

Ideas at Work - May 5, 2019

A homegrown economy starts with entrepreneurs



Recognizing the economic and cultural benefit entrepreneurship brings to their hometowns, mayors and other local leaders are looking for practical ways to attract and retain more entrepreneurs. Rather than luring businesses from the outside through costly incentives such as tax breaks and calling it growth, city leaders are now looking within. “Entrepreneurs grow the cities they live in. The money stays in their community. They hire local. This leads to an upward spiral of success for the city,” said Betsy Hodges, former mayor of Minneapolis.

Mayors for entrepreneurship

Barriers to funding parity persist



Research shows that the racial and gender wealth gap, in addition to negative bias and a lack of access to networks, creates significant barriers to funding. Meet four founders who, to start and scale their businesses, are working to overcome the funding gap for African American women.

The struggle for funding

The future is credentials



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"The reality is that people from the business industry side are starting to rethink their hiring practices. That's going to push educators to realize, 'Wow. I need to really rethink how I'm educating people.' The fastest growing credential in this country? Certificates. Not the two-year degree, not the four-year degree, certificates. From a Wharton executive MBA-type certificate to an entry-level certificate in Emily Griffith Technical College," said Jeff Barratt during Kauffman's 2018 Rethink Ed convening.

Barratt joined Kauffman's Education team as an entrepreneur-in-residence in March. He will be working in partnership with the Kansas City community to expand the credential opportunities for the region, aligned with higher education institutions and growing local industries.

Rethinking education for work

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Libraries are staking their claim as the original coworking space



With meeting rooms, internet access, programming, and community members in one place, your friendly local librarian wants you to start thinking of libraries as the entrepreneurial spaces they've always been. "There's paid coworking spaces across the nation, but the one that's always been free is the library," said Ryan Salts of Launch San Antonio, which operates out of the Central branch of the San Antonio Public Library.

[Meet at the library >](#)

Taking entrepreneurship to the Hill



Entrepreneurs and ecosystem builders take us into a day of advocacy during Kauffman's recent Washington, D.C., fly-in to bring the voice of entrepreneurs to Capitol Hill. "It's very easy to get sidetracked by buzzy politics that are happening, but these are the issues that matter to entrepreneurs," said Lindsey Cox of Launch Tennessee. "We want to make sure that our lawmakers know about them."

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