

A photograph of four people (three men and one woman) standing in a theater with red seats. They are all smiling and have their arms crossed. The man on the far left is wearing a dark suit and glasses. The man next to him is wearing a dark blue jacket with a logo. The woman in the center is wearing a maroon shirt. The man on the far right is wearing a grey blazer. The text "2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT" is overlaid in large white letters.

2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT



**CIOCCA
CENTER**
FOR PRINCIPLED ENTREPRENEURSHIP

THE CATHOLIC
UNIVERSITY
OF AMERICA





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Director's Letter 2024



Andreas Widmer

Dear Reader,

As I write, several of my team members and some of our best entrepreneurship students have just returned from a week at "Acton University," which we used as both an opportunity to share and discuss important ideas and as a team-building exercise. It was exhilarating to be in the company of intellectuals and practitioners from all over the world who share belief in the importance of free markets and good character if we want to build and serve the common good. Exhilarating but exhausting! And we flew back smack into the vaunted heat and humidity of mid-summer Washington. So it's a good moment to slow down, enjoy the year's accomplishments with satisfaction, and reflect on where we should go for the upcoming year.

The Ciocca Center for Principled Entrepreneurship rests on three foundations: forming students intellectually and practically to think and act like entrepreneurs wherever they are; incubating and launching businesses that spring from within the university community; and practical and intellectual contributions to the practice of entrepreneurship.

Our late friend and benefactor Art Ciocca emphasized building slow and steady for truly lasting results, and we believe in this year, not quite 10 years since our founding, our ideas are beginning to have real reach: whether in the classroom, where our student body is responding to our hands-on pedagogical style; in the expansion of our VentureLab incubator through partnerships with other schools; or in our growing network of partners and collaborators.

You'll learn more about these and the other good things we've been up to this year in the coming pages, and we'd love to hear your feedback about what we could do better. As always, if you are near campus, get in touch. We'd love to give you a tour or discuss a new possibility for collaboration.

Pax,
Andreas



WHO WE ARE

The Ciocca Center for Principled Entrepreneurship

is a lean team of academics and practitioners united to harness the power of principled entrepreneurship to overcome the small-spirited, zero-sum vision of business by inspiring the creation of profitable, person-centered companies that provide enterprise solutions to human problems.



The Solution

At the Ciocca Center for Principled Entrepreneurship, we believe the key to reversing these trends in favor of an optimistic, “can-do,” and harmonious society is restoring each person’s sense of agency, connecting them to their deepest ideals and purpose. We teach and model an entrepreneurial mindset that aims to create transformational entrepreneurs: persons capable of integrating personal virtue, cutting-edge entrepreneurial tools, and long-term perspective to launch and grow enterprises that harness human creativity at the service of individuals and communities.

The center achieves its goal through three main strategies: providing and scaling programs on principled entrepreneurship and developing future leaders who appreciate the intersection of virtue and business; offering resources for small business creation and long-term success; and engaging the public, academic, and Catholic business communities with the center’s insights and achievements regarding principled entrepreneurship.

The Problem

Record disengagement at work. High levels of hopelessness and loneliness in our young people. The increasing perception of societal disaffection and the turn to one-size-fits-all, statist (“socialist”) solutions.



OUR IMPACT THIS YEAR

10

Awards

300+

Student businesses
launched

37

Events hosted

6

New projects
launched

350+

Media presentations
& appearances

**3.5
million+**

Total media
audience

**505
in 22 states**

CEDE
Students

7000+

Event
participants

3166

Google
citations

1

Papal
knighthood



In February 2024, Director Andreas Widmer was made a Knight of St. Sylvester for “extraordinarily meritorious service to the Church,” in recognition of his decades of service to the Swiss Guard.





VentureLab@CatholicU

Cultivating entrepreneurship and innovation by giving students, faculty, alumni and select businesses a practical path for pursuing their start-up dreams.

THE PROBLEM

As the nation's premiere Catholic research university, the Catholic University of America community is engaged in pioneering work in science, medicine, engineering and the arts.

How do we connect students, alumni, and faculty with innovative business ideas across the university—including budding architects, engineers, scientists, and artists—to the unique combination of business acumen, virtue education, and principled entrepreneurship championed at the Busch School of Business and the Ciocca Center? How do we assure that the next great innovation in technology, retail, food services, medicine, or the arts is brought to fruition instead of remaining an idle thought for lack of the practical tools to get started? And how do we assure that businesses emerging from Catholic University of America alumni embody the pillars of principled entrepreneurship, becoming agents that change the world of business into a place of honesty, respect for human dignity, and the flourishing of families and communities?

THE OPPORTUNITY

VentureLab@CatholicU is the university's business incubator. It brings together a team of mission-aligned and successful professors and business professionals to bring the best ideas from university students, alumni, and faculty from discovery to market.

VENTURELAB IN PRACTICE

Students and alumni across the university can work with VentureLab@Catholic U in four ways:

- ENT 455 gives students the opportunity to develop their own start-up businesses while studying great cases including iconic brands such as Apple, Home Depot and Disney. Using the Business Model Canvas and Core and Explore frameworks, the classroom experience features interactive lectures by notable members of the VentureLab@CatholicU Alumni Leadership Board on topics including leadership, ideation, and finance.
- Independent Study allows students with a deeper drive to create a business to spend a semester with one on one mentorship.
- Personal coaching schedule. Students, alumni and staff can approach VentureLab at any time to talk through their ideas and develop next steps.
- Venture Lab Summer Fellow / Scholar program: each summer, we identify the most promising student business ideas and offer a paid internship for students to develop their businesses while achieving a challenging but realistic set of milestones.



Innovation Incubator

For those who are called to it, enterprise is almost an art: a means to put the best of yourself on the line in service of making life better or more delightful for your neighbors. We train students to solve problems through business and our innovative programs help those already in business to professionalize and scale.

VentureLab@CatholicU

Venture Lab - By the Numbers

VentureLab@Catholic U., now in its fourth year, aims to be a campus hub for bringing students, alumni, and select aligned businesses from inspiration to the market.

We are proud of the steady progress we've made this year by:

11	Spreading the word on campus that VentureLab is not only for business students. We were delighted especially to welcome 11 Architecture students (including 5 Andy Tran Scholars--see sidebar) to VentureLab 455/555.
30	Incubating 30 student business in the classroom
35	Mentoring 35 aligned businesses, including Stand Together, MagisteriumAI, Optimal Work, Theology of Home, Watts of Love, Givr, Sent, and Young Catholic Professionals.
80	Engaging with local food incubator Mess Hall to host an entrepreneurship mixer with more than 80 students in attendance!
3	Sponsoring Three VentureLab Summer Scholars, enabling them to work on promising business ideas.



Catholic U alumnus, venture capitalist, and Ciocca Board member Andy Tran meets with Andy Tran Scholars outside the Ciocca Center on campus.

Andy Tran Scholars are the top 5 Architecture in Business students.

Meet some of our VentureLab alumni and current Summer Fellows in the next few pages.

INNOVATIONS TO OUR PROGRAM THIS YEAR:

1

Working with promising businesses from Engineering students, including interesting work in the treatment of diabetes and a device restoring the ability to play golf to persons with prosthetic limbs.

2

The launch of student businesses such as Film & Photo by Ellie and WhichSpot, an app guiding college students to local restaurants and bars featuring special offers.





Meet the Venture Lab Summer Scholars

Mohammad Alghamdi



Mohammad is working on a project developing a process to refurbish continuous glucose monitoring devices and send them back to customers. Over the summer, he is primarily focusing on developing a go-to-market plan, a strategic business model, and developing partnerships that would allow him to succeed in this area.

A rising senior at Catholic University, John has successfully developed and prototyped a device to assist scoliosis patients. A few of the things he has done this summer include beta-testing and gathering data on the effectiveness of the device, beginning the patenting process, developing a sales script, doing market research on his customer base, and developing a go-to-market plan. He has also focused heavily on branding and has begun exploring funding avenues.

John Whelan



Oluwatosin Johnson



Tosin, a biomedical engineering student, has worked this summer developing an engineering project of his to bring to the marketplace. It's a device that helped Sean, a veteran who is the first ever double-limb transplant patient, return to golfing. Tosin is working on finding and conducting research on other customers, developing strategic partnerships, and working on a go-to-market plan and business strategy.





Social Enterprise Mentoring

All genuine business is problem-solving, but at the Ciocca Center we explicitly challenge students to bring enterprise solutions to bear on the problems they see around them.

PRINCIPLED ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In 472/572, Principled Entrepreneurship, side by side with the study of the Pillars of Principled Entrepreneurship and the importance of company culture, we ask student teams to study and tackle a social problem. This year, in partnership with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington and Campus Ministry, student teams met with homeless persons in places where they gather, seeking to connect them to employment and other resources.

"The key to the wealth of nations lies in human creativity more than in any other source."

– Michael Novak, *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*

the spirit of entrepreneurship

We introduced a similar approach to our high school challenge this year, tweaking the CEDE Entrepreneurship Challenge to focus expressly on problem-solving in local communities. In partnership with the Templeton Foundation, we were able to offer a select group of high school students the opportunity to study Michael Novak's idea of *Business as a Calling* and the concepts of Pluralism, Creativity, Calling, and Community in monthly virtual meetings —and then put those ideas into action in monthly "quests" to discover their individual gifts and use them to help people and organizations in their local communities better serve their constituents and missions. Students who presented the best "artifact" of their work were selected for Exitus, an on-campus experience in Washington, DC, to be held the Summer of '24.



The Ciocca Team also coaches existing social enterprises, including Magisterium AI, Givr, Watts of Love, Young Catholic Professionals, La Marmotta Gelateria.



Church Management Program



An overlooked source of entrepreneurial thinking in service of the human person is the Church!

Our new Church Management Program seeks to help dioceses, parishes, hospitals, schools and non-profits bring an entrepreneurial spirit and best business practices to bear on faith-based organizations.

In service of the Church in the United States, the Church Management Program aims to promote the faith with an ecclesial effort to reform, to aid the poor, and to promote holiness throughout the world.

The program’s faculty is drawn from the Busch School of Business, including experts in civil and ecclesial practice. Instruction is supplemented by guest lecturers and seminar-leaders from parishes, schools, seminaries, dioceses, and apostolates. The degree program includes individual courses redesigned to respond to the 6th edition of the Program of Priestly Formation, approved by the Holy See on June 24, 2022.

Meet the Church Management Team!



We are delighted to welcome the newest members of the Ciocca Team: Rev. Robert Gahl, Director of our Church Management Programs, and Program Manager, Caroline Beecher.

Rev. Robert Gahl, PhD is Associate Professor in the Busch School of Business at Catholic University of America, where he has relaunched Church Management Program including the Master in Ecclesiastical Administration and Management (MEAM). He is also Associate Professor of Ethics in the School of Philosophy of the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross (Santa Croce) in Rome where he was Director of the Program of Church Management (2017-2022).

Caroline Beecher is from Chicago, IL, and earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Saint Mary’s College of Notre Dame. After graduation, she worked as a neonatal intensive care nurse while remaining involved part-time as a student life and logistics coordinator for the Catholic Worldview Fellowship, which she attended during college. This role inspired a growing interest in management, marketing, and team dynamics which led her to pursue a master’s degree in Political and Corporate Communication at the University of Navarra in Pamplona, Spain. Caroline now serves as program coordinator of the Rome Experience, a summer formation program for diocesan seminarians, and program manager of the Church Management Program.

Initial Success

The MEAM (Masters of Science in Eccesial Management) program has had 85 students since its inaugural semester in Spring 2023.

20	Twenty are currently enrolled in the full MEAM degree program.
3	Three students are pursuing graduate certificates in Church Leadership.
62	Another 62 students, primarily seminarians, have enrolled in stand-alone courses.
4	The program will graduate 4 students with master’s degrees at the end of the summer.
15	Last August, we hosted an in-person session with 15 participants from our 512/513 courses and a variety of guest speakers. We will offer this opportunity again in August 2024.

The Busch School of Business FAMILY BUSINESS CONSORTIUM



THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA



What distinguishes our Family Business Consortium is that we start from the understanding that the family is the fundamental building block of society both socially and economically. It's an organization of family entrepreneurs united in our understanding that, large or small, family businesses face unique challenges and complexities, but also opportunities for growth. Opportunities not solely economic: our consortium shares a commitment to building not only strong businesses, but strong families.

Our network of family businesses is growing! This year we hosted two full-day colloquia for family entrepreneurs, always addressing the numerous sources of family capital: financial, human, social, and spiritual.



SOCIAL



HUMAN



SPIRITUAL



FINANCIAL



Family Business Consortium

Fall Meeting: 62 participants

Spring meeting: 57 participants



Presentation to the
United Nations NGO
Committee on the Family
March 21, 2024

Dr. Anthony Cannizzaro, Ph.D.
*Director, Family Business Consortium
Associate Professor, Busch School of Business
The Catholic University of America*

Dr. Francisco Lara, Ph.D.
*Assistant Director, Family Business Consortium
Full Professor, Universidad Católica de Valencia
Visiting Professor, Busch School of Business
The Catholic University of America*

Family Business Consortium leaders Dr. Anthony Cannizzaro and Dr. Francisco Lara were invited to address the UN NGO Committee on the Family on the importance family business plays in a flourishing society.

Fall 2023 Speakers



Tim Busch
Founder
The Busch Firm



Gates Garcia
President & CEO
PineHill Capital



Patrick Kilner
CEO
Kilner & Kirk



Dr. Francisco Lara, PhD
Associate Director
Family Business Consortium

Spring 2024 Speakers



Deacon Steve Kaneb
Retired Chairman
HP Hood



Paul Doman
Founder
Victory Square Partners



Peter Mustian
Principal, Consultant, and Chief
Operating Officer *Innovest*



John F. Reim
Managing Director
*Morgan Stanley's Private
Wealth Management division*



Sloan Smith
Principal and Director
Innovest



Solving the “Three City” Problem

In November 2023, Luke Burgis convened a unique conference at the university that led to a major new funding initiative, The CLUNY Project.

The Conference

In the summer of 2022, Luke Burgis wrote a popular article in WIRED magazine titled “The Three City Problem of Modern Life,” asking the question: “What does Athens have to do with Jerusalem, and what do both of these places have to do with Silicon Valley?” These three metaphorical cities represent Reason, Faith, and Innovation. In November 2023, Burgis convened a conference to bring together leaders from these different spaces in a unique conference at CUA.



President Kilpatrick giving opening remarks at the event.

The conference, titled **NOVITATE** (from St. Paul’s letter to the Romans, meaning “renewal”), brought together leaders to explore the work of the leading Catholic thinker René Girard, who is at the nexus of Athens (as a professor), Jerusalem (a Catholic), and Silicon Valley (he taught at Stanford, and was the most important intellectual influence of many famed entrepreneurs).

250 people from diverse fields and traditions —such as Hamish McKenzie, CEO of Substack, writer Walter Kirn, Rev. Robert Sirico, and entrepreneur Peter Thiel— gathered to explore the work of French social theorist René Girard and make connections to the modern world.

This event led to the creation of what is now called The CLUNY Project, named after an institution in France founded in 910 that became a center of scholarship, spiritual renewal, and innovation. Through CLUNY, we will be building an ecosystem of person-centered entrepreneurs.

1 The first-ever Novitate Award was bestowed on author Cynthia Haven for embodying the ideals of “New Models of Thought and Desire.”

2 The “Young Thinker” prize was given to Owen Yingling, a first year student at the University of Chicago, by a three-person panel, for his critical engagement with Girard’s work.



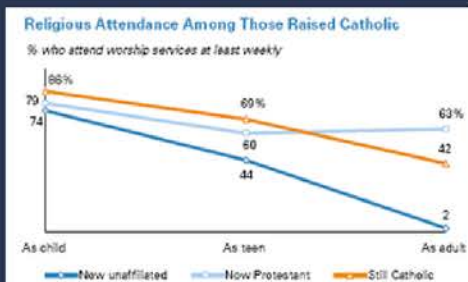
The Catholic Entrepreneurship & Design Experience (CEDE)

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

THE PROBLEM

In the next 10 years, hundreds of thousands of young Catholic high school students will become unaffiliated with the Church and feel that they are drifting through their twenties without clear direction, mentorship, or purpose.

The situation is challenging. According to one study from the Pew Research Center, "Almost half of Catholics who are now unaffiliated (48%) left Catholicism before age 18." Another study performed by Ascension Press found that 68% of those leaving the Catholic Church are doing so because their spiritual needs are not being met.



In addition, students lack the practical skills needed to thrive in life: skills of decision-making, discernment, and a knowledge of basic business concepts like opportunity cost or return on investment. The consequence of this skills gap is that 40% of college graduates regret their choice in major. Along with this, students lack a network of professional mentorship that will help them navigate the myriad circumstances they will encounter as they transition from high school to college and eventually to young professionals.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The period of life between the ages of 14-24 is critical for developing a sense of self that will allow a person to move into adulthood with purpose. The CEDE Program directly addresses this problem and has the potential to change the trajectories of millions of young American Catholics.

The Catholic Church and its large network of schools is in the best possible position to do what secular schools cannot: to draw on the riches of the Catholic tradition to help students discern their personal vocation and to develop their own sense of freedom and agency—helping them to see themselves as protagonists, or CEOs, of their own lives: co-creators with God. That is the purpose of the CEDE program.

There is a powerful precedent: the Designing Your Life course ("How to build a well lived, joyful life") is the longstanding most popular undergraduate course at Stanford University, taught by Bill Burnett and Dave Evans. It has helped tens of thousands of students embark on lives of meaning and purpose, using the principles of design thinking to help them think through their life journey. Yet this program has no serious philosophical and theological foundation. The CEDE program integrates the tradition and wisdom of the Catholic Church with the principles of design thinking in order to meet student needs and awaken in young men and women a sense of purpose and agency.



What does CEDE look like in practice?

CEDE is a highly adaptable experiential-learning curriculum in which 14-18-year-olds move through a series of learning modules—each of them anchored around a “challenge” or “quest” to complete in the real world—in which they learn key skills of discernment, learn how to “think and act like an entrepreneur,” and learn how to take ownership of their lives.



CEDE program graduates from Marin Catholic

The program culminates in a capstone: an Odyssey Project in which they articulate a plan for living the next 1-2 years of their life with intention and purpose and a clear plan of action and commitment to development.

CEDE is usually administered by a trained Facilitator (whether in a traditional high school, a homeschool parent, or in a parish setting as part of a youth group); a self-directed version of CEDE is also available.



CEDE includes an onboarding program for teachers and ongoing support through a growing community of educators and business leaders.

a CEDE workshop



Students can choose to take advantage of our dual enrollment option, using successful completion of CEDE requirements to earn three college credits at Catholic University of America’s Busch School of Business.

Upon completion of the full CEDE program, students become official CEDE alumni who will be invited to future events and have access to a mentoring network to help them navigate their college journey, start their first business venture, or pursue their vocation.



CEDE HIGHLIGHTS

CEDE BY THE NUMBERS: *A growing network*

505

Students Participated

23

States

12

Students applied to Catholic
University from CEDE

20

Schools integrating CEDE
curriculum next year



"I absolutely loved the Spirit of Entrepreneurship Challenge! It was a wonderful experience to be surrounded by like-minded individuals. The interactive discussions were a highlight and it was great to see everyone's opinions valued. In the future, I plan to apply what I learned from the symposium in my leadership and volunteer roles. It was a valuable experience that will guide me as I pursue college in the future." -
Hailey Klein

A HELLO AND A FOND FAREWELL

We welcome as CEDE's new Assistant Director Maureen McNeill and are grateful to Jon Bachura, our outgoing CEDE Assistant Director, for the joy and dynamism he brought to getting CEDE launched.



Maureen McNeill



Jon Bachura



cede Programs

CEDE has expanded its suite of programs to include:



A COLLEGE-LEVEL
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
COURSE



IN-PERSON WORKSHOPS
FOR SCHOOL AND PARISH
GROUPS



A VIRTUAL SOCIAL
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
CHALLENGE EXPLORING
THEMES IN MICHAEL NOVAK'S
BUSINESS AS A CALLING,
CULMINATING IN A THREE-DAY
ON-CAMPUS EXPERIENCE



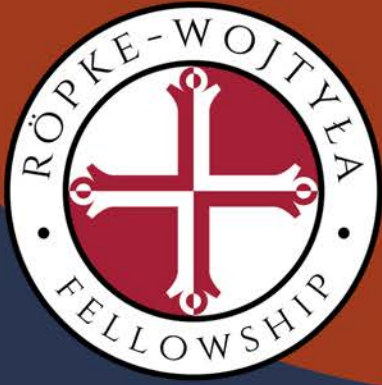
A VIRTUAL STARTUP
CHALLENGE FOR
STUDENTS
INTERESTED IN
STARTING THEIR
OWN BUSINESS
LAUNCHING IN
SUMMER '24

I was very fully confident in my idea that religious and economy/society should be separate, and Novak + this program blew that away and forced me to wrestle with the idea that both my faith and my interactions with the rest of the world need to interconnect.

~ Entrepreneurship Challenge Participant



Röpke-Wojtyła Fellowship



A Fellowship For Truth

What do Matteo Liberatore (a nineteenth century Italian theologian), François Michelin (a French CEO) and Michael Novak (an American author and ambassador to the Holy See) have in common? Besides the fact that they were all Catholics, they strove to understand the truth and make an impact in their respective fields. Liberatore influenced the writing of Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*; Michelin thought that an essential aspect of business was to love one's employees, always respecting their dignity; and Novak described the social order of free societies as the result of the interplay of three spheres: political, economic, and moral/cultural.

The Röpke-Wojtyła Fellowship is a program hosted by The Catholic University of America for Catholic undergraduate seniors from any institution across the United States. The purpose of the Röpke-Wojtyła Fellowship is to help college seniors, thirsty to explore ideas they may not encounter in their formal studies, to realize their call to become the next Liberatore, Michelin, or Novak. Moreover, in a time surfeited by the digital at the expense of the personal, RWF provides an opportunity for young scholars to spend time in genuine fellowship with each other as they encounter fundamental ideas about the good society and their role in it.

The Röpke-Wojtyła Fellowship aims to educate future Catholic intellectuals and business leaders in the study of market order and social thought — and in particular Catholic social thought as it compares to more secular scholarship. Throughout the year, the fellows discuss topics in history, philosophy, political economy, and politics.

RWF is a call on young Catholics to explore important questions of social philosophy, such as the makings of a good society, the civilizing aspects of commerce, and the tensions between markets and community. The Fellowship also aims to encourage the next generation to critically engage intellectual traditions and authors they might not otherwise encounter during their studies. These include the Church Fathers on trade, the medieval debates on commerce and the economy, the origins of property, the impact of labor value theory on social movements, the critiques of political economy, Wilhelm Röpke's assessment of the social framework for the market order, and Karol Wojtyła's philosophy of the human person and of human action.



Röpke-Wojtyła Fellowship

Funding opportunity: Reach out to Dr. Frederic Sautet if you would like to sponsor a Fellow or to participate in a Partner Colloquium in which interested partners spend a day on our Catholic U campus getting a taste of the Röpke-Wojtyła experience in conversation with others.



In their words, here is what RWF meant to this year's Fellows:

"Something really thoughtful that Dr. S had said in one of our colloquium sessions is that it is actually our duty as Catholics to enter the marketplace and help create profit and to really do a service there by being good stewards of the gifts and charisms that we have....I hadn't really heard that before, but I do love this idea that God gives us gifts and talents and that we are actually called to cultivate them and live them out in various spheres."

-Shea Nowicki, 2023-24 fellow



2023-24 Cohort Notable Placements

Columbus School of Law	Constevooy McHarty
University of Virginia School of Law	Seton Teaching Fellows
Yale Divinity School	Louis Burke Associates
Boston College	Perella Weinberg Partners
University of Notre Dame	Ethics & Public Policy Center

"I believe that reading the authors which the fellowship puts forth has helped me to better understand my duty as an American and the place these authors of business, finance, economics play in the great conversation of the authors of the ages."

-Elizabeth Gracon, 2023-24 Fellow



"I remember the first day I got my readings for the first colloquium and the book by Michael Novak in particular: I was blown away. I thought this is just what I wanted. Being able to spend time with these encyclicals and to discuss them with my peers from other colleges has been incredible. And to grow in that Catholic faith and friendship over our common heritage has been lovely."

-Helen Schlueter, 2023-24 fellow

"Being able to be here has been a true blessing. We get to see the places where [the authors we read] wrote, or to see the places where they walked the streets. Having that grounding from not just texts in the abstract, but also knowing these are real people with real lives who walked these streets. It really gives you a sense of duty." -Abraham Figueroa, 2023-24 fellow



In a Fellowship First, two of our Fellows who met through the program this year fell in love and were engaged outside St. Peter's Basilica during our recent colloquium in Rome. This seems fitting given that love is born of friendship and the deepest friendships are in pursuit of the highest things. (Not promising marriage as the fruit of every cohort, though -- results may vary!)



Class of 2024



Raleigh Adams
Clemson University



Natalia Ibarra
Brown University



Ian Crossey
Naval Academy



Victoria Lyczak
University of Notre Dame



Abraham Figueroa
University of Notre Dame



Eamonn Newton
University of Notre Dame



Merlot Fogarty
University of Notre Dame



Shea Nowicki
Benedictine College



Ryan Gapski
Yale University



Helen Schlueter
Hillsdale College



Elizabeth Gracon
Magdalen College



Lauren Witt
Wellesley College



Patrick Hyland
Catholic University of America



Brody Zywan
University of Virginia



Alumni Updates

A key metric of program success for us is whether the Fellowship becomes a genuine source of lasting connection for participants across the years. This year we were pleased to host local alumni for dinner on campus, allowing us to catch up with old friends and make connections across cohorts.

Seven years into the program, here's how our alumni are making their mark:

In the Church:

- **Sean Piowar**, Class of 2022, is entering the Dominicans this summer.
- **Nicholas Vance**, Class of 2018, was fully ordained as a Catholic priest in May 2024.
- There are 5 additional RWF alumni in the midst of their seminarian studies as well.

In Academia:

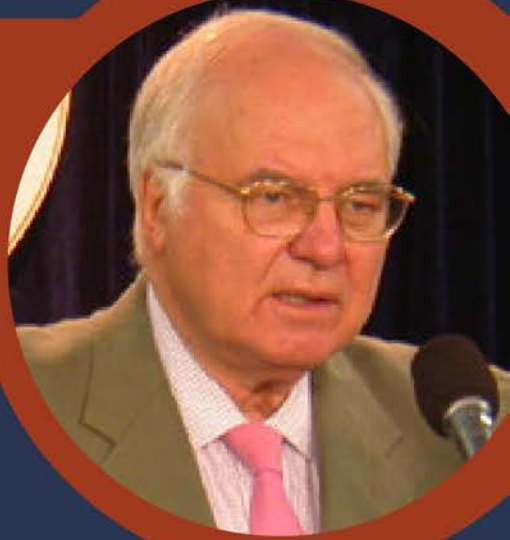
- **Patrick Mitchell**, Class of 2021, will be presenting a paper at the Aquinas at 800 Conference at Notre Dame in September 2024. This paper is an extension of his RWF essay.
- **Jean Paul Juge**, Class of 2019, won a "graduate student paper award" at the North American Patristics Society Conference - the paper is forthcoming in the Journal of Theological Studies.
- **Katheryn Furlong**, Class of 2020, graduated with a law degree from University of Minnesota and will soon start as a Judicial Law Clerk for the US District Court for the District of Minnesota.
- **Kacey Reeves West**, Class of 2018, graduated with a PhD in Economics from George Mason University, fully funded by the Mercatus Center.
- **Toby Hoonhout, Theresa Ryland, and Sammy Roberts**, all Class of 2019, attended the Institute for Human Ecology's Rome Seminar in June 2024.

In Public Policy:

- **Michael Lucchese**, Class of 2018, is now an Associate Editor at Law and Liberty.
- **Justin Callais** is beginning a new role as the Archbridge Institute's Chief Economist. His research this year on social mobility drew the attention of Utah's governor, Spencer Cox.
- **Michaella Maniscalco Vaughan**, Class of 2022, is beginning a new role as the Director of Education for Texas Right to Life.
- **Catherine Francois**, Class of 2018, began a role as a Deputy Speechwriter for Mitch McConnell.



NOVAK FELLOWSHIP



The Novak Fellowship is our effort to create an interdisciplinary community of thought on campus at the Catholic University of America, in an effort to cultivate high-caliber thinking about what is needed for a free and virtuous society. Thanks to a generous grant from the Templeton Foundation, we are able to offer students the chance to think about political economy using insights from the late Ambassador Novak's seminal work, *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* as the foundation of discussion.



Ambassador Michael Novak (1933-2016) spent a career thinking and writing about all that pertains to the human spirit and the moral foundations undergirding economic and political systems. When first published in 1982, his *Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* caught the attention of his friend Pope St. John Paul II, and was eagerly studied in secret and at personal risk by peoples in the grip of Soviet and other forms of tyranny. It earned him the highest civilian honor from not one, but several, subsequently liberated countries, and it contributed to his winning of the prestigious Templeton Prize.

New times require fresh thinking, but we hope to cultivate in our students not so much Novak's specific ideas, but rather, his approach: interdisciplinary, open-minded, supremely realistic. He was able to bring fresh insights to old problems because he could cast aside cant and convention to examine an institution or phenomenon afresh.

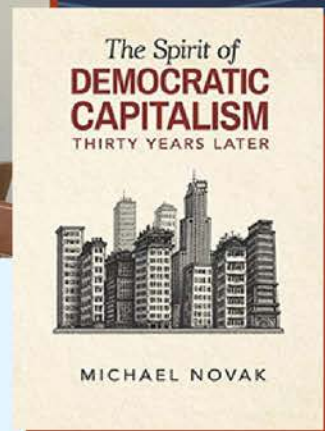


FELLOWSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

For the first time this year we were able to recruit a full cohort of fourteen fellows. In our building years we struggled to get applicants, but this year we had 23 applicants from four Catholic University schools and 13 different majors.

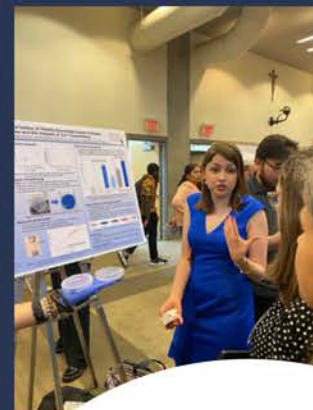


Juniors and seniors read the entirety of Michael Novak's *Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* and a short companion piece, and met eight times during the year to discuss it.



In addition, we're proud of the contributions our Novak Fellows made to campus life:

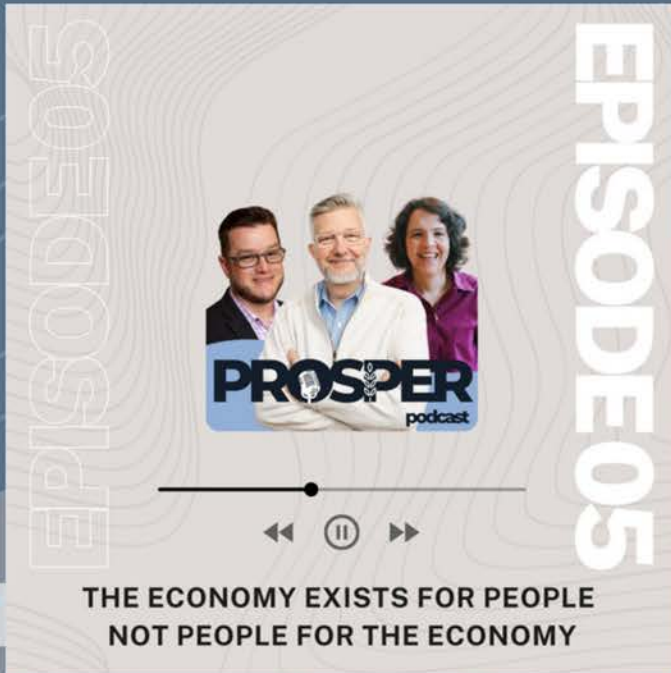
- Maria Eriquiaga, Engineering & Pre-Med: President's Award (University's Highest Student Award)
- Becca Miller, Business, was the Busch School Valedictorian
- Jamie Besendorfer, Business/ Entrepreneurship: Michael Novak Free Enterprise Award
- Gavin Lewis, Business/ Entrepreneurship, won the Busch School's Force for Good Award
- 6 of the 14 Novak Fellows presented research at University Research Day: Maria Eriquiaga, Gavin Lewis, David Fritz, Dean Robbins, Faith Dickerson, and Alex Havey



Lifelong Learning



Aware that young entrepreneurs especially favor audio formats, this spring we launched Prosper, our podcast to spread the ideas of Principled Entrepreneurship to a target audience of young faith-filled professionals.



Billed as the show "where serial entrepreneur (and bodyguard to St. John Paul II) Andreas Widmer and his friends navigate business challenges in the light of faith," we aim to help professionals under the age of 45 learn to live as Principled Entrepreneurs.



- Grouped into 12-episode seasons, Season 1 features our in-house team of Andreas Widmer, Rebecca Teti and Jon Bachura exploring key ideas in the Ciocca Center approach to entrepreneurship, including the dignity of work, the economy being made for the person, not the person for the economy, and the need to seek for enterprise solutions to social problems.

- Season 2 will feature our interviews with a wide variety of business practitioners who exemplify Principled Entrepreneurship telling compelling stories about their businesses and sharing wisdom garnered from experience.

- At the time of this report, the show has just launched, and has a small but already loyal group of listeners, and the first several episodes have garnered interest in the form of: the invitation to address a Catholic Women in Business conference, an invitation to write a book, and solicitations to be guests on the program! We are hopeful this initiative will grow into a fun listening community, able to live out and spread the Ciocca way of business.



The Gospel of Work

Don't just *make more*,
become more.



The Gospel of Work is a free 8-part video series beautifully filmed and directed by Michael Matheson Miller. Informed by the teachings of the Catholic Church and inspired by what Andreas Widmer learned from Pope St. John Paul the Great during his service as a Swiss Guard, this series takes a close look at what scripture and tradition have to say about the vocation and meaning of work, the important role it plays in human flourishing, and how not to let negative cultural trends steal the joy, meaning, and community inherent in work well done.

The series explores work under the lens of our sanctification—and provides actionable insights for building a good life and a good business. Widmer is joined by his colleague Luke Burgis, fellow CEOs and scholars.

In its first year, more than 17,000 viewers completed the course on FORMED, the platform of the Augustine Institute, with a potential reach of 1.6 million, and The M5 Leadership Institute, directed by Benjamin Hagan, began using the Gospel of Work for its employee training as part of “servant leadership.”

This year we’ve gained new audience from new partners:

- Now in use on campus as formation for the Ohio State Catholic Center
- Added to digital platforms Heroic Men, Array of Hope, and Shalom World
- Additionally, in the Fall, Andreas Widmer addressed the national conference of Heroic Men on the Gospel of Work.
- In the Spring, Andreas Widmer, Luke Burgis, and Rebecca Teti led more than 100 participants in a pre-conference workshop based on the Gospel of Work ahead of the Young Catholic Professionals Conference in Dallas.



Catholic Social Thought in Business Education



As we have each year for four years, we co-sponsored the annual Catholic Social Thought in Business Education program, a collaboration among the Ciocca Center, the Mendoza School of Business, the John Ryan Institute, the Pontifical University Santa Croce, and the Lumen Christi Institute to teach a deep and non-ideological approach to Catholic Social Teaching to Business-school professors.

This year it was the John Ryan Institute's turn to host, and Andreas Widmer joined a team of 25 tenure and tenure-track faculty on the topic of "Business and Catholic Social Thought: A Primer." During the seminar, graduate students and faculty members in business schools covered foundational principles in Catholic social thought and learned how apply them to their own field of research and teaching.

Tolton : From Slave to Priest

In keeping with our conviction that human creativity is a participation in God's initial act of creation, The Ciocca Center strives to support and expose our students to innovators in the arts as well as more conventional business pursuits.

This year we were thrilled to bring actor Jim Coleman to campus for two performances of an innovative multi-media one-man performance bringing to life the story of Fr. Augustus Tolton. Fr. Tolton was the first American-born African-American priest, a candidate for canonization, and an exemplar of the entrepreneurial virtues of creativity, fortitude, dogged determination, and faith.

We partnered with Catholic University of America's Sr. Thea Bowman committee and the Catholic Campus ministry of Howard University. On closing night of the performance, we were honored by the presence of Cardinal Wilton Gregory, who happens to be the first African-American cardinal.



His Eminence Wilton Cardinal Gregory attended a performance and gave remarks



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Paul Doman
Co-Founder & CEO,
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MEDIA & PRESENTATIONS



Luke Burgis nominated for Whiting Award for Creative Non-fiction



Andreas Widmer appeared at Gallup World Headquarters for Stand Together



The Art of Principled Entrepreneurship recommended as must-read by US Chamber of Commerce

Summer 2023

- Dr. Frederic Sautet hosted the final RWF colloquium of 2023 and launches the 2024 cohort.
- Andreas Widmer addressed Acton University on the topic of principled entrepreneurship.
- Luke Burgis appeared on the Paul Millard podcast.
- Anthony Cannizzaro was invited to give a lecture in Rome on the economic history of the Italian wine industry.
- Luke Burgis appeared on the Forward podcast with Andrew Yang.
- Andreas Widmer was a guest on the Believe! Podcast .
- Rebecca Teti gave four workshops on basics of political economy for ECYD High School convention.
- Andreas Widmer participated in panel discussion at Napa Institute Summer Conference .
- The New Atlantis published Luke Burgis' "Culture War as Imitation Game."
- Andreas Widmer addressed the Heroic Men conference on the topic of Principled Entrepreneurship.
- Luke Burgis published in *City Journal*, "The Promise of Entrepreneurial Education."

- *Our Sunday Visitor* published, "Staying Faithful in a Secular Business World," an interview with Andreas Widmer.
- Andreas Widmer addressed the Philanthropy Roundtable as a panelist for "Failure to Launch."
- Dr. Frederic Sautet addressed the Southern Economics Association Conference in New Orleans on the topic "Alertness: An Aristotelian Approach." His presentation was also published as a chapter in Per Bylund's (editor) book: *A Guide to Modern Austrian Economics*. Overall, Dr. Sautet has more than 2000 scholarly citations.

Fall

- Andreas Widmer was interviewed for the "Living the Call" podcast.
- Luke Burgis addressed the Intercollegiate Studies Institute on campus at CUA.
- Both Prof. Widmer and Prof. Burgis served as panelists at the Novitate Conference hosted by our center. Luke Burgis convened the conference and Andreas Widmer also served as MC for the event.
- Andreas Widmer appeared at Gallup World HQ for Stand Together.
- Andreas Widmer attended "Let's Celebrate Entrepreneurship in Baltimore" as a guest of Conscious Capitalism.



- Dr. Sautet launched first colloquium of 7th Röpke-Wojtyła cohort.
- Rebecca Teti launched 5th Novak Fellowship cohort.
- Dr. Cannizzaro hosted Fall Family Business Consortium Meeting.
- Rebecca Teti addressed CAPP Certificate Program on Catholic Social Teaching on the topic "Our Duty to the Poor Person."
- The Ciocca Team hosted two nights of *Tolton: From Slave to Priest*.
- Andreas Widmer addressed the Heider College of Business at Creighton University.
- Andreas Widmer participated in a working group at Belmont University's Hope Summit. The working group is a coalition of Christians who seek to advance enterprise solutions in their respective denominations while collaborating and sharing best practices with each other.

Winter

- Luke Burgis re-launches his popular substack from "Anti-Mimetic" to "Luke Burgis."
- Andreas Widmer named a Knight of St. Sylvester in Rome .
- Andreas Widmer address the Gupta School of Business at University of Dallas.
- Busch School and Ciocca Center VP for Advancement Katie Garvey received Cardinal Gibbon Mission Award for outstanding staff. Ciocca Team members Kate Schulz and Rebecca Teti nominated for Fr. Francis Duffy "Unsung Hero" university staff awards.
- Luke Burgis addressed an event sponsored by Brookfield Properties at Miami Design District.
- Andreas Widmer appeared at the Museum of the Bible at the invitation of Stand Together.
- Dr. Paul Radich, whose entrepreneurial research we are supporting, presented at two academic conferences work to be submitted as articles for publication next year: "From 'Can Virtue Be Taught?' to '(How) Virtue Can Be Learned' - The Important Role of Business Ethics Education as Transformation" (Paul Radich, Brian Engelland, and Beatriz Lopez Bonetti); and "Does prosperity really lead to higher flourishing? A multifactorial analysis with the Prosperity Index (Atlantic Council) as determinant of the Harvard Flourishing Scale" (Paul Radich, Christopher Jacobi, Nicoleta Acatrinei, and Maxwell Hsu).

2024



Dr. Anthony Cannizzaro and Dr. Francisco Lara addressed the United Nations NGO Committee on the Family on the importance of family business for a flourishing society.



Luke Burgis spoke about his book, *Wanting: The Power of Mimetic Desire in Everyday Life*, at the Catholic Information Center.



- Dr. Andreas Widmer was the keynote speaker for the Gala of the Diocese of Arlington, with the topic, "Uniting Faith Communities with Bottom-up Solutions."
- Prof. Brian Walsh published lessons learned as he closed his business, TipYo.
- Andreas Widmer, Luke Burgis, and Rebecca Teti together led a pre-conference workshop for the Young Catholic Professional conference in Dallas this Spring that participants widely said was the highlight of the conference.
- Andreas Widmer, Rebecca Teti & Jon Bachura launch Prosper, the podcast of the Ciocca Center.
- Dr. Sautet was on sabbatical during the spring, and has been working on a new book project: *God Loves Profit*. He presented his project at the Busch School Research Seminar in April.

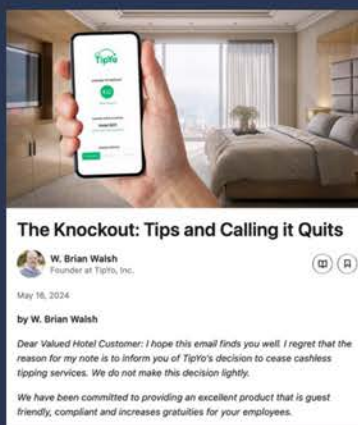
- At University Research Day, Dr. Anthony Cannizzaro presented two ongoing working papers: "Societal Impact Through Catholic Social Thought" and "The Dignity of the Worker Framework."
- Rebecca Teti presented to CEDE Entrepreneurship Challenge
- Dr. Anthony Cannizzaro and Dr. Francisco Lara addressed the United Nations NGO Committee on the Family on the importance of family business for a flourishing society.



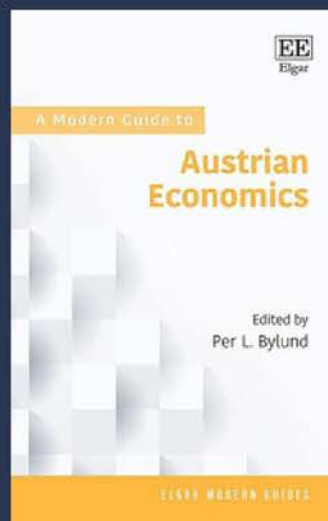
"Dear Rebecca, Thank you for doing such a magnificent presentation today. It was superb and the feedback has been outstanding - everyone has expressed genuine appreciation and gratitude for what you shared today."
- Dr. Fred Fakharzadeh, CAPP



The New Atlantis publishes Luke Burgis' "*Culture War as Imitation Game.*"



Prof. Brian Walsh publishes *lessons learned* as he closed his business, TipYo.

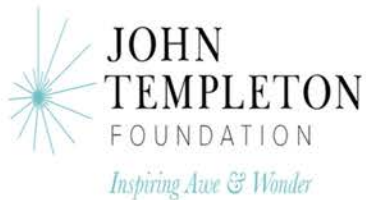


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