

Pava Marie LaPere Center for Entrepreneurship

2023-2024 YEAR IN REVIEW



JOHNS HOPKINS
TECHNOLOGY VENTURES

**Pava Marie LaPere Center
for Entrepreneurship**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

DIRECTORS WELCOME	1
MEET THE TEAM	2
STUDENT STAFF	2
REDEDICATION	3
FUNDING RAISED	5
ALUM SHOUTOUTS	6
CONTINUUM OF ENGAGEMENT	7
COWORKING SPACE	8
PROGRAMMING	8
SPECIAL PROGRAMMING	9
PRE-O & ORIENTATION	10
INTERSESSION	10
IGNITE AWARDS	11
SINGHAL FAMILY CS ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARD	11
STUDENT ACCELERATORS	12
SPARK AND FUEL BREAKDOWN	13
SOCIAL INNOVATION LAB	14
SOCIAL INNOVATION LAB FAST FACTS	15
SUMMER INCUBATOR	16
INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP CHALLENGE	17
PRESIDENT'S VENTURE FELLOWS 2023 UPDATE	18
PRESIDENT'S VENTURE FELLOWS 2024	19
OTHER COLLABORATIONS	20
ALUMNI PROGRAMMING	21



WELCOME

This year, we're celebrating five years of championing student, alumni, and community entrepreneurship at Johns Hopkins! As our grad students know, that milestone after the previous foundational years is a big one—building on what we've learned, creating new opportunities, and fostering a deeper, more mature sense of community.

This year was marked by the tremendous growth of the program. Our accelerators expanded significantly, amidst more applications than ever before, and we partnered with colleagues and student initiatives across campus to continue evolving into our role as the hub for student, alumni, and community entrepreneurship. Our teams are going on to national accelerators, government grants, and significant outside investment. Throughout all of it, our startups are doing extraordinary work, being recognized nationwide, and raising over \$40 million during a “down” year. I'm proud to work with colleagues at the Pava Center and across JHTV who help empower these changemaking teams in extraordinary ways.

Amidst that success, there was no more bittersweet moment for us than our re-dedication last spring. More than just a renaming of the space, it has been an incredible honor to join the world in recognizing the pivotal work of Pava Marie LaPere—a student, an alum, an early employee at the center, and one of the greatest friends of the program before and during its first half decade.

Pava was part of my introduction to Johns Hopkins and a significant reason why I am here today. Recognizing her lasting influence and entrepreneurial energy provides us the opportunity to double down on our efforts to support students, alumni, and community changemakers through our programming.

We are more committed to this work and its place here in Baltimore than ever before. In addition to the visionary leadership of JHTV's executive director, Christy Wyskiel, and the rest of its staff, we also owe a deep debt of gratitude for the tireless investment and talents of many other leaders over the years, including Brian Stansky, Kerrie Carden, Kerry Ingram, Alex Riehm, Kevin Carter, Darius Graham, and Madison Marks.

That same gratitude extends to the rest of our mentorship network and alumni supporters. You truly are the “secret sauce” to all that we do, and we continue to invite you to join us in that work, as we build an ecosystem that is taking risks and moving forward together.

Josh Ambrose

Director

MEET THE TEAM



JOSH AMBROSE
Director



ANTHONY WATTERS
SIL Interim Director



PAUL DAVIDSON
Associate Director



**SEPHORA
SAINT-ARMAND**
Assistant Director



ELENA DEBOLD
Marketing and Operations
Coordinator

STUDENT STAFF



CLARA
Operations Intern
WSE, UG



CONNOR
Operations Intern
WSE, UG



SAMUEL
Operations Intern
WSE, UG



RAGHEEB
Creative Intern
KSAS, GRAD



ALANA
Spark Peer Mentor
WSE, UG



NANDITA
Spark Peer Mentor
WSE, UG



RITA
Spark Peer Mentor
WSE, GRAD



SELENA
Spark Peer Mentor
WSE, UG



SRIVATHSAN
Spark Peer Mentor
WSE, GRAD



WESLEY
Spark Peer Mentor
PBY, GRAD



FAYEZ
Fuel Peer Mentor
CBS, GRAD



JOSEPH
Fuel Peer Mentor
WSE, PhD



SHREEN
Fuel Peer Mentor
CBS, GRAD



GODSON
SIL Peer Mentor
CBS, GRAD



TOBI
SIL Peer Mentor
KSAS, GRAD

REDEDICATION

On April 6, FastForward U was rededicated and renamed the Pava Marie LaPere Center for Entrepreneurship. This event was attended by the LaPere family, special guests from the Baltimore and Johns Hopkins University entrepreneurship ecosystem and students. A highly anticipated event, it was standing room only at the center.

“Envisioning a brighter future, and investing in making it reality, is what this center has been about since its inception...we are doing our best to make sense of our loss by ensuring that this place stands as an enduring memory to her values, her energy, her dreams. A place where students, alumni, and community entrepreneurs alike are hatching new ideas and transforming them into businesses that sustain our city and our neighbors.”

- Ronald Daniels, President, Johns Hopkins University

“We would be hard-pressed to find another student in the history of this university who did so much to create resources for student entrepreneurs. Pava made it her mission to make sure that an entire legion of students could get help.”

- Christy Wyskiel, executive director of JHTV

FastForward U Opens
September 2018



FastForward U First Demo Day
Fall 2019



FastForward U
Under Construction
2017-2018



FastForward U
Grand Opening Ceremony
September 2018



FastForward U Events
2021- 2023

REDEDICATION CONTINUED

*I love Baltimore
because I love its
entrepreneurs.*

"The purpose of supporting undergraduate entrepreneurship is not to produce ventures, it is to produce entrepreneurs."

- Pava LaPere

LaPere Family Representing Pava at
Fuel Demo Day
Fall 2023



President Ron Daniels Speaking at
the Rededication Event
April 2024



Pava LaPere Supporting
Fuel Cohort
Fall 2023



Pava Center Starts
Coming Together
Spring 2024



Learn more about the
Pava Center story
and our mission.



\$243M+

Money raised in the
lifespan of the program
with \$40M+ raised in
the '23-'24 year.

ALUM SHOUTOUTS

Executed successful seed rounds:

- Class Bank (formerly known as Class Equity)
- Ecomap
- Hubly Surgical
- Leap.AI
- Kubanda
- Marigold Health
- Relavo

Received grants:

- B360: Numerous state and federal grants
- Medsetgo: Support from Goldbug Ventures and more
- The New Norm: Grant received from the Reynolds Corporation
- Optosurgical: Received support from ARPA-H and SBIR

Accepted into accelerators and competitions:

- MonaGems: 776 Fellowship
- Somnair: Competed nationally at pitch competitions including Rice Business Plan Competition
- Tastee Tape: Indie Bio accelerator

CONTINUUM OF ENGAGEMENT



- **Workshops, open houses, class presentations, panels, and more**
- **Ignite Awards & Singhal Family Computer Science Entrepreneurship Awards**
- **Spark: early-stage accelerator**
- **Fuel + Social Innovation Lab: later stage accelerators**
- **Summer Incubator: follow on support**
- **Innovation & Entrepreneurship Challenge & President's Venture Fellowship: advanced support**
- **Alumni support**

10K SQ FT INNOVATION HUB

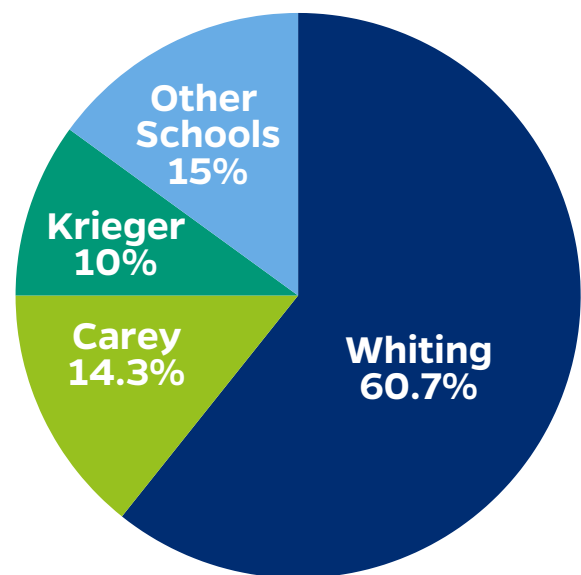
7,000 VISITS

2,000 UNIQUE VISITORS

3,200+ ADDITIONAL VISITS TO THE MAKERSPACE

PROGRAMMING

- Six accelerators
- Major award cycles
 - Spark
 - Fuel
 - Social Innovation Lab
 - Innovation & Entrepreneurship Challenge
 - Singhal Family CS Entrepreneurship Award
 - President's Venture Fellowship



~140 UNIQUE TEAMS FROM ALL OVER CAMPUS AND THE COMMUNITY

PROGRAMMING CONTINUED

- Engaged with about 2,000 additional students and 100+ community members each year through programming
- Awarded \$700k+ in non-dilutive grants (student, community, CS, etc)

“Working with the Pava Center team has been an integral part of my career development in my Ph.D. Josh, Paul, Elena, and the team have been champions of my growth since day one and the experience working with them has enabled me to gain opportunities at some of the most notable venture capital firms in the industry.” - Joseph Choy, School of Medicine, Ph.D. Candidate

- Facilitated mentoring from 200+ industry experts from around the world
- Hosted in-person and/or virtual events every week
- Offered multiple resources including pro bono services and IP guidance





SPECIAL PROGRAMMING

PRE-O & ORIENTATION

- Engaged with multiple Pre-O courses, reaching hundreds of undergraduate students
- Co-led a panel with the Life Design Lab, addressing the entire incoming first-year undergraduate class
- Connected with the entire incoming full-time MBA class at Carey Business School
- Built connections with students from the School of Education and the School of Medicine, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration

INTERSESSION

- Students gained firsthand insights into innovation and entrepreneurship either on the East or West Coast
- East Coast Session:
 - Taught by Alum Margaret Roth from Squadra Ventures and the LifeDesign Lab
 - Visited alumni at Municipal Acquisitions, Early Charm, Harry's, Bloomberg, Gutter Capital, and New Lab
- West Coast Session:
 - Taught in cooperation with Life Design Lab
 - Explored tech entrepreneurship in the Bay Area with visits to Google, Meta, Pendulum Therapeutics, Founders Inc, and more

IGNITE AWARDS

**17 AWARDS
TOTALING \$9,168**

**9 UNDERGRADUATE
8 GRADUATE**



AWARDED STUDENT SCHOOL AFFILIATION:

- Whiting School of Engineering (WSE): 12
- Bloomberg School of Public Health (BSPH): 2
- Krieger School of Arts and Sciences (KSAS): 1
- School of Education (SOE): 1
- Carey Business School (CBS): 1

This year, the Pava Center gave out 17 Ignite awards. The Ignite Fund offers Johns Hopkins student entrepreneurs access to funding throughout the academic year. The fund aims to support discrete tasks to help a venture move forward. In focusing funding this way, we hope to provide student ventures access to capital at key moments.

SINGHAL FAMILY CS ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARD



This year, two new student-run software ventures were honored with the 2024 Singhal Family CS Entrepreneurship Awards, including the top prize to Fuel alum, CounselAI, who received the \$20,000 Entrepreneurship Award.

The Singhal Family Entrepreneurship Awards is a collaboration between the Department of Computer Science and the Pava Maria LaPere Center for Entrepreneurship created to jumpstart student-run ventures in the fast-growing, competitive software industry. In addition to up to \$30,000 in funding, awardees are paired with software mentors to assist in product development and gain access to business, marketing, and financial mentorship; investor and advisor networks; and peer/cohort ventures through the Pava Center.

Read details about
the 2024 CS
Award winner.



STUDENT ACCELERATORS

FALL:

70+ applications received

Spark: 34 teams

Fuel: 10 teams

SPRING:

**94 applications - an
all-time high**

Spark: 42 teams

Fuel: 10 teams

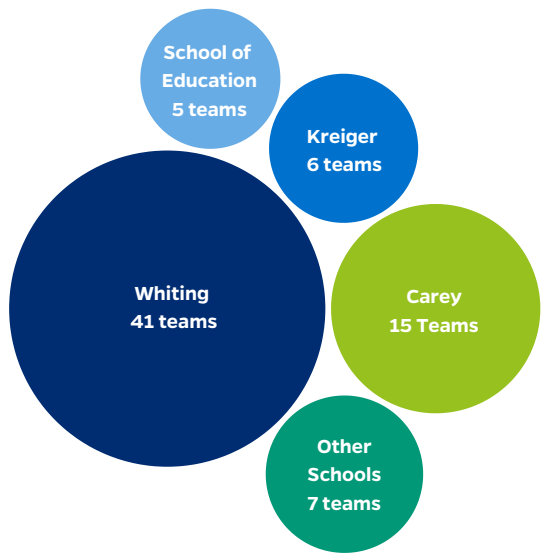


MOVE FORWARD

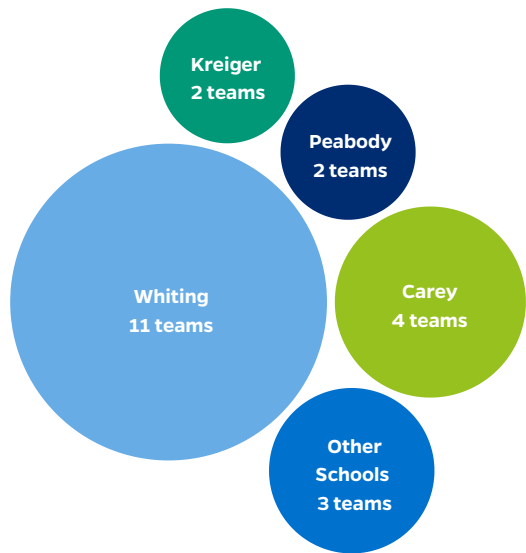


SPARK & FUEL BREAKDOWN

SPARK



FUEL



Read details about our Spring 2024 Spark Showcase.



Read details about our Fall 2023 Demo Day.



SOCIAL INNOVATION LAB

Since its inception, the SIL program has supported over 130 ventures, which have collectively raised more than \$110 million and employed hundreds of people after completing our accelerator.

This year:

- Our community workshops and bootcamps were well attended, averaging over 75 participants
- We received a record 120 applications in the fall
- The cohort of 10 teams included three Johns Hopkins affiliates and seven teams from the community
- Salama Wellness, a premier doula agency, won the top prize at this year's SIL Showcase

“You helped me start from zero! I’m excited for where I am going now.”

- Tlee Cooper (2023-24 cohort participant)

SOCIAL INNOVATION LAB

FAST FACTS

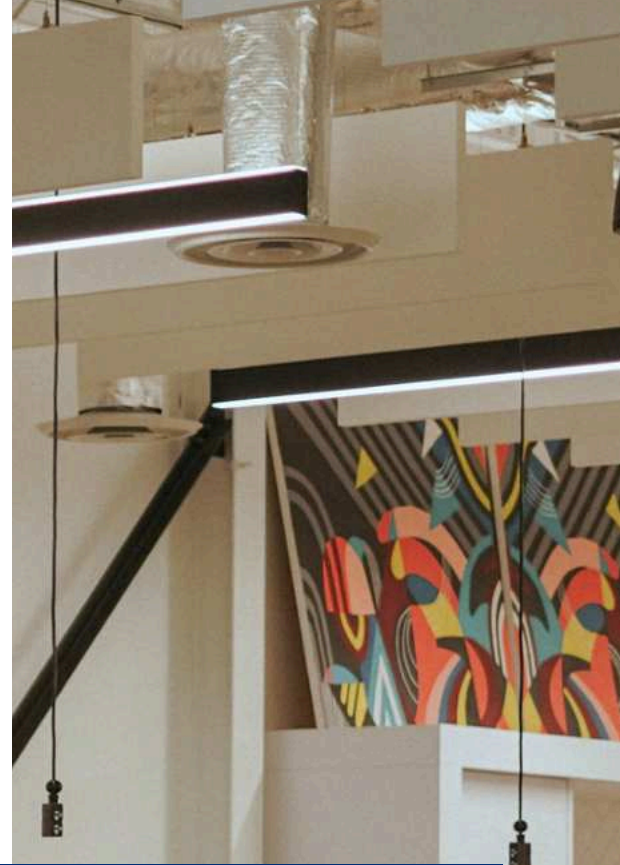
- \$5K stipend provided to each of the 10 teams
- \$20K awarded at the SIL Showcase
- 85% of this year's teams are led or co-led by women

“I love the community and the collaborative culture of the cohort.” - Shawna Stepp-Jones (2023-24 cohort participant)

- Previous two cohorts raised over \$1M post-SIL program
- SIL teams have impacted 3k+ community members
- Teams hired 17 new positions during this year's cohort
- Almost 1,300 customers/clients were directly served through our ventures' operations



Learn about the 2023-24
SIL Showcase.





SUMMER INCUBATOR

- **20 individuals admitted**
- **80 applicants applied**
- **26 put on waiting list**

Team School Affiliation:

- **Whiting School of Engineering (WSE) - 11**
- **Carey Business School (CBS) - 4**
- **Krieger School of Arts and Sciences (KSAS) - 4**
- **School of Medicine (SOM) - 1**

This unique program provided student founders with a six-week sprint that helped them build their startups, attend workshops on fundamental entrepreneurship skills, form connections with alumni and mentors, and establish a foundation in Baltimore's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Learn about our Summer Incubator's third year.





INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP CHALLENGE

Offered each Spring. A variety of award opportunities in a single event, allows students a streamlined process to access funding to work on their ventures over the coming year. Non-dilutive grants range from \$10-\$30K.

- 60+ teams submitted 130+ applications
- 20+ alumni reviewers
- 20 finalists
- 10 were selected — winning a total of \$130,000 in awards.



Learn about this year's I&E Challenge award winners.



PRESIDENTS VENTURE FELLOWSHIP 2023 UPDATE

The President's Venture Fellowship, the largest award for student entrepreneurship ever offered by the university, was launched last year to encourage startup creators to put down roots in Baltimore and become part of the city's burgeoning innovation ecosystem. The fellowship, funded by the Office of the President along with generous philanthropic alumni support, is open to any full-time Johns Hopkins student who wants to continue pursuing a business venture in Baltimore after graduation.

“Students across Johns Hopkins are translating their research into novel solutions that will make a meaningful impact in Baltimore and in our world. We are thrilled to help bring their ideas to fruition and to see our students grow their businesses in the heart of Baltimore in ways that support all—our patients, our neighbors, and our communities.”

- Ronald Daniels, President, Johns Hopkins University



Aptabridge™

Continuing to solidify data at the 1812 Ashland lab space with the help of student interns, in addition to refining their business case.



Read details about the 2023 winners.



CurveAssure

Wrapping up data collection from human trials and expanding the business with enhanced digital platform offerings, including collaborations with additional Johns Hopkins open-source technology.



Building an automated hardware device to detect disease using saliva.

Team: Brent Ifemembi and Nelson Ndahiro

PRESIDENTS VENTURE FELLOWSHIP 2024



A novel neurostimulation oral appliance therapy for a highly prevalent, poorly treated form of obstructive sleep apnea.

Team: Mitchell Turley, Anders Sideris, Shri Prabha Shivram and Phoebe Dijour



In addition to the financial support, fellows receive a partial scholarship to the Carey Business School and mentoring from university leaders and alumni who have launched successful business ventures. Teams have access to co-working space at the university's Pava Center student innovation hub and meet monthly as part of a larger cohort.



Read details about the 2024 winners.

OTHER COLLABORATIONS

- Collaborations with Carey Business School: Co-administered the Student Venture Showcase, hosted a new networking night and facilitated regular walk-in office hours on campus.
- Sponsorship: Hopstart including the New Venture Challenge, GreenHacks, Hophacks, Product Management Club, Hop AI Club, and more
- Collaborations with student organizations: Hopstone, A-Level Capital, and more
- Multiple speakers/workshops in collaboration with the Life Design Lab
- Collaborations with Baltimore innovation organizations: BELN, Upsurge Baltimore, Code and Coffee, Baltimore Climate Tech Brunch, Ink and Pixels, and more





ALUMNI PROGRAMMING

Engaging with our alumni worldwide isn't just a top priority for our office—it's the “secret sauce” to everything we do! We collaborate closely with our colleagues in Development and Alumni Relations to continually grow and support this network. Our alumni give back by:

- Mentoring student entrepreneurs
- Speaking at workshops to accelerator teams
- Judging applications to top awards asynchronously and in person
- Hosting on-site visits during intersession and the summer sessions
- Supporting student grants financially

We also support our alumni entrepreneurs by providing:

- Strategic non-dilutive grants to recent graduates through select awards in the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Challenge and the President's Venture Fellowship
- Mentorship and industry connections
- The Founders' Forum series of networking events
- Cross-promoting job and internship opportunities at alumni-led startups
- Advising from Pava Center and JHTV staff

Want to connect with us about participating as an alum mentor or entrepreneur? Contact pavacenter@jhu.edu.



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