INVENTING AND INVESTING
Penn State entrepreneurs and innovators are imagining the way forward—and making an impact as they go
The future of the Commonwealth’s economy depends on innovation, and Penn State is leading the way. Through a focus on turning intellectual property into economic output, Penn State students and faculty and Pennsylvania citizens are seeing their ideas become realities with the help of new entrepreneurship programs, mentorship, training, and philanthropic investment. Support for these initiatives ensures that our academic community has the tools and technology they need to tackle today’s most pressing problems—and create solutions that will make a big impact on the world.

...will receive training, mentorship, and small seed grants through the Invent Penn State I-Corps Site, created with a $500,000 award from the National Science Foundation last year. The program will accelerate the process of getting these startups’ innovative ideas into the hands of consumers.

...was spent by Penn State on research in 2016–2017, up $27 million from the preceding year. The College of Agricultural Sciences alone was home to $113 million in research, and on page 12, you can read more about their new Entrepreneurship and Innovation (E&I) Program, which helps students and faculty secure funding, commercialize their research, and launch successful entrepreneurial careers.

...in the Commonwealth alone are using Penn State degrees as the foundation for careers, businesses, and lives that contribute to the economic strength of Pennsylvania and the nation. A growing number of graduates are entering the workforce with experience in launching their own companies thanks to new programs in entrepreneurship offered across the University.

...from University funds is doubling the impact of donor commitments to economic development initiatives during the Greater Penn State campaign. So far, donors have made more than $3.5 million in total gifts, including endowments for LaunchBoxes and Innovation Hubs, that support innovation and entrepreneurship on our campuses and in our communities. Learn more about these programs and matching opportunities on page 5.
A Message from Rick Sokolov

As a Penn State alumnus, I have always believed in the power of this institution to change lives and communities. It is an honor to serve as chair of the current fundraising campaign, *A Greater Penn State for 21st Century Excellence*, which will help the University to continue to be a leader in serving the public and our students.

One of the campaign’s central tenets is a commitment to driving economic prosperity across the Commonwealth, and in this issue of *We Are*, you will find an exploration of how philanthropy can spur innovation and entrepreneurship. Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations Rich Bundy will review what it means to fulfill a land-grant mission in the twenty-first century—and how deepening Penn State’s economic impact is at the heart of our success. This issue also offers a sampling of ideas that have come to life with the support of LaunchBoxes and Innovation Hubs across the Commonwealth. These programs are designed to fuel student and community entrepreneurship. The University is inviting and encouraging donors to join us in investing in new ideas and businesses through two matching programs that double the impact of private gifts, and here you will learn how two Penn State couples recently multiplied their investments in entrepreneurship and innovation in the College of Agricultural Sciences. This issue also revisits the impact of scholarships created through the Open Doors Scholarship Program and introduces you to Raise Penn State, a new digital home for Penn State fundraising and community building.

The Penn State legacy remains one of empowering hard workers—many of whom are the first in their family to attend college—to become community leaders and forward thinkers. With a focus on turning bright ideas into real-world impact, and with philanthropic investment from friends and alumni like you, today’s potential for Penn State to become an even more powerful force in the Commonwealth—and our world—is greater than ever before.

Thank you for your continued support of and interest in Penn State.

Rick Sokolov ’71 Lib
Chair, Executive Committee, *A Greater Penn State for 21st Century Excellence*
A Message from Rich Bundy

Imagine, if you can, the economy of Pennsylvania without Penn State. According to the most recent study of the University’s economic impact, no other entity—no corporation or industry, no organization or institution—contributes more to the prosperity of the Commonwealth. Each year, the University generates more than $17 billion in economic impact through expenditures on education and research, employment of nearly 27,000 Pennsylvanians, and new businesses and jobs that grow from the innovative ideas of our students, graduates, faculty, and staff.

This is what it means to serve the public as a land-grant institution in the twenty-first century, and this is why the University has made driving economic prosperity a top priority of our current fundraising campaign, A Greater Penn State for 21st Century Excellence. President Eric J. Barron began to lay the groundwork for a new era in the University’s history of economic leadership in 2015, when he directed $30 million in University funds to Invent Penn State. That initiative connects Penn State expertise and resources with the spirit of entrepreneurship and innovation that’s growing among our students, our faculty, and community members across the Commonwealth.

As you’ll learn on pages 6 and 7, the opportunities offered through Invent Penn State and other programs are already helping new businesses—and new business leaders—to thrive. With support from private donors, the possibilities for Pennsylvania and Pennsylvanians will be limitless. Supporters who make gifts to economic development programs during the Greater Penn State campaign can secure matching funds from the University and double the impact of their gifts in the communities that they call home. As you learn more about these matching programs on the pages that follow, I ask you again to imagine the economy of Pennsylvania—made even stronger through your partnership with Penn State.

Sincerely,

Rich Bundy

O. Richard Bundy III
Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations
The Economic Development Incentive Matching Program

The University is offering a 1:1 match for gifts supporting programs or scholarships that promote economic development through the creation of new businesses and jobs. Penn State’s development team can provide details on specific opportunities that qualify for this program, including:

- Entrepreneurs-in-residence who can share their real-world experiences with Penn State students and faculty
- Centers and programs that partner with community organizations to support new and emerging businesses
- Cutting-edge technologies that students and entrepreneurs can share to create prototypes for new products

Available through the end of the Greater Penn State campaign on June 30, 2021, or while matching funds last!

The LaunchBox Matching Program

Penn State’s network of seventeen Innovation Hubs and LaunchBoxes is helping entrepreneurs and businesses in communities across the Commonwealth to thrive. Innovation Hubs typically offer resources to support local manufacturing, while LaunchBoxes provide entrepreneurship education, but each center responds to the specific needs of its service area. Every LaunchBox and Innovation Hub has the opportunity to secure a $1 million match from the University if donors contribute a total of $1 million to its endowment.

To learn more about these opportunities, please contact:

David J. Lieb
Senior Associate Vice President for Development
Office of University Development
105 Old Main
University Park, PA 16802
Phone: 814-863-0694
Email: djl120@psu.edu

Across the Commonwealth, LaunchBox and Innovation Hub programs are fueling entrepreneurial spirit. To learn more about these programs, visit invent.psu.edu.
From seed money for promising startups to services for both emerging and established businesses, Penn State is driving economic development in communities across the Commonwealth. Learn more at invent.psu.edu.
Happy Valley LaunchBox, Powered by PNC Bank

Pittsburgh-based PNC Bank has long been a leading investor and an important partner with Penn State in strengthening the economy of the Commonwealth. In January, that relationship was celebrated at an event announcing PNC’s $1 million gift to endow the Happy Valley LaunchBox, Powered by PNC Bank. Located in downtown State College, the center offers two revolutionary opportunities for startup businesses. Through a four-week program, the Idea TestLab helps entrepreneurs to define their audience and the problem they want to solve. The fifteen-week FastTrack Accelerator takes emerging companies to the next stage: testing their market with real prototypes and gathering the customer feedback that will help them to succeed. With help from the Happy Valley LaunchBox, Hunter Swisher (lower left), a 2016 College of Agricultural Sciences graduate, developed a product to encourage turfgrass growth, and his startup, Phospholutions, won the Ben Franklin Technology Partners’ BIG IDEA contest in 2017.

Penn State Behrend Innovation Commons

Since the Innovation Commons opened in 2016, Penn State Behrend engineering students have partnered with local industry on more than fifty projects using the facility’s 3-D printers, AutoCad modeling software, and other technology to create prototypes and test new product lines. The lab (bottom, middle) was created with seed funding from Invent Penn State and Ignite Erie, a collaborative that draws upon the strengths of four Erie County institutions to encourage entrepreneurship and offer hands-on experience to students across many disciplines. In addition to engineering support, community members can tap into the knowledge of Behrend’s Black School of Business students, and the site also offers free consulting from local experts on intellectual property law, marketing, and small business development. This “Innovation Beehive” model has earned new grant funding, and new sites at other institutions will be launching in 2018.

Lehigh Valley LaunchBox

The postindustrial decline of Allentown, Pennsylvania, may have been immortalized in Billy Joel’s famous song, but the Lehigh Valley LaunchBox (above, left) is helping the local economy to sing a new tune. Penn State became the first institution to move back into the city’s downtown with the opening of the Lehigh Valley LaunchBox, and it has already awarded more than sixty microgrants to entrepreneurs, including those from communities historically underrepresented in the business world. Actor Tanya Wright (left), best known for her role on the television series Orange is the New Black, spoke at the Lehigh Valley campus last fall about how the LaunchBox has helped her to start her own haircare product line, HAI Riette. The event was part of the LaunchBox Ladies series, which highlights the achievements and challenges of female entrepreneurs. The Lehigh Valley LaunchBox also offers a program for area high school students, to cultivate a new generation of business leaders for the region.
Q: Who are Penn State’s fundraising volunteers?

A: Penn State’s fundraising volunteers are some of the University’s most passionate advocates and ambassadors. These individuals—who number approximately 700 across all of our colleges, campuses, and units—are alumni and friends who not only support Penn State through philanthropic gifts, but who also make a significant investment of their time and talents.

Q: How do these individuals add value to the University’s fundraising efforts?

A: During our current campaign, A Greater Penn State for 21st Century Excellence, our volunteers will be critical to our success. Through their own gifts, they set a powerful example for their fellow alumni and friends of the University. Beyond their financial investment, though, our volunteers engage new donors, cultivate high-level support, and steward the investment other donors have already made in the University. In this way, they significantly extend the ability of our professional staff to raise funds for the institution. Our volunteers continue to inspire me with their genuine passion and enthusiasm for Penn State. We value what our volunteers bring to the University, and we want them, in turn, to gain value from their experience—to feel that their talents are being put to good use and that they are deepening their connection to the University.
For billions of people around the world, social media provides news, entertainment, and community. At Penn State, it provides a new frontier for fundraising. Raise Penn State—the Office of University Development’s account on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram—offers an exciting point of connection for alumni and friends, stories about the impact of private support, and unique opportunities for giving to the University.

The foundation of Raise Penn State is an ever-growing digital community devoted to celebrating the importance of philanthropy at Penn State. Through photos, video, and stories that speak to a wide variety of interest and impact, Raise Penn State provides snapshots of philanthropy at work. It also encourages participation in new digitally driven events such as #GivingTuesday, which in November of 2017 generated more than $1 million in support for Penn State. Raise Penn State honors transformative giving by philanthropic leaders, helps new supporters learn how they can make a difference, and engages donors at every stage of their journey to feel informed, inspired, and proud to be a part of giving to Penn State.

Most importantly, Raise Penn State gives the Penn State community a new kind of voice. The University’s strength has always lain in community, and Raise Penn State provides a powerful way for donors to show and share their support. Liking or sharing a post puts that content in front of a donor’s online community—expanding the reach of Penn State storytelling further than ever and giving the donor a chance to endorse the area of need or opportunity that matters most to them.

With a single swipe or click, Raise Penn State followers have the latest philanthropic Penn State news at their fingertips—and a megaphone for encouraging others to be a part of raising the spirit and support that defines our institution today.

Raise Penn State
A new voice in University fundraising
What sparked your interest in human health?
My dad and I got into a car accident several years ago, and he was paralyzed. Watching his sincerely loving caretakers provide twenty-four hour care made me want to be in the medical field. I want to make the difference that someone else made for me and my family.

What has been the most challenging aspect of your time at Penn State?
Definitely the transition to University Park. I graduated from high school with 200 people—there are almost as many students in my chem lecture now as in my entire high school class. The size of Penn State can be really hard.

How would your Penn State experience be different without STEP?
It can be a hard transition to go from a smaller Penn State campus to University Park. Without STEP, I would be struggling. Getting to meet with alumni and professors, to take courses in the summer, to have extra financial support—it’s all really beneficial. STEP is helping students prepare to be better in their careers and want to give back themselves one day.

What do you hope to be doing twenty years from now?
I’d like to have my own family practice with a focus on pediatrics. I’d also like to get involved in women’s and children’s health in my native countries of Liberia and Trinidad and Tobago.

Favorite Creamery flavor?
I’m not big on sweets, but I’m obsessed with the Creamery’s lemonade. It’s not good for you...but it’s good for you. It will brighten your day.

If you could create an endowment at Penn State, what would it support?
I’d want to support women on campus and also help to promote racial unity amongst the student community. I want to be a part of ensuring that every student feels equal.

How has philanthropy made a difference for you at Penn State?
I don’t have the privilege of having of two parents with income or of being an in-state student. I’m so appreciative that kind-hearted people chose to support me. It’s kind of like a ripple effect—it makes me work harder and want to give back.

Until June 30, 2018, donors can earn a 2:1 match from the University for scholarships directed to students in STEP and several other programs designed to help students graduate on time and on track to success. Learn more at greaterpennstate.psu.edu.
Since 1861, Penn State seniors have shaped their legacies—and launched their own philanthropic journeys—through creating class gifts. From classic landmarks such as the Memorial Gateway at Allen Street and the Nittany Lion Shrine to recent student-centered gifts like endowment support for the Lion’s Pantry student food bank and the Penn State Center for Counseling and Psychological Services, the results of this meaningful 156-year philanthropic tradition continue to shape the Penn State experience.

This year, the class of 2018 returned to an old strategy of choosing more than one gift—and is setting a new direction by selecting a fund that supports students across the Commonwealth. By building a display of the alma mater in the HUB-Robeson Center, funding an endowment for the Student Farm, and supporting the University-wide Textbook and Educational Resources Fund, the class of 2018 is expanding their philanthropic impact and, like generations before them, taking their first steps towards a lifetime of giving back.

The first class gift, a portrait of Evan Pugh, now hangs in the lobby of Old Main.

The Peace Garden represents a student commitment to academic study and meaningful conversation.

The first student-endowed library book fund launched a legacy of support for University Libraries.

An endowment to support the Student Farm is one of three gifts selected by today’s senior class.

For more than 100 years, the gateway at Atherton and Pollock has greeted the Penn State community.


1861              1903             1935          1965               1997           2018

Then & Now
Students and faculty in College of Agricultural Sciences have long brought an entrepreneurial spirit to their endeavors, developing innovations that have helped to transform agriculture and strengthen the Commonwealth’s economy. In 2018, this spirit is stronger than ever, with a robust Entrepreneurship & Innovation Program that allows students of the college to learn firsthand from seasoned entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial organizations, and innovative faculty about how to turn great ideas into viable ventures.

Recent major gifts from two Penn State couples—Earl and Kay Harbaugh and John and Patty Warehime—will provide even more support for faculty and students creating the businesses of the future. Their gifts, which the University matched 1:1 through the Economic Development Incentive Program, will endow the Harbaugh Entrepreneur and Innovation Faculty Scholar and the John and Patty Warehime Entrepreneur in Residence. The Harbaughs’ gift builds upon their past support for the college’s entrepreneurship program. As an investment in student and faculty ingenuity, the Harbaughs’ and Warehimes’ philanthropy will extend Penn Staters’ impact—not only on agriculture, but also on issues ranging from human health to water and energy security to the environment. With private support, Penn State continues to be a force for growth and innovation across the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world.