

Tulane Innovation Institute Launches Young Entrepreneurship Academy to local high school students

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The Tulane Innovation Institute is launching the Young Entrepreneurship Academy (YEA!) in New Orleans, an after-school high-school program, to teach and inspire the next generation of local students to start businesses and become entrepreneurs. The academic year-long program (August 2024-May 2025) is sponsored by the Patrick F. Taylor Foundation, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana (Louisiana Blue), and Elevance Health.

The inaugural class will include over 30 students from 15 schools across New Orleans. It will meet weekly at Tulane University's downtown campus and the New Orleans BioInnovation Center. The curriculum will cover entrepreneurial topics, including business idea brainstorming, market analysis, marketing plan development, strategy implementation, financing strategies, fundraising, and product creation.

Participating students currently attend Benjamin Franklin High School, Booker T. Washington High School, Edna Karr High School, Frederick Douglass High School, Livingston Collegiate Academy, Louise S. McGehee School, Lycée Français de la Nouvelle-Orléans, Eleanor McMain Secondary School, Morris Jeff Community School, New Orleans Charter Science and Math High School, New Orleans Military and Maritime Academy, St. Katharine Drexel Preparatory School, Sophie B. Wright Charter School, Willow School and Warren Easton Charter High School.



"This program aligns perfectly with our mission to promote entrepreneurship in the New Orleans region, starting with the youngest members of our community. We are excited to see the brilliant ideas from local high-school students and arm them with mentors and know-how that could create generational wealth for them in the future," said Kimberly Gramm, MBA, PhD, David and Marion Mussafer, Chief Innovation & Entrepreneurship Officer Tulane Innovation Institute.

The program will be led by three instructors: Norman Barnum, Managing Partner of Barnum Group LLC, and Tulane Professors Michelle Jackson and Jane Cooper. Students will also benefit from presentations by local business leaders as guest speakers, including marketing, accounting, and many other experts who are excited about the program.

The students will also participate in field trips to local businesses, including the Dew Drop Inn, The Cosmetology Institute, and Chapter IV restaurant, to name a few, which will provide them with real-world insights into various industries.



The program will culminate in a pitch competition, in which students pitch their business ideas to a panel of judges to win funding to launch and operate their businesses.

Founded in 2004 at the University of Rochester, The Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) is a 501(c)(3) organization teaching middle and high school students how to start and run their businesses. With support from the Kauffman Foundation, YEA! today serves thousands of students nationwide. The program empowers students to take charge of their futures by developing business ideas, writing business plans, and launching fully formed companies.

The Patrick F. Taylor Foundation promotes education, equal opportunities, and the values of free enterprise to enable individuals to realize their full potential and maximize their contributions to society.

About [Louisiana Blue](#)

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana, or Louisiana Blue, is committed to improving the health and lives of Louisianians; founded in New Orleans in 1934, it is a tax-paying not-for-profit health insurer with offices across the region to serve customers. For the past five years, they have been recognized as an honoree of The Civic 50, named by Points of Light as one of the 50 most community-minded companies in the United States. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

Elevance Health supports health at every life stage, offering health plans and clinical, behavioral, pharmacy, and complex-care solutions that promote whole health.