

Wesleyan University student entrepreneurs receive \$5,000 in seed grants for 4 projects

By Olivia Drake Published 3:48 pm EST, Wednesday, March 6, 2019

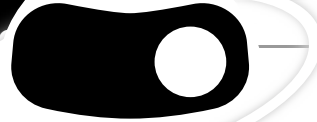


IMAGE 1 OF 4

Four Wesleyan University student-run ventures received \$5,000 seed grants from the Patricelli Center for Social Entrepreneurship. Here, grant finalist Luke Lezhansky presents his “Foster Care Support ... more

MIDDLETOWN — On March 4, four **Wesleyan University** student-run ventures received \$5,000 in seed grants from the **Patricelli Center for Social Entrepreneurship**.

The unrestricted funding is accompanied with training, advising, mentoring, incubator work space, and other resources from the Patricelli Center.



On March 1, six finalists pitched for a panel of judges in Allbritton 311.

“As always, the competition was steep, and the judges had a tough time selecting the Patricelli Center for Social Entrepreneurship. “In addition to the Patricelli Center so we could offer four

early stage growth of a social enterprise, problem,; be sustainable, scalable and/or be for-profit, nonprofit, hybrid, or have no

"This program is all about giving students a chance to develop and test their leadership skills and their ideas for social change," Kingsley said. "Wesleyan's mission is to 'offer an education characterized by boldness, rigor and practical idealism,' and programs like the PCSE Seed Grant embody that mission and help students turn theory into practice."

The 2019 PCSE Seed Grant recipients are:

Dharma Gates (Aaron Stryker, Miles Bukiet and Nicholas Antonellis) offers a semester of intensive training at a Zen monastery in the United States, bridged by workshops on compassionate activism, contemplative neuroscience, and Buddhist environmentalism. The curriculum is designed to train a generation of compassionate leaders and offer an affordable alternative to traditional gap-year programs.

Downstream Podcasting (Alli Fam, Ben Saldich and Isaac Price-Slade) aims to diversify the podcasting industry in terms of teams and content by providing workshops for underrepresented students and the opportunity for these students to work on Downstream's own podcast series, "Act Local, Be Vocal." The series highlights the work of local activists and nonprofits, allowing them to reach potential donors, volunteers, and people who can benefit from their services and message with greater ease.

Accessible and Affordable Sanitation for Women (Sydney Ochieng and Ziyaan Virji of the Aga Khan

Academy Mombasa) is a student-run initiative that seeks to increase access to proper sanitation for young schoolgirls in Mombasa, Kenya. AASW empowers girls globally to self-produce their own menstrual materials sustainably and aims to break down the social stigma of menstruation locally. Its goal is to provide a safe, cost-effective, ecofriendly, and long-lasting alternative for menstrual care.

Foster Care Support Project (Luke Lezhansky, Katerin Osorto, Ruby Lu and Angela Duong '21) is an effort to support and empower foster children of all ages by connecting them with students and young adults. Their work is guided by an ambitious goal – to ultimately reach all of Connecticut's foster children.

Other 2019 PCSE Seed Grant finalists

Karma (Zhi Gan, Timothy Kim, Seong Son, Yuhan Wang, Dashiell Halpern and Jonathan Goldman) is a mobile app that captures hidden productivity in the world around us by connecting college students who share common geographical tasks. The platform uses a combination of a pseudo currency and a method of gamification to create a barter system that allows for free peer-to-peer delivery between students.

YouthHack Connecticut (Philippe Bungabong, Chunyue Ma, Nick Franczak, Natasha Wong and Roshaan Siddiqui) aims to empower high school and university students in Connecticut to translate their education into action by using emerging technologies, innovative thinking, and start-up culture as tools in solving societal problems. Through a variety of educational events, workshops, and programs, it aspires to make Connecticut a prominent hub for entrepreneurship and technological innovation – one idea at a time.

Editor's note: Olivia Drake is newsletter editor and campus photographer at Wesleyan University.

This article originally appeared in the [Wesleyan Connection blog](#).

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