.

Suss Scholarship

Suss family endowment recipient

Established by Richard Suss CFP®, Executive Director of UBS Wealth Management Americas in Miami, the Suss Family Endowment provides scholarships for Innovation Academy students in pursuit of a degree from the Warrington College of Business or the College of Journalism and Communications. Since 2018, the Suss family remain valuable members of the UF Parent & Family Philanthropy Council (PFPC). Last spring, the Suss family awarded their first scholarship as a non-recurring, annual gift via a selection process managed by the Innovation Academy.

The Innovation Academy is happy to announce the 2022 Suss Scholarship awardee—Saryn Taylor. Saryn is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Telecommunications in conjunction with an Innovation minor. She is well-versed in film making, writing, and storytelling. Saryn enjoys sharing her creativity online through costume design and sewing videos, writing for Spoon University, as well as working with a variety of local organizations. The Innovation Academy wishes Saryn the best in her future endeavors!



Amicon

Student Immersion Program



Ten Innovation Academy students, along with IA Director, Dr. Jeff City, and IA Assistant Director, Joanna Barousse, participated in an immersion experience in Miami, FL, to visit Amicon in June 2022. Amicon is a construction management company with a keen focus on owner representation. The objective of this unique experience was to introduce IA students to what a niche career in construction management might be like in Miami, FL. IA students had the opportunity to network with professional staff at the Amicon offices, visited construction project sites, and got a small taste of Miami city life. One student described their experience this way, “Construction management and general contracting is a field that I hope to take on post-graduation and being able to get first-hand experience on an ongoing construction site like Church by the Sea was a great inside look at what the industry is like.” Adam Mopsick, CEO and Co-Founder of Amicon, conversed with IA students about the importance of keeping an open mind as they prepared for their future careers. He encouraged them to become excellent problem solvers and to maintain mental fortitude.

Gator Giving Day

Pitch Studio & Business Incubator

Gator Giving Day is a designated day of giving each spring at the University of Florida. With the generous help of our Gator community, the Innovation Academy (IA) successfully raised \$16,570 during the 24-hour donation drive on February 17, 2022. These donations surpassed our goal of \$15,000 and will aid in constructing the Innovation Academy Business Incubator. The business incubator will serve many aspiring Innovation Academy students in executing their plans and innovations.

Alongside the Pitch Studio built with last year’s Gator Giving Day donations, the Business Incubator will provide an accessible and all-inclusive experience for IA students. IA students may reserve the Pitch Studio to rehearse presentations for class, Catalyst, interviews, and more. Thanks to IA donors, our students are suited with multiple resources to become change makers and innovators. From the classroom to the IA Pitch Studio and to the future IA Business Incubator, we are excited to have this unique space for our students to excel in the Innovation Academy.



Special Thanks

Our accomplishments this year would not have been possible without the generous support of our partners, and all of the Innovation Academy students and their families.

Dr. W. Kent Fuchs, *President*

Dr. Joseph Glover, *Provost*

Dr. Angela Lindner, *Associate Provost, Academic Affairs*

Dr. Andrew McCollough, *Associate Provost, Teaching and Technology*

Dr. Mary Parker, *Vice President, Enrollment Management & Associate Provost*

UF Division of Academic Affairs

UF Division of Enrollment Management

UF Department of Housing and Residence Education

UF Division of Student Life

UF Counseling and Wellness Center

UF Foundation

UF Advancement

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UF Innovate

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College of Journalism and Communications

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Warrington College of Business

Dr. Natalie Coers

Dr. Elizabeth Palmer

Ms. Megan Cantrell

Mr. Jamie Kraft

Mr. Parker Van Hart

Ms. Sierra Calhoun-Pollard

Mr. Daniel Stepp

Ms. Amy Freeman

Ms. Tingting Feng

Mr. Evan Galbicka

Mr. Mitch Glaeser

San Felasco Tech City

Loss Prevention Resource Council

IA Curriculum & Advisory Committees



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