

CIOCCA CENTER ANNUAL REPORT

Where Innovation Meets Personal Vocation

2024-2025

15 UNIVERSITIES NOW
USING OUR CURRICULUM!

INNOVATIVE
TEACHING

THE LAUNCH
OF CLUNY

VENTURELAB@CUA

LIFELONG
LEARNING



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LETTER *from the* DIRECTOR

The late Art Ciocca, co-founder of The Wine Group, called me to help with a project about two decades ago. He wanted to run a workshop for faculty at a university he'd been supporting philanthropically to show them all that was involved in business above and beyond the pursuit of profit. They were good people, but like a lot of people of faith, possessed of a prejudice that business is inherently dirty business, populated by — let's be candid — "greedy bastards."

Art—who had derived a lot of satisfaction not only from delivering great value for his customers, but also from mentoring hundreds of people he worked with, watching them develop their own talents and virtues— wanted to open minds to all the different kinds of good that a well-built business can accomplish, from economic dynamism to personal growth, and family and community stability. "Andreas, let's see if we can show them what Entrepreneurship is really all about."

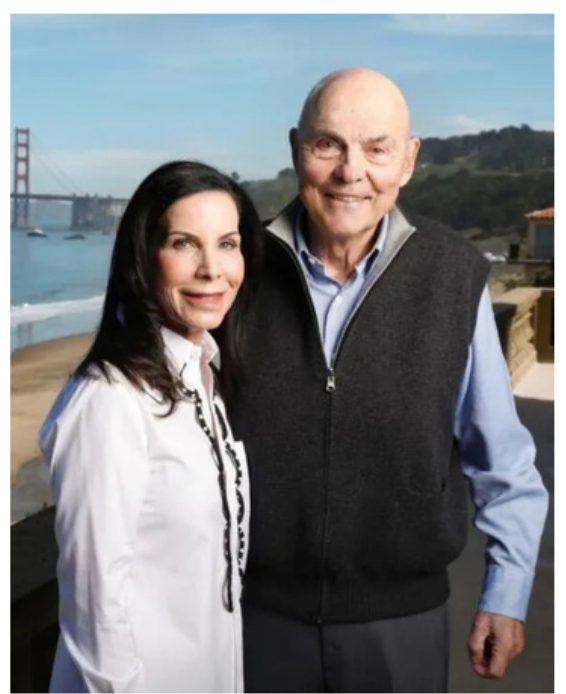
So we challenged that faculty to innovate: to come up with business ideas that would solve or improve specific problems or pain points in people's lives. They loved it! Their working groups got genuinely energized by the good they could do by providing a wonderful good or service and they loved working through the processes of ideation and prototyping we led them through.

We thought the experience would create a window of empathy for what's in the hearts and minds of business people, but we found cynicism instead: most people couldn't assume good will in others: "If I started a business, it wouldn't be for selfish reasons – but I don't trust others not to work primarily from greed."

Years later, when Art spent some time in my classroom at the Catholic University of America, he loved interacting with students and was delighted by the openness of leadership and faculty. That's why he committed to helping The Busch School of Business launch and build an entrepreneurship center dedicated to a new and open approach. Without being naive about the possibility for human selfishness, we appeal to the God-made goodness of each person, challenging them to channel their talents and dreams for good, letting business be shaped by Catholic Social Teaching and sound economic principles.

The Ciocca Center for Principled Entrepreneurship is **where innovation meets personal vocation**, and I invite you not only to peruse the pages of this annual report, but also to explore our new website, CioccaCenter.com, to see how we can help you, whether you're a student at any level or in business for yourself.

Pax,
Andreas



ART AND CARLYSE CIOCCA



OUR TEAM OUR MISSION

WHERE INNOVATION MEETS PERSONAL VOCATION



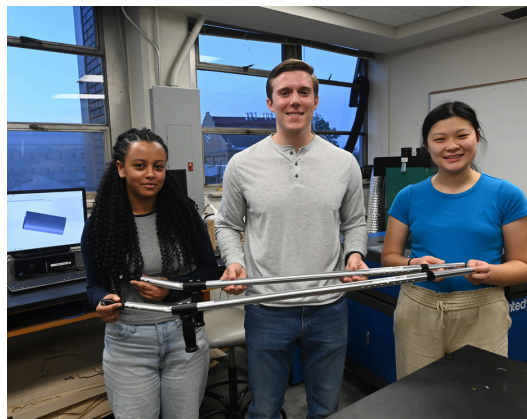
We're the **entrepreneurship center** dedicated to helping intentional Catholics and like-minded collaborators overcome the small-spirited, zero-sum vision of business by inspiring the creation of profitable, person-centered companies.

And we're also the small but mighty team driving innovation in education and business at The Catholic University of America and in more than 20 universities using our curriculum in the U.S. and around the world.

How can we help you?

Whether you're a working professional, new business founder, Church leader or student, discover how we can serve you at CioccaCenter.com

"At a crucial turning point in my company's development, the mentorship provided by the Ciocca Center became a beacon of guidance." — Matthew Harvey Sanders, CEO, Longbeard





IMPACT THIS YEAR

6

Awards

300+

Student businesses
launched

35

Events hosted

6

New collaborations
launched

350+

Media presentations
& appearances

**3.5
million+**

Total media
audience

505
in 22 states
CEDE
Students

15

Other Universities
using our curriculum

3166

Google Scholar
Citations



NEW LAUNCH:

CLUNY

INSTITUTE



Cluny Institute is a multidisciplinary organization hosting events, publishing Cluny Journal, offering classes and workshops, and giving grants. It's named for Cluny Abbey, the most important cultural institution of the Middle Ages. The abbey's founding mission was spiritual renewal in the monastic tradition, but it quickly became the nexus of learning, cultural transmission and technological advancement. The Cluny Institute aspires to be the same, at the intersection of **Athens** (reason), **Jerusalem** (faith) and **Silicon Valley** (innovation and building).



- Cluny Journal has **5k subscribers in its first year**; it is publishing award-winning and emerging novelists, academics, philosophers, poets, technologists and more. A particular innovation is the “**Trialogue**,” in which the Journal facilitates a written conversation between three prominent thinkers without their knowing who they are writing with until the end of the conversation.
- Cluny launched with an ambitious schedule of **8 experimental “encounters”** and one conference in its first year. These ranged from a silent event in Manhattan, to a private dinner with **philosopher Charles Taylor**, to an art-focused **salon** at The Moore in Miami, and a private book discussion at the NAC with **Bishop Barron, Peter Thiel** and more.



- Cluny Co-founders **Luke Burgis** and **Jordan Castro** co-taught a flagship course, “**The Foundations of Agency**” at Catholic University in the Spring, and will launch a public workshop based on this in the fall

A sequel to the highly successful Novitate Conference in Fall 2023, **Metanoia: The Foundations of Change** was a sold-out, invitation-only gathering of academics, creatives, and tech innovators among others.

“

The conference convinced me that it would be irresponsible to reject the possibility of Christian faith’s leavening Silicon Valley

-Stephen G. Aduato, writing in *First Things* about the Metanoia Conference

”



The **VentureLab@CatholicU** has developed a dynamic, hands-on curriculum designed to empower both undergraduate and graduate students at The Catholic University of America to explore and launch new ventures. Students from the **Busch School of Business** and across disciplines—including **Architecture**, **Engineering**, and **Biotechnology**—are guided through the entrepreneurial process using the Business Model Canvas as a foundational framework. Rooted in Catholic Social Teaching, our approach emphasizes ethical innovation, human dignity, and the common good.



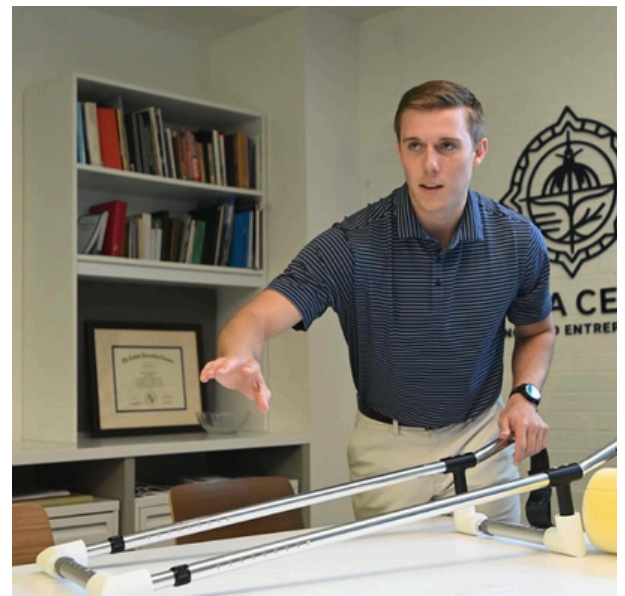
This academic year alone, students created over 30 new ventures, tackling a range of global and local challenges. These include accelerating access to critical pharmaceuticals, launching healthcare concierge services for critically ill patients in Africa, developing AI-powered solutions for TikTok users seeking recipes, designing an adaptive hand grip enabling the elderly and physically limited individuals to play Pickleball, and introducing a health-conscious energy drink.

Through experiential learning and interdisciplinary collaboration, students don't just learn about entrepreneurship—they live it.

Student Businesses in the Spotlight:

Skolios

John Whelan developed a project to bring to market a simple device that helps scoliosis patients. With our help, John was able to collaborate with the engineering department to refine his device and ready it for beta testing. John was one of a select group of students from DMV-area universities invited to pitch his business project at **DC Start-Up and Tech Week's** University Day.



SCIANT Solutions

Student **Nolan Terry** created **SCIANT Solutions**, which he describes as a “tech-enabled service company that creates value by designing and implementing custom CRM systems, sales automations, and revenue workflows tailored to each client’s business. The hands-on service model ensures small and mid-sized teams convert more leads, save time, and scale efficiently.” VentureLab assisted Nolan by helping him pivot away from a focus solely on the real estate sector. We also allowed him to use VentureLab itself as a test case and feedback from us helped him grow to 10 active clients.



Hoppin’

Alumni **Jack Dee** and **Will Simone** pivoted a business they first workshopped with us as students. They describe their project: “With an average retention rate of 77.5% at private universities, millions are lost to student churn rates each year. Hoppin’ encourages students to discover and share social activities based on common interests while giving schools a way to promote campus events alongside them.” These two alumni launched the beta for their app this spring, amassing more than 700 users on the Catholic U. campus in the course of two weeks. They are now working to refine and build features based on student and university feedback.



VentureLab Keynote Address

We were honored to welcome Catholic University alumnus and *New York Times* bestselling author **Steve McClatchy** to speak at our VentureLab@CatholicU Annual Keynote: **Celebrating Entrepreneurial Leadership**. We filled the Della Ratta auditorium with students eager to hear from Steve about hard work, continuous improvement, and being fully engaged in work and at home.

Announcing
Annual Keynote
CUA Alumnus
Steve McClatchy

MONDAY
April 14th

Della Ratta
Auditorium
IN MALONEY HALL

5:10-7:30 PM

(venturelab) Catholic U

CIOCCA CENTER

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Lifelong Learning



Earlier this year, Prosper passed into the top 25% of podcasts worldwide. Come join our small but growing community of principled entrepreneurs learning from and encouraging each other!



CioccaCenter.com

Our re-designed website invites visitors from seasoned professionals to college to high school students to find their way to the ideas and programs that will help them do business the Ciocca way – as principled entrepreneurs.

Are you a regular listener to **Prosper** yet? If not you're missing out on compact (no four hour commitment!), entertaining, and useful discussions with Catholics in business who tell the fun and compelling origin stories of their businesses and share how experience and the lens of faith has them thinking about the everyday challenges of running a business as a faith-based entrepreneur.

The most recent season's guests have included: **Dr. Catherine Pakaluk** on what it REALLY takes to raise a family (and why proposed incentives to reverse the "birth dearth" are unlikely to work); **Fr. Leo Patalinghug** on how shared meals can be "pre-evangelization" – and the challenges of the food industry; Ciocca alumnus **Grady Connolly** on claiming social media for good.



Don't miss our free 8-part videos series beautifully filmed and directed by **Michael Matheson Miller**. Informed by the teaching of **Pope St. John Paul II** on human dignity and the meaning of work, as well as what host **Andreas Widmer** learned from him while serving him as a Swiss Guard, this series explores work under the lens of our sanctification—and provides actionable insights for building a good life AND a good business. Along the way you'll meet co-host **Luke Burgis**, and a team of CEOs and scholars.

Teaching the Business Teachers

Each year, the Ciocca Center partners with the **Lumen Christi Institute**, the **Pontifical University Santa Croce**, and the business schools at **Notre Dame** and **University of St. Thomas** (MN) to teach Business School Professors and graduate students a deep and non-ideological approach to Catholic Social Teaching as it applies to business and economics. The seminar helps business professors inculcate CST and respect for economic principles in their curricula and to apply them in their own fields of research.

The Busch School of Business FAMILY BUSINESS CONSORTIUM



This year we hosted
two full-day seminars
for family businesses,
for more than
100 total participants.

The Family Business Consortium is a growing network of entrepreneurs with family businesses who help each other capitalize on the particular opportunities and strengths of family-owned businesses, while navigating the unique challenges they face.

Directed by Vice-Dean Anthony Cannizzaro and Dr. Francisco Lara, Consortium members share a commitment to building not only strong businesses, but strong families.

Fall 2024 Speakers



Carlyse Ciocca
President
Carlyse and Arthur Ciocca Foundation



Marc Butler
Founder and CEO
J.R. Butler



Robby Larkin
Researcher
J.R. Butler



Chuck Widger
Founding partner
East Bay Merchant Partners



Noreen D. Beaman
Partner
East Bay Coaching & Consulting



Ashley Widger-Kaplow
Partner
East Bay Merchant Partners, Inc.



Mike Shaughnessy
Retired Co-Chairman, President & Owner
ColorMatrix

Spring 2025 Speakers



Peter Freissle
CEO; *Polydeck Screen Corporation*
Founder; *His Way at Work*



Scott Hamberger
Founder
Fortessa Tableware Solutions



Elizabeth & Matt Marcolini
CEO & CHRO
Rose Roofing and Restoration



John Gugliada & Michael Hawthorne
Family Enterprise USA



"IT'S ETHICAL AND FULFILLING BUSINESS.
THERE'S NO OTHER PLACE LIKE IT."
— GRADUATE & FAMILY BUSINESS EXECUTIVE



Know a family business owner? Send them our way! It's free to join.

Röpke-Wojtyła Fellowship

The **Röpke-Wojtyła Fellowship** challenges senior level undergraduate students from around the country to a **deeper understanding of the human person** through an examination of the relationship between business in the free enterprise system on the one hand and religion and culture on the other.

An important purpose of the Fellowship is to **build an interdisciplinary community** of thinkers to champion a free and moral society. We tackle questions about the conditions under which the market system contributes to human fulfillment. The Fellowship is named after two intellectual giants who grappled with similar questions in their lives and in whose footsteps we hope to follow: **Wilhelm Röpke and Karol Wojtyła** (Pope St. John Paul II).

Rounding out our eighth year of existence, our alumni Fellows are pursuing vocations in religious life, academia, medicine, law, business, political and economic policy, education, and the non-profit industry. It is our hope that whichever career path they choose, they come to appreciate the importance of both markets and religion for a well-functioning society, something that is not fully appreciated in today's marketplace for ideas.

We hosted 16 Fellows from 9 different institutions this academic year, chosen from a prestigious and competitive pool.



Meet this year's fellows:

- Blake Chen, Chemistry, Harvard University
- Zachary Frederick, Finance, St. Louis University
- Colin Joyce, Math and Biochemistry, Hillsdale College
- Elizabeth Knapp, Business, University of Notre Dame
- Magdalena Kyne, Philosophy, Franciscan University of Steubenville
- Gavin Lewis, Business, Catholic University of America
- Monay Licata, Marketing, University of Notre Dame
- Adelaide Machado-Ulm, Business, Catholic University of America
- Madeline McCarthy, World Politics, Catholic University of America
- Julia Nore, Finance, Benedictine College
- Dean Robbins, Psychology and Business, Catholic University of America
- Jeffrey Schremmer, Economics and Political Science, Benedictine College
- Rachel Schroder, History, Hillsdale College
- Sean Scully, Philosophy, Catholic University of America
- Urszula Solarz, Computing and the Arts, Yale University
- Stephen Wiecek, Politics and Economics, University of Virginia

The program consists of four colloquia, conducted Liberty-Fund style, with the Fellows leading the discussion accompanied by faculty experts. The last colloquium in June is dedicated to discussing the fellows' essay drafts. In 2024-2025, we continued our analysis of Michael Novak's work, *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*.



Our Growing Alumni Community Makes Its Mark

In the Church:

- We have one ordained **priest** & another awaiting ordination among our alumni. And we have four **Dominicans**, one **Jesuit**, and a **religious sister** in formation.
- Maggie Tynan, Class of 2021, works in development for **EWTN**.
- Sean Scully, Class of 2025, will soon start a role with **Knights of Columbus**.
- Julia Nore, Class of 2025, will soon start a role at **Hallow**.

In Academia:

- John Paul Juge, Class of 2019, finished his **PhD at Boston College** and landed a job as a Teaching Fellow at the **Augustine Institute** Graduate School of Theology.
- Philip Pinell, Class of 2019, finished his **PhD at the University of Wisconsin** and is moving to Florida to join the faculty at Florida State University's **Institute for Governance and Civics**.
- Joseph Galassi, Class of 2021, finished an **MBA at Georgetown University**.
- Patrick Mitchell, Class of 2021, will begin his Master's in Theology at the **Dominican House of Studies** this fall with full funding.
- Thomas Richter, Class of 2023, will begin his **JD at Harvard Law School** this fall, joining other alumni also there.
- Raleigh Adams, Class of 2024, launched a podcast called Faithfully Feminist, started a substack called, Aspasian Afternoons, and cofounded the **Yale Civitas Society**.
- Helen Schlueter, Class of 2024, will begin her **PhD at Catholic University of America** this fall.



Private Mass at the Church of San Girolamo celebrated by Fr. Bob Gahl



Discussion session at CUA in Washington, DC



Discussion session at CUA's Rome campus

In Public Policy:

- Kacey Reeves West Ph.D, Class of 2018, began as **Research Fellow at the Elm Institute**.
- Justin Callais, Ph.D, Class of 2018, is the Chief Economist with the Archbridge Institute. Where he is also Co-Editor of Profectus Magazine. He has a Substack on economic prosperity called "Debunking Degrowth."
- Catherine Francois, Class of 2018, is the **Chief Speechwriter for Senator John Cornyn**.
- Michael Lucchese, Class of 2018, is an **associate editor of Law & Liberty**, a contributing editor to Providence, and the founder of Pipe Creek Consulting.
- Gillian Richards, Class of 2021, is a Senior Research Associate at the **Heritage Foundation**.
- Max Bodach, Class of 2021, was promoted to Executive Vice President at the **Foundation for American Innovation**.
- Anthony Crnkovich, Class of 2022, began a role as **Special Assistant in the Office of the US Trade Representative**.
- Harry Scherer, Class of 2022, began a role as **speechwriter in the US Secretary of Agriculture's office**.
- Elizabeth Knapp, Class of 2025, will soon begin a role at the **Poverty Initiative** at the University of Notre Dame.

“Reading Catholic social teaching has powerfully transformed my perspective on governance, morality, and the economy. My college experience would have been greatly impoverished without such a phenomenal Catholic curriculum and community of fellows.”

—Stephen Wiecek, *University of Virginia*

HIGHLIGHT OF THE YEAR



A highlight of this year's Rome trip. Pope Leo, the first American Pope, made eye contact and pointed right at the Fellows and their three flags representing the Ciocca Center for Principled Entrepreneurship, The Catholic University of America, and the United States.

In Business:

- Josh Peine, Class of 2018, is a **Co-founder at DOCSI**, a tech firm dedicated to improving healthcare by connecting the right data to the right people.
- Joseph St Pierre, Class of 2018, is a Financial Advisor and Branch Manager at **J&J Financial Group** under Ameriprise Financial.
- Michael Corado, Class of 2019, works as **Vice President at JP Morgan Chase**.
- Maggie Tynan, Class of 2021, works in **development for EWTN**.
- Rebekah Balick, Class of 2022, works at **Northrup Grumman** in Business Development.
- Kathryn Linz, Class of 2023, is a Senior Business Analyst at **McKinsey**.

NEW THIS YEAR:

We launched our first RWF Executive Session, inviting a select group of supporters to enter the RWF experience by spending the day in discussion with our scholars. Pictured is a closing dinner.



First ever RWF Executive session, a successful fundraising event

Testimonials



Monay Licata
University of Notre Dame

"RWF complemented my business and global affairs studies with a robust study of democratic capitalism, Catholic social thought, and economics that helped me think about the world in a more intentional way!"



Blake Chen, Harvard

"There's perhaps no better place to discuss the themes of faith, citizenship, the family, and human flourishing—perennial questions that all societies must grapple with—than in the Eternal City herself, with a group of serious and motivated scholars."



Zach Frederick,
Saint Louis University

"Röpke Wojtyła has helped me to grow in my personal faith while also expanding my understanding of how to apply my faith to everything else around me. This was the most transformative experience of my college career and leaving this fellowship I truly feel I have lifelong friendships with like-minded people."



Urszula Solarz,
Yale

"Discovering the Röpke-Wojtyła Fellowship came at exactly the right time. After I was swept up in a pre-professional race during most of my undergraduate years, this senior year fellowship gifted me the chance to re-examine my academic and personal growth through the lens of faith. ...I sincerely hope to continue my studies at CUA in the future."



Julia Nore, Benedictine College

"This fellowship has invigorated me in both my faith and my intellectual rigor. No other program for young people has the formative capacities such as this one, and thanks to it, my heart and mind are forever changed. I will carry these ideas, encounters, and experiences with me everywhere for the rest of my life, and so too will I remember the friends I've made from across the country."

Sean Scully, Catholic University of America

"Being able to explore some of the most pressing social questions of our day in a community of like-minded and exceptional young scholars has been nothing short of transformative. Although there were often sharp disagreements among us, our collective pilgrimage in Rome, the epicenter of our Catholic faith, united us in a common quest for truth. The friendships I have made here, I am sure, will last a lifetime."





Röpke-Wojtyła Fellows, Class of 2025 on the first day of our October Colloquium

Testimonials (cont.)

Jeff Schremmer,
Benedictine College



Gavin Lewis, Catholic University of America



"This fellowship has invigorated me in both my faith and my intellectual rigor. No other program for young people has the formative capacities such as this one, and thanks to it, my heart and mind are forever changed. I will carry these ideas, encounters, and experiences with me everywhere for the rest of my life, and so too will I remember the friends I've made from across the country."

"The Röpke-Wojtyła Fellowship synthesized and supplemented my undergraduate education by giving me the opportunity to closely examine important economic and moral ideals. I come out of the fellowship with optimism about the ability of young, Catholic professionals to promote human flourishing upon the principles of sound economics and moral theology."

Rachel Schroder, Hillsdale College



"RWF synthesized my university education by providing me a robust theological, philosophical, and political account of the human person. I made the dearest of friends, bound by our love for the faith (and karaoke), through the cohort. Our desire to bring the social teaching of the Catholic Faith to a world will unite us in the years to come!"

Dean Robbins, Catholic University of America

"The RWF is a profoundly transformative experience that draws you deeper into the philosophical and economic underpinnings and debates of our day while also situating you within an intellectual tradition and a fun, caring community."



Fellows in St. Peter's Square in Rome.

Novak Fellowship



"I am thinking differently about my own role in the world: in how I am expected to, and fully am able to, positively contribute to the world even in my own profession and my own unique way."

The **Novak Fellowship** is an interdisciplinary reading group open to upperclassmen at the Catholic University of America. Fellows read and discuss texts exploring the question: What conditions and institutions must exist in order for America to become the "more perfect union" that promotes human flourishing in all its dimensions?

We're proud to continue the intellectual legacy of our late colleague, **Ambassador Michael Novak**, whose intellectual approach was interdisciplinary, open-minded, and supremely realistic. He was able to bring **fresh insights to old problems**, examining everything anew, and Novak Fellows aspire to bring similar freshness to thinking about the intersection of faith, business and politics.



"I just wish our sessions could have lasted a little longer."

"The most valuable part of being a Novak Fellow is that I get to see the relationship between my Catholic faith and my vocation to business come together in a new way. It also provides me with a firm foundation to defend against the socialist impulse of our time."

"I enjoyed taking a step back from the chaos of busy university life to talk about important and relevant issues with others who also wish to share their opinions and listen to others. This was also a great way to get to know other members of the university community that I may not have met outside of this fellowship."

NOVAK FELLOWS DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES

- Novak Fellow Nick Robben received the Busch School **Finance Award**
- Three Novak Fellows presented at University Research Day: **Declan Pennese** researched using "de novo" proteins to harmlessly decompose plastics. **Ciara Donegan** presented on "Explanatory Depth," and why people have a tendency to overestimate what they understand of any given topic. And **Teresa Varadan** premiered a documentary film.
- '24 Novak alumnus David Fritz III won Catholic University of America's highest student honor, the **President's Award**.
- '24 Novak alumnus (and '25 Röpke Fellow) Gavin Lewis received the Busch School's **Novak Free Enterprise Award** & the **Excellence in Solidarity** award



Highlight:

We were blessed in the Spring semester to be accompanied by Visiting Scholar Dr. Flavio Felice, a personal friend of Ambassador Novak who was recently named a Knight of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic. (See him here with Novak alumnus Gavin Lewis.)



A photograph of two students, a young woman with long dark hair and a young man with curly hair, sitting at a desk in a classroom. They are looking at a computer monitor which displays a technical drawing or map. The young man is pointing at the screen. The desk has some papers, pens, and a small potted plant. The background shows a modern classroom with large windows and other students.

Innovative Teaching

Whether **founding a company**, joining a startup, or **serving** in corporate or nonprofit roles, Busch School entrepreneurs bring:

Courage to create, **clarity** of purpose, a **commitment to building something good**. Don't take our word for it! Hear this unsolicited testimony from Ruth Swope, a Music major and entrepreneurship minor, about the difference studying entrepreneurship made to her career as a music conductor:

"Any good leader in a risky or precarious market (which the arts world always is) has to be agile and entrepreneurial, and also grounded in good principles. I have a high degree of optimism that many of my fellow musicians don't have, because I feel in control of my career as a free and creative agent with an understanding of the market and of society. The exciting thing is when they let me loose after all this formal education, to create programs and build orchestras and find my own audiences! "

- Ruth Swope, 2023 Music Major,
Entrepreneurship Minor

HIGHLIGHTS

- **ARTHUR BROOKS VISITS FRESHMEN**

In Fall, 2024, we brought Harvard's Arthur Brooks to guest lecture in the freshman Vocation to Business classes about leadership and happiness in challenging times.





- CLUNY Team members Luke Burgis and Jordan Castro launched a new entrepreneurship elective: **The Foundations of Agency**
- Students in Principled Entrepreneurship worked with **Catholic Charities** and **Gabriel Network** to find **enterprise solutions** to challenges faced by non-profits and the people they serve.
- **Renowned business coach Steve McClatchy** gave the VentureLab@CUA Keynote Address in Spring 2025
- Entrepreneurship Minor **Afua Agyekum** received **the Marian Award**, Catholic University's second-highest honor for a female student.



A LIFELONG COMPASS

Of course we teach business essentials and best practices! But more importantly, we model and inculcate a fresh mental model for thinking about business.

- More than a quarter of entrepreneurship alumni have **already** started a company or side hustle within a year of graduation!



EXPERTS SAY:

“

I go to bed on Sunday excited to get to work on Monday. That mindset came from Catholic U.
— *Entrepreneurship Alumnus*

”

“In my decades of service with Catholic Charities, I’ve seen firsthand both the beauty and the limits of traditional models of support. What Andreas Widmer and the Ciocca Center are doing—bringing sustainable, principled entrepreneurship to bear on the challenges of poverty—is not just timely, it’s vital. This initiative has the potential to spark a new generation of faith-driven leaders who think creatively, act with integrity, and build solutions that restore dignity and create lasting opportunity. I fully support their vision....”— *Monsignor John Enzler, former director of Catholic Charities for Archdiocese of Washington*



The Catholic Entrepreneurship & Design Experience

Giving high school students a sense of purpose and the confidence to see themselves as entrepreneurs of their own lives.

CEDE launched a new program, the *Startup Venture Challenge*, in 2025 and guided 27 high school students through the process of identifying and launching their own business startup. Participants launched businesses inspired by the True, the Good, and the Beautiful in the course of a 10-week virtual startup bootcamp.

CEDE BY THE NUMBERS:

405
Students
Participated

22
States

27
Students launched
their own
business startup

5
Schools integrated
CEDE curriculum
this year



Examples of businesses include lawn care companies, a natural skincare business, piano lessons, and baking classes.

During the 2024-2025 school year the CEDE course was offered for college credit at 5 partnering schools, allowing students to earn both high school and college course credit for their participation in the CEDE class.



Church Management

The new evangelization demands entrepreneurial thinking at the service of human flourishing and the wholesome growth of the Church!

Our Church management programs seek to help schools, hospitals, dioceses, parishes and non-profit groups flourish and have an impact in their mission fields by equipping them with practical business tools, a deeper understanding of Catholic Social Teaching, and an entrepreneurial mindset.

The program's faculty is drawn from The Busch School of Business, including experts in civil and ecclesiastical practice. Instruction is supplemented by guest leaders from parishes, schools, dioceses and apostolates. There are degree programs as well as certificates.



A business degree designed to serve the Church!



ENROLLMENT

Summer 2024: 48

Fall 2024: 64

Spring 2025: 81

"This course was a practical and theologically grounded presentation of pastoral management best practices. The course content was engaging and structured to be immediately useful for implementation into my administrative style... so having concrete, tangible, and executable tactics on feedback, observation, and clarity was an incredible gift for me." - **Fr. Korey Lavergne, Diocese of Lafayette**

Choose from:

The Master of Science in Ecclesial Administration and Management:

An online program in management, accounting, finance, planning, decision-making, and the virtues of leadership. 30 credit hours that can be completed in one calendar year or paced across several semesters.

Graduate Certificate Programs:

Church Leadership (designed for seminarians)

Church Administration (for parish/ school administrators and pastors)

4+1 Undergraduate Program

Our new 4+1 track permits Catholic University undergraduates to begin their studies in Church Management while working on their bachelor's degree so as to finish the full Master of Ecclesial Administration and Management degree the year after graduation!



We also added two exciting new courses:
EAM 500: Winning Metrics for Mission &
EAM 517: Change Management for Performance Evaluation

Impact



In less than ten years, the Ciocca Center for Principled Entrepreneurship has had a powerful effect on how people think about business, and has proved itself to be an effective “sandbox” where great ideas can incubate. For example:

"The Ciocca Center's thought leadership helped inspire our thinking on principled entrepreneurship and human flourishing."
— Gonzalo Schwarz, *Archbridge Institute*

- Catholic U's **Tucson campus** began as an initiative of the Ciocca Center to spread the message of principled entrepreneurship to underserved communities and to make an impact in the Western United States.
- The Busch School/ Napa Institute's **annual Principled Entrepreneurship conference** began as a Ciocca Center initiative.
- Our **CEDE** program has become Catholic U's **top dual enrollment program**.
- More than **20 universities in the U.S. & internationally** use Ciocca Center curriculum, case studies, or texts from Ciocca authors in their own business classes.
- **VentureLab@CUA**, in addition to championing new businesses from students and alumni, also provides **valued coaching** to aligned businesses such as **SENT Ventures, Stand Together, MagisteriumAI, Optimal Work, Theology of Home, Watts of Love, Givr, and Young Catholic Professionals**.

“

I distinctly remember meeting Brian Walsh, during his first week at Venture Lab. I approached him with Givr, a new concept for serving our neighbors experiencing homelessness. He immediately jumped in with humility, care, and practical guidance that only comes from years of entrepreneurial experience. Driving away from our meeting, I was overwhelmed with emotion, feeling that the Lord had put the Venture Lab@CatholicU in our path.



Over the years, Brian not only made critical connections and provided ongoing counsel, but he also believed in our team - giving us the confidence to keep going despite the challenges of launching a social enterprise. We would not have achieved nearly the same social impact without this support, and I know we're not alone in our gratitude for the Venture Lab@CatholicU. — Mark Ferguson, founder of Givr

”

Appearance & Publication Highlights

Luke Burgis

Fall, 2024 Luke Burgis signs a major book deal with **St. Martin's Press**, to publish his forthcoming book *The One and the Ninety-Nine: Forging Identity in the Age of Social Contagion*, due out in 2026.

Luke wrote the **foreword** to a new edition of Eric McLuhan's *Synesthesia, the Sensus Communis, and the Soul*, and invited Marshall McLuhan's grandson, **Andrew McLuhan**, into his new class as a guest speaker.

April 11, 2025 Luke gives "fireside chat" on "Entrepreneurship, Vocation and the Common Good" at **Loyola University**, New Orleans.

May 2-3, 2025 Luke **cited** in major presentation at **Diocese of Tulsa** conference on faith & culture.

Throughout the year: Luke cited in reporting or essays for *Vanity Fair*, *Comment*, *National Catholic Register*, *Our Sunday Visitor*, *First Things*, & *Politico*. He was featured on numerous podcasts.

Andreas Widmer

October 8, 2024 Andreas presented at **West of Perfection Leadership Summit**

October 21, 2024 Andreas spoke about *The Art of Principled Entrepreneurship* at the **Center for Character Formation** in El Paso, TX

October 26, 2024 Participated in the **AI Forum** sponsored at the Vatican by the **Pontifical Academy of Sciences**. Other participants included Cardinal Turkson and other curial figures, **Luke Burgis**, and representatives from Google, Tik-Tok, etc.

Championing Principled Entrepreneurship

February, 2025 Presented at **Creighton University's** Heider College of Business.

April, 2025 Andreas spoke at Loyola University New Orleans

April 30, 2025 Spoke at Purdue's Cornerstone for Business Conference. Subsequently, the school published three blog posts about his presentation.

May 1, 2025 Andreas gave a virtual address for **Holy Cross College** on Christ, Church, and the Marketplace.

May, 2025 Andreas gave the commencement address at prestigious **Belen Jesuit Prep School** in Miami, FL.

Widmer was the guest on numerous podcasts throughout the year.

Other Team Members

October 23, 2024 Ciocca Center Exec. Director **Rebecca Teti** spoke about Enterprise Solutions to Poverty to a cohort of deacons and other church leaders for the annual **CAPP-USA Conference** in Washington, DC.

October 19, 2024, **Francisco Lara, PhD**, asst director of the Family Business Consortium, spoke at the **ETA Club at Harvard Business School**.

November 9, 2024, **Rebecca** addressed the **Maryland Catholic Women's Conference** on "Work as a Mission Field."

April 4, 2025 CEDE Asst. Director **Maureen McNeill** presented CEDE and dual enrollment at the **Archdiocese of Philadelphia** Spring Chairman Meeting

April 23, 2025 Maureen invited to speak at the **2025 National Catholic Educational Association Conference**: Equipping Educators; Families and Young People to be Truth-Seeking Protagonists in the 21st Century

May 5, 2025, Rebecca presented on "Business As a Calling" to a group of 75 visiting high school students and their parents.

May 18, 2025, Francisco addressed the **ETA club at Wharton School of Business**.

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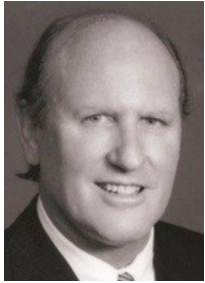
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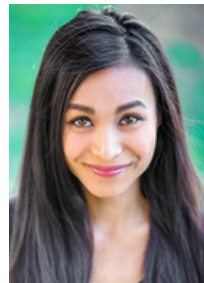
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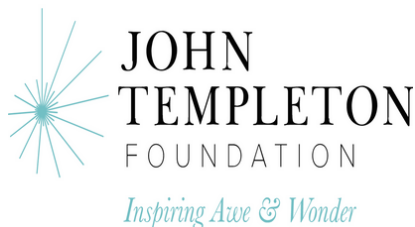
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