



# Husky Innovate

Pavlis Honors College • Innovation & Commercialization • College of Business



# HIGHLIGHTS REPORT 2021|2022

# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Students impressed us again with their business ideas, pitches, and passion to bring them forward. Creativity continued to flourish in the Alley Makerspace with over 3,100 check-ins. Innovation was alive and well with our I-Corps cohorts, Design Thinking workshops, and our University Innovation Fellows cohort. Students and the Tech community attendance reached over 350 for our talks and workshops! Combined, students who pitched their ideas won over \$30,000 in prize money - money that they can use for the next phase of their startup endeavor.



**Lisa Casper**

Innovation Week, a weeklong celebration each January, included eight fantastic events! The popular student pitch event the Bob Mark Business Model Pitch Competition was a draw for students, alumni from afar, faculty, staff and community. Parents and friends were able to join through an online option.

Special thanks to all alumni, guest speakers, and faculty who shared their time and talent with our students. Alumni Dan Green, Matt Monte, David Shull, Arick Davis, Eric Roberts, and Jason Mack presented talks, mentored our student innovators, and judged & provided feedback at our pitch competitions. Each contribution helps us to strengthen our Innovation and Entrepreneurship ecosystem providing a network of resources for our students.

We're looking forward to another year of exciting I&E events, student engagement, and connection with our growing I&E community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Casper".

Lisa Casper

# ABOUT HUSKY INNOVATE

As Michigan Tech's Innovation and Entrepreneurship resource center, Husky Innovate connects student innovators and faculty and staff researchers with the support and resources needed to advance their ideas through the I&E process, by providing co-curricular educational and experiential learning programs, mentorship, and funding opportunities.

Husky Innovate represents a collaboration between the Pavlis Honors College (PHC), the Office of Innovation and Commercialization (OIC), and the College of Business (COB). Our interdisciplinary team allows us to provide an agile and comprehensive set of resources to student innovators.

Husky Innovate resources include:

- Pitch competitions
- Workshops
- Guest talks
- Internships
- Off-site opportunities
- The Alley Makerspace
- University Innovation Fellows
- I-Corps Site Program
- Paths to commercialization

## Our Vision

To support a university campus where entrepreneurial spirit thrives throughout the community and across disciplines, converting ideas into capital and impact.

## Our Mission

To enhance the potential of the campus community to develop and implement innovations and ideas and to launch inventions by building and managing a cohesive set of entrepreneurial innovation resources that enable success

# MEET THE HUSKY INNOVATE TEAM



**Lisa Casper**  
Husky Innovate Director,  
Pavlis Honors College



**Mary Raber**  
Executive Council Advisor,  
College of Engineering



**Jim Baker**  
Executive Council Advisor,  
Office of Innovation and  
Commercialization



**Jon Leinonen**  
Executive Council Advisor,  
College of Business



**Mike Morley**  
Director, Technology  
Commercialization



**Nate Yenor**  
Director of Technology  
Business Incubation



**Laura Vidal Chiesa**  
Graduate Student  
Marketing Intern



**Connor Langdon**  
Makerspace Student  
Manager Intern



**Sam Vellequette**  
Makerspace Student  
Manager Intern

# MEET OUR INTERNAL ADVISORY BOARD (IAB)



**Charles Wallace**  
Associate Professor,  
College of Computing



**Erich Petushek**  
Assistant Professor,  
Cognitive and Learning  
Sciences



**Nathan Manser**  
Professor of Practice,  
Geological and Mining  
Engineering and Sciences



**Timothy Eisele**  
Associate Professor,  
Chemical Engineering



**Josue Reynoso**  
Assistant Professor,  
College of Business



**Patricia Heiden**  
Professor, Department  
of Chemistry



**Rick Berkey**  
Enterprise Director,  
Manufacturing and  
Mechanical Engineering



**William Endres**  
Associate Professor,  
Mechanical Engineering,  
Engineering Mechanics

# Innovation Week

Each year we host a weeklong celebration of innovation. Innovation Week was started by University Innovation Fellows students, and we've carried tradition forward. The Bob Mark Business Model Pitch Competition pulled the community together as students' showcases their innovations. Many of our events were in person, but some were online allowing us to reach a broader audience.

## Event examples include:

- Unboxed Challenges - an innovative treasure hunt designed by Michigan Tech innovator Jannah Turney, Campus research talk about the effects of the pandemic on Gen Z's; "Gen Zoom" with Cassy Tefft de Munoz,
- Swedish guest speaker from IKEA, Jukka Vornanen shared IKEA's progressive philosophy for innovating in the modern age.
- New this year was a "Reverse Pitch Presentation" hosted by Nate Yenor with our Office of Innovation and Commercialization. Nate presented translational technology research and founders who are looking to build their teams.
- Michigan Tech Alum David Shull shared his journey with Handshake, a startup company newly valued at \$1.5B. Shull was part of the original Michigan Tech alumni team who launched Handshake. He shared his perspective on how the Michigan Tech and Pavlis Honors College experience prepared him for his career journey.

**Save the date!**  
**INNOVATION WEEK**  
**January 24 - 28 2022**  
Husky Innovate

### STUDENT INNOVATION

- Business Model Boot Camp
- Bob Mark Business Model Pitch Competition

### MICHIGAN TECH INNOVATION

- Unboxed Treasure Hunt with Jannah Turney
- Regional Innovation and Entrepreneurship Panel
- Husky Innovate Talk with Dr. Colin Brooks
- Reverse Pitch Event with the Office of Innovation and Commercialization
- Generation Zoom with Cassy Tefft de Munoz
- Husky Innovate Talk with David Shull

...and more!



Event Details: [mtu.edu/husky-innovate](https://mtu.edu/husky-innovate)



**INNOVATION WEEK 2022**  
Building Michigan Tech's Innovation Community  
January 24 - 28

#### Regional Innovation and Entrepreneurship Panel

January 24th, 12:00 - 1:00 pm | Zoom  
Registration: [bit.ly/IEpanelDiscussion](https://bit.ly/IEpanelDiscussion)  
Event info: [bit.ly/rie-event](https://bit.ly/rie-event)

#### Unboxed Challenges - Treasure Hunt with Jannah Turney

January 25th, 5:30 - 6:30 pm | Zoom  
Registration: [bit.ly/InnovationUnboxed](https://bit.ly/InnovationUnboxed)  
Event info: [bit.ly/unboxed-event](https://bit.ly/unboxed-event)

#### Husky Innovate Talk with Dr. Colin Brooks

January 26th, 12:00 - 1:00 pm | Zoom  
Registration: [bit.ly/ColinBrooks](https://bit.ly/ColinBrooks)  
Event info: [bit.ly/brooks-event](https://bit.ly/brooks-event)

#### Reverse Pitch Event with the Office of Innovation & Commercialization

January 26th, 4:00 - 5:00 pm | Zoom  
Registration: [bit.ly/ReversePitch2022](https://bit.ly/ReversePitch2022)  
Event info: [bit.ly/reverse-event](https://bit.ly/reverse-event)

#### Generation Zoom with Cassy Tefft de Munoz

January 27th, 12:15 - 1:15 pm | MUB Ballroom A and Zoom  
Registration: [bit.ly/HiWgenzoom](https://bit.ly/HiWgenzoom)  
Event info: [bit.ly/genz-event](https://bit.ly/genz-event)

#### Bob Mark Business Model Pitch Competition

January 27th, 4:00 - 7:00 pm | MUB Ballroom A and Zoom  
Contestant Registration: [bit.ly/2022BobMarkContestantRegistration](https://bit.ly/2022BobMarkContestantRegistration)  
Audience Registration: [bit.ly/BobMark2022](https://bit.ly/BobMark2022)  
Event info: [bit.ly/bm-event](https://bit.ly/bm-event)

#### Husky Innovate Talk with David Shull

January 28th, 12:00 - 1:00 pm | Zoom  
Registration: [bit.ly/HiTalkDavidShull](https://bit.ly/HiTalkDavidShull)  
Event info: [bit.ly/shull-event](https://bit.ly/shull-event)



**unboxed**  
CHALLENGES  
**TREASURE HUNT**  
Race against the clock to discover the lost treasure of Captain Black.

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 25, 5:30 - 6:30 PM, WADSWORTH HALL**  
**REGISTER AT [BIT.LY/INNOVATIONUNBOXED](https://bit.ly/InnovationUnboxed) BY 1/21**

Come try the newest educational outreach program offered by Michigan Tech's Center for Educational Outreach, Unboxed Challenges, an escape room-style activity. Prizes will be awarded!

# impact

at a glance

Over \$30K in  
prize money  
was awarded  
to our  
students!

## Idea Pitch Awards

Students with an innovative idea that could disrupt the status quo and "business as usual" are welcome to pitch their ideas at Idea Pitch Competition. Graduate and undergraduate students from all disciplines are invited.

The following contestants won:

First Prize — Nicholas Peterson with NOMAD (\$200)

Second Prize — Ella Faulk with Parkinson's Symptom Monitoring App (\$100)

Third Prize — Nathan Vogler with Dorm Racks (\$50)

Honorable Mention — Mary Stevens with HuskyBox (\$25)

Honorable Mention — Isaac Swanson with Snowmobile Guiding Service (\$25)

Audience Favorite — Mary Stevens with HuskyBox (\$25)

Social Impact Award presented by Elham Asgari (CoB) — Ella Faulk with Parkinson's Symptom Monitoring App (\$100)



# Bob Mark Business Model Pitch Competition

A highlight of Tech's Innovation Week, this legacy event celebrates entrepreneurship and is a tribute to the late College of Business (COB) Professor of Practice Bob Mark. There were three categories of prizes: business model, social impact, and breakout innovation. The business model category looked at how well the solution addresses the customers' needs, the path to revenue, and the overall presentation. The social impact category examined the significance of the social problem and how well the solution addressed it. The breakout innovation award considered the solution's novelty, ease of implementation, and time to implementation.

The following contestants won:

First Prize — Akhil Kurup with SENSE (\$2,000)

Second Prize — Maggie Zimmermann with Famealia (\$1,000)

Third Prize — Jakob Christiansen with ProBoard (\$500)

Honorable Mention — Nick Peterson with NOMAD trackPAK (\$250)

Audience Favorite — Maggie Zimmermann with Famealia (\$250)

Social Impact Award - Bayle Golden with STEMPOWER (\$2,000)

Breakout Innovation Award -Akhil Kurup with SENSE (\$1,000)



**BOB MARK**  
BUSINESS MODEL PITCH COMPETITION

# New Venture Challenge at Central Michigan

For more than a decade, Michigan Technological University and Central Michigan University have collaborated to offer Tech students the opportunity to compete at the New Venture Competition in Mount Pleasant, Michigan. Students compete for more than \$100,000 in cash prizes and in-kind services. Tech students won the following awards:

## Two-Minute Pitch Competition

First Prize - Jakob Christiansen with ProBoard (\$4,000)

## Seven-Minute Pitch Competition

Social Mission Category - First Prize - Bayle Golden with SafeRow (\$10,000)

High Tech High Growth Category - Second Prize - Rourke Sylvain and Ali with imi (integrated molecular innovations) (\$5,000)

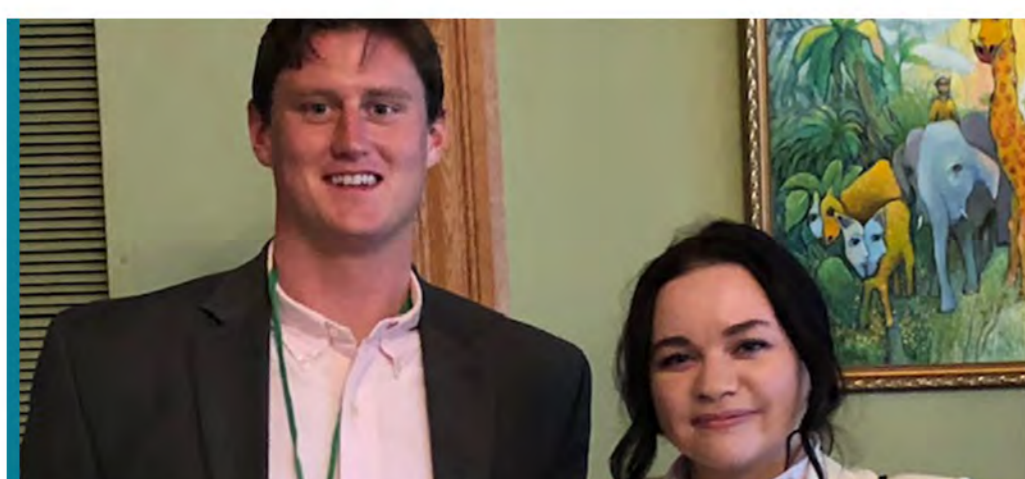
High Tech High Growth category - Third Prize - Jordan Craven with Tall and Small Designs (\$2,000)



# TCNewTech

Michigan Tech innovation was on full display at events occurring throughout the week (May 9-15). At TCNewTech's University Idea Showcase, Husky Innovate students Bayle Golden (master's, engineering management) and Rourke Sylvain (master's, biomedical engineering) took on students from universities around the state in a pitch competition. Golden placed second and was named audience favorite, receiving \$2,000 in total prizes for SafeRow, an innovative wearable device designed to keep children safe. Sylvain also gave a compelling pitch for imi (integrated molecular innovations), an electrochemical biosensor for T4 detection. The event can now be viewed on YouTube.

After pitching, both Golden and Sylvain spent an additional 54 hours at the TechStars hackathon and pitched new ideas to a panel of judges. Both represented Tech well at this event.





# University Innovation Fellows

The University Innovation Fellows is an international program offered through the Stanford University Hasso Plattner Institute of Design (d.school). In the spring semester of 2022, the Pavlis Honors College hosted a pinning ceremony for students who completed the UIF program. Six students met in person for the first time to celebrate officially becoming fellows. Included were: Gary Tropp and Sam Raber; 2020, Peter LaMantia, 2021; Benjamin Leinonen and Hunter Malinowski, 2022. Mary Raber and Lisa Casper also celebrated becoming Faculty Innovation Fellows at the conclusion of the 2022 inaugural cohort.



## I-Corps

The I-Corps program uses the lean startup methodology to de-risk technology by conducting customer discovery interviews in order to validate or invalidate their business model hypotheses and to find a scalable business model. Michigan Tech became part of the NSF I-Corps Great Lakes Region Hub in January 2022. We hosted two cohorts throughout the academic year with 32 individuals completing our lean startup workshops in which they worked to validate their business hypotheses and develop their business models based on customer discovery interviews. At the completion of 30 customer discovery interviews, eligible teams may be awarded a \$1000 mini-grant and continue on to the I-Corps National Program.



The programs I have attended have not only furthered my education outside of the classroom, but have also given me the confidence to build my innovation through my business as well as outside of it. I have learned so much from every Husky Innovate program, and the opportunities supplied through this program are endless.

**Jordan Craven**

# Workshops

In addition to Innovation Week events and pitch competitions, 180 students attended our co-curricular workshops such as Introduction to Design Thinking, Finance Your Innovation, and Telling Your Story to help students along their innovation journey.

Those who attended found them helpful for the pitch competitions. Students are welcome to attend as many events as they want.

These events have made me into a more well-rounded business thinking individual. These programs have provided me with resources to overcome my fear of public speaking and thrive in pitch competitions. I look forward to attending more seminars and workshops in the upcoming semester!

**Bayle LaDawn Golden**

I have been involved with Husky Innovate for the past three years. All the programs had helped me to grow professionally and network. I learnt a lot from attending the workshops, and from direct mentorship. Husky Innovate and the mentors get a lot of credit for all the progress I have made with my venture. Thank you!!

**Ranit Karmakar**

**“The value of an idea lies in the using of it.”**

Thomas Edison



2021 | 2022  
Event Series

Learn more and register at [mtu.edu/husky-innovate](http://mtu.edu/husky-innovate)  
Check our updates for event locations, monthly pop-up speaker events and other innovation and entrepreneurship opportunities

## FALL

SEPT 15 Introduction to DT  
5-7 PM  
The Alley Makerspace

SEPT 23 Introduction to DT  
5-7 PM  
The Alley Makerspace

OCT 6 Protect Your Innovation  
5-7 PM  
MTU Library 244

OCT 20 Idea Pitch Competition  
5-7 PM  
M & M U115

NOV 11 Prototype Your Innovation  
5:30-7 PM  
The Alley Makerspace

## SPRING

JAN 19 Business Model  
Boot Camp  
5-7 PM  
M&M U113

JAN 27 Bob Mark Business  
Model Pitch Competition  
5-7 PM  
M&M U115

FEB 17 Finance Your Innovation  
5-6 PM  
M&M U113

MAR 15 New Venture Competition  
Prep I  
5-6 PM  
M & M 724

MAR 23 New Venture Competition  
Prep II  
5-6 PM  
M & M 724



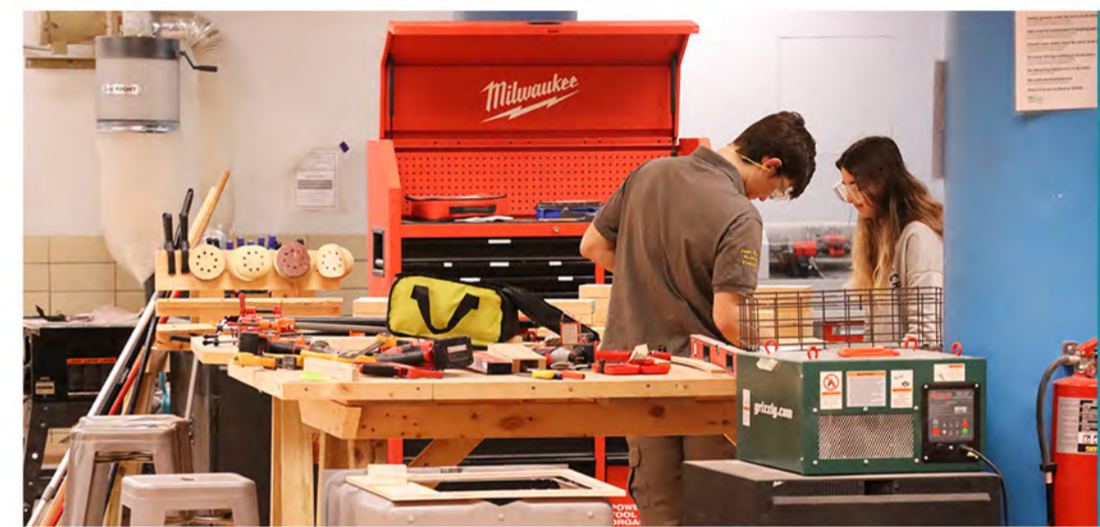
MICHIGAN TECH IS AN EOE WHICH  
INCLUDES PROTECTED VETERANS  
AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES





## The Alley Makerspace

The Alley Makerspace is a creative space on campus with open-source equipment and tools available to all students. Equipment includes 3D printers, woodworking equipment, electronics, and sewing available during the spring and fall semesters. The space is run by student volunteers and daily operations managed by student interns. Throughout the year, students host making and training events. This year we had over 3100 check-ins, making this space a popular destination for building prototypes for a class project or just for fun.



## Sponsorship

Special thanks to our gracious and generous sponsors:



Pavlis Honors College  
 Office of Innovation and Commercialization  
 Rick and Jo Berquist  
 Dan and Jane Green  
 CoB Gate Professor Elham Asgari  
 Arick Davis and Jake Northey, Creative Mines  
 Patrick Visser, MTEC SmartZone and the  
 Michigan Economic Development Corporation  
 Connor Langdon, B.S. Computer Science