



# MONDAY MORNING MEMO

from Dean Avi Mukherjee



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## Marshall University hosts the Third West Virginia Innovation and Business Model Competition



WEST VIRGINIA  
**INNOVATION &  
BUSINESS MODEL**  
COMPETITION  
**STATEWIDE FINALS**



**TUESDAY, APRIL 13**  
**1PM - 4PM**

Emceed by Bill Bissett, President and CEO of  
The Huntington Regional Chamber of Commerce.





Marshall University's Lewis College of Business and Brad D. Smith Schools of Business and their Center for Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation (iCenter) have hosted the third annual West Virginia Innovation and Business Model Competition (WVIMBC) finals on Tuesday, April 13. The statewide competition is open to all students enrolled in a two- or four- year institution of higher education in West Virginia.

This unique and exciting endeavor was conceived as a collaborative effort between business school deans and heads of four-year colleges and universities in West Virginia in 2018 to foster innovation and entrepreneurship across the state. This student competition also owes its origin to the Design for Delight event hosted by Marshall in collaboration with Intuit in 2017. Brad D. Smith and his team at Intuit have trained our entire College of Business faculty and staff and some of our student leaders on Design Thinking, making our college a center of excellence for design thinking in higher education. Our goal is to propagate this new approach to innovation across the state. Entrepreneurship faculty from business schools from all around the state of WV got trained on design thinking by our Marshall Innovation catalysts, who in turn have trained their student entrepreneurs to come up with new business ideas using design thinking as the theme. As part of the competition, seven participating institutions hosted a campus qualifier, where their top team was selected to move on to the finals, and at the finals, a pre-recorded eight-minute pitch video was played and followed by 10 minutes of Q&A from the judges. Due to ongoing COVID-19 concerns, this year's competition was hosted virtually via Zoom. Dr. Bill Bissett, president and CEO of the Huntington Regional Chamber of Commerce, served as the master of ceremonies for the event.

The judges for the event were David Bland, founder, author, and CEO of Precoil, Inc.; Scott Ewing of the Appalachian Investors Alliance; and Dr. Jackie Khorassani, entrepreneurship director and professor at Marietta College.

The focus of the competition is designing desirable, feasible, and viable business models that are attractive to investors. Students learn and apply a blend of entrepreneurial best practices like design thinking, business model canvas, and lean startup to identify problems, create game-changing solutions, and develop business models by testing their assumptions on real customers. The WVIMBC is passionate about giving students the mindset and tools they need to innovate high-impact businesses that will change their lives and the lives of those in the state and beyond.

Winning first place was Morgania, a sustainable fashion business created by Morgan Widmer of West Virginia University. Widmer will receive a prize package of \$3,000. Her faculty mentors were Dr. Carrie White and Anne Jones. Widmer is a senior fashion design major from Buckhannon, West Virginia.

"With the money I won from WVIMBC, I'm going to get the equipment I need to make prototypes and start producing inventory for my brand to sell on my website," Widmer said. "I'm incredibly excited to move along this journey in making fun, playful designs that are sustainable and help make the fashion industry a good place for people and for the planet."



The second-place winner was Tots Anytime, an anytime aftercare business, created by Marshall University students Tommie McCartney and Isabella Schrader. McCartney, a junior management major from South Point, Ohio, and Schrader, a freshman biomedical engineering major from Huntington, will receive a prize package of \$2,000. Their faculty advisor was Dr. Ben Eng.

"I believe the WVIBMC competition has truly helped our business, not just from a financial standpoint, but also from the input given by the judges," McCartney said. "With their knowledge and experience, we have made multiple changes that have improved our company, and that advice is priceless."

Earning third-place was Issac Prather from Concord University, who will receive a prize package of \$1,000. His business, Ez Lube, seeks to serve athletes with prosthetics, and his faculty advisor was Dr. Angela Addair. Prather is a junior resource tourism and management major from Summersville, West Virginia.

"The WVIBMC was an eye-opening experience in terms of interacting with the judges and competing against great competition," Prather said.

Honorable mentions and \$500 were awarded to finalists Mary Griffith from Alderson Broaddus University and Justin Kemp and Ciara Radcliff from Fairmont State University.

The competition is made possible by the generosity of the Robert E. Yancey, Sr. Entrepreneurship Endowment and Intuit. It was coordinated by Olen York, instructor of entrepreneurship and director of the iCenter; Jeremy Turner, Lewis College of Business executive in residence, and Tricia Ball, associate director of the iCenter and Brad D. Smith Business Incubator.

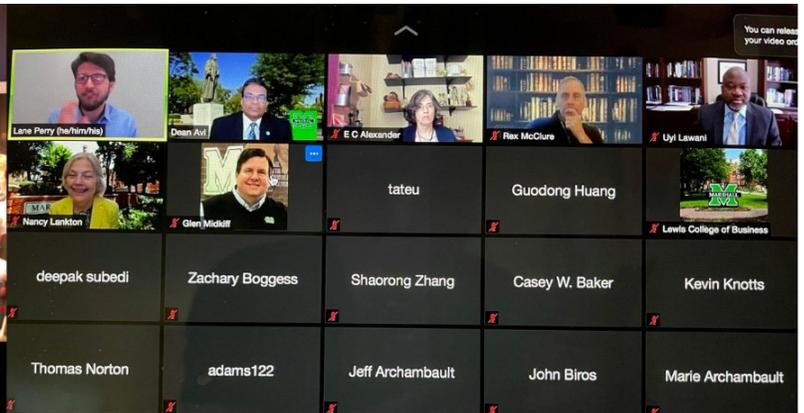
"I believe our iCenter promotes a dream – a dream to think 'out of the box' and embrace risks; a dream to disrupt, innovate and challenge status quo; a dream to solve societal and business problems; a dream to seek rapid experimentation and pivot failure to success; a dream to bring different constituencies / stakeholders together; and a dream to turn adversity into economic prosperity," Dr. Avi Mukherjee, dean of the Lewis College of Business, said in his opening remarks. "WVIBMC is turning this dream into reality."

WVIBMC was part of Bridging Innovation, a week of virtual competitions across the state that are promoting and fostering entrepreneurship in West Virginia. The competitions range from supporting elementary to college students in their pursuit of becoming entrepreneurs and creating more opportunities in West Virginia.

The link to the WVIBMC Statewide Finals is: <https://youtu.be/FSb1JfvfEro>



## Brad D. Smith Schools of Business Teaching & Learning Conference launched



### Inaugural TEACHING & LEARNING CONFERENCE

From Learning to Doing: Experiential Learning, Teaching Adaptability, and Global Trends in Business Education

April 9th, 2021



Featuring Keynote Speaker,  
Dr. Lane Perry  
Western Carolina University

9am - 4pm

The Lewis College of Business and its Brad D. Smith Schools of Business celebrated the inaugural **Teaching and Learning Conference** on Friday, April 9. The theme of this conference was "From Learning to Doing: Experiential Learning, Teaching Adaptability, and Global Trends in Business Education."

In this virtual Teaching and Learning conference, we had 3 faculty panel discussions, 9 faculty mini presentations, and a student sharing session at the end. 17 faculty members made presentations - Uyi Lawani, Rex McClure, Liz Alexander, Margie McInerney, Susan Lanham, Kent Willis, Amanda Thompson-Abbott, Olen York, Uday Tate, Kevin Knotts, Deepak Subedi, Monisha Gupta, Ben Eng, Marc Sollosy, Tyson Fnu, Ralph McKinney, and Casey Baker.



Dr. Lane Perry, Executive Director, Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning, Office of Undergraduate Studies at Western Carolina University, served as the plenary Dean's Distinguished Speaker. Dr. Perry has more than 15 years of experience in Higher Education Administration. Lane has presented and published extensively in the fields of community engagement, service-learning, global citizenship, higher education, and pedagogical approaches to disaster response. He teaches in WCU's College of Education, College of Business, and has served as a journal editor, Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar, and a New Zealand International Doctoral Research Fellow. Lane and his team's work has been recognized with awards such as the North Carolina Campus Compact Civic Engagement Professional of the Year, the Saltmarsh Award for Emerging Leaders in Civic Engagement, the Gulf South Summit Community Engagement Practitioner of the Year, the AACSB Excellence in Civic Learning, and Faculty and Student Organizations of the Year from the Engagement Scholarship Consortium. The title of his talk was "S-L Theory to S-L Practice".

Our expert panel comprising Dean Michael Prewitt, College of Business Advisory Board member Jim Rorrer and former Interim Dean Bob Simpson selected the top three mini-presentations:

**Best Presentation: "Pedagogical Mindsets to Encourage Life-Long Learning" - Ben Eng, PhD**

**Second Best Presentation: "Co-Instructing: Channeling Synergy Inspiration, Innovation and Creativity" - Uyi Lawani, PhD and Ralph McKinney, Jr., DBA**

**Third Best Presentation: "Teaching Case: Spanning the Knowledge-Doing Gap" - Marc Sollosy, DBA**

There was remarkable consistency in the judging scores. All three awards come with modest cash prizes.

In his welcome message, Dean Avi Mukherjee said: "On behalf of the faculty, staff and students at the Brad D. Smith Schools of Business, I want to extend our warmest welcome to all participants to the Inaugural Teaching & Learning Conference at Marshall University! This year's theme is "From Learning to Doing: Experiential Learning, Teaching Adaptability, and Global Trends in Business Education". Business is a rapidly transforming space, and it is important that the educators of future business leaders not only keep pace but also steer the course in this ever-shifting environment during the Covid-19 pandemic. At the Brad D. Smith Schools of Business, we seek to accomplish this by hosting this Teaching & Learning Conference where business educators can develop and share ideas, experiences and best practices related to online and virtual instruction, pedagogical innovations, research related to learning and teaching, etc. The conference will share ideas that will help business educators foster in business school students the skills necessary to be personally successful and contribute to business and economic development and strengthening the communities in which they live and work. This conference brings together academics to discuss the future of business education, as well as current trends and changes. Each year the Teaching & Learning conference will pivot to focus on target issues specific to graduate and undergraduate business education. I thank all the distinguished invited speakers for their presence and contributions to the conference. I also thank the Teaching & Learning Committee for their efforts in ensuring a rigorous review process to select high quality presentations."



Dr. Uyi Lawani, Chair of the Teaching & Learning Committee, said in his welcome message: “On behalf of the Teaching and Learning Committee, I am delighted to welcome you to the Inaugural Teaching and Learning Conference of the College. The committee has the primary charge, as directed by the Dean of the College, Dr. Avi Mukherjee, for putting the events of the conference together. We hope that you will find the conference worthy of your time and attention. This year, we are fortunate to have Dr. Lane Perry from Western Carolina University deliver a Keynote address. We have three-panel sessions based on three specific themes: Teaching Mode Adaptability, Experiential Learning, and Global Concepts and Issues. The panel sessions will be followed by mini-presentations by faculty and students. Topics for presentations span a wide area of pedagogy that should trigger quality discussions and debates. We invite you to participate actively and to prepare to give us post-conference feedback that will enable us, on behalf of the entire college, to continue to improve on our mandate as a committee in the months and years to come. Thanks for your time and attention.”

A large number of LCOB faculty, students, alumni and external stakeholders attended this day-long Teaching and Learning Conference. I am delighted to see such an overwhelming response to our inaugural Teaching and Learning Conference, because it is not only a celebration of our faculty's intellectual accomplishments, but also it is the recognition of how our applied and engaged learning strategies can help the business community.

The event was organized by the LCOB Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) comprising Uyi Lawani (Chair), Monisha Gupta, Nabaneeta Biswas, Casey Baker, Yi Duan, Rex McClure, Tom Norton and Kevin Knotts. This event could not have happened without the tireless efforts of many people at Marshall, particularly TLC Chair Dr. Uyi Lawani, Panel Moderator Dr. Rex McClure, Stakeholder Director Glen Midkiff, and Accreditation Coordinator Alena Adkins – special thanks to all of them!

Let us continue to grow the Brad D. Smith Schools of Business Teaching and Learning Conference as a signature event for the Lewis College of Business. From now on, the Teaching and Learning Conference will be an annual Spring conference open to the world that will help us foster innovative pedagogies and share new teaching ideas with the global academic and business community. Our next conference is scheduled for April 8, 2022.