

Social Entrepreneurship Workshop & Ben Franklin TechVentures Tour

The Social Entrepreneurship Workshop was conducted by Chris Kauzman, who has been involved in teaching, managing, and overseeing Baker Institute programs at Lehigh University for a decade. His primary role at Lehigh University is to develop core structural systems, including mentorship, content, and policies, enabling Lehigh founders to concentrate on their innovative ideas and what truly matters. During this session, Chris delved into the intricate realm of social entrepreneurship and engaged the TRF fellows in a discussion, centered around the question of whether it's possible for entrepreneurs to simultaneously achieve both financial success and social good. To kick off the session, the students were prompted to share their viewpoints on what a social entrepreneur is. This led to an engaging discourse where examples of individuals who could be regarded as social entrepreneurs were given. Subsequently, the session became more interactive. Chris introduced the "Fish Bone" tool, a methodology that helps identify problems and break them down into subproblems. The students were tasked with using this approach to address the implementation of wind energy. They explored factors that need to be considered when introducing wind energy and identified potential challenges. These discussions and more formed the core of the workshop.

Following the Social Entrepreneurship Workshop, the TRF cohort of 2023 visited Ben Franklin TechVentures in Bethlehem. Here, they were guided on a tour of the premises by Anthony Durante, the Manager of Entrepreneurial Support for Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania. Ben Franklin TechVentures is an award-winning 129,000-square-foot technology business incubator located on the Mountaintop Campus of Lehigh University. Its mission is to nurture technology-based startups. To fulfill this mission, Ben Franklin Northeast provides support to startups in various ways, such as offering lab and office spaces at affordable rates and providing coaching and mentoring programs. After a brief presentation and an introduction to the incubator, the TRF cohort of 2023 had the chance to meet David, the CEO of a startup called Mussel Polymers Inc., which originated at Ben Franklin TechVentures. With a background in chemical engineering, this startup developed an innovative adhesive that facilitates underwater ship repairs without needing to dock the vessels. David and Anthony shared crucial insights with the group about what incubators seek in startups, including aspects like product-market fit and a viable strategy for market entry. After being inspired by their success story, the students also toured the labs and offices.

Overall, the workshop and the tour at Ben Franklin TechVentures provided the students with invaluable insights into the process of building a startup and becoming an entrepreneur.

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<https://nep.benfranklin.org/ben-franklin-appoints-anthony-durante-as-manager-entrepreneurial-support/>