

ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP@CLARKSON

Fall 2022

Welcome to Our Entrepreneurial Leadership @ Clarkson Newsletter!

It is my pleasure to share with you the good news that Clarkson's entrepreneurship program continues to climb in the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings.

Our Innovation & Entrepreneurship program gives students the skills, confidence and opportunity to take their current passion and make it a reality. Every year, new start-ups from Clarkson students reach global markets and have a real impact on society. Many of our graduates have gone on to start their own companies or continue pursuing the ones they started here. Some recent student start-ups are discussed in this newsletter.

This issue also includes impactful research conducted by our faculty. Clarkson researchers are creating solutions to address global environmental challenges. **MICHELLE CRIMI**, Interim Vice Provost for Research & Technology, and **SILVANA ANDREESCU**, the Egon Matijevic Endowed Chair, are collaborating with The Shipley Center for Innovation to commercialize technology they have developed to clean PFAS-contaminated groundwater and soil. Other faculty, like Assistant Professor of Environmental Economics and Sustainability **QINGRAN LI**, are working on translating their research into practical solutions to mitigate the impact of climate change.

Thanks to our reputation for collaborative research excellence and our strong global connections, we are engaged in new multidisciplinary projects, including the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) in Canada, which allow us to collaborate with colleagues at world-class research universities around the world.

In the fall, Clarkson hosted the 2nd annual Technology Showcase and Competition in Buffalo. The event created opportunities for selected start-up companies and their Clarkson alumni and faculty founders to engage with industry leaders and start-up investors outside of our Northern New York region.

I invite you to learn more about our educational approach that seeks to develop graduates with an "entrepreneurial mindset" and a global perspective; the influential research led by our world-class faculty; and our outsized influence in the world.

Enjoy the reading, keep tuned into our new developments and remember:
Think entrepreneurship, think Clarkson!

– **Professor Christian Felzensztein, PhD**
*Reh Family Endowed Chair in Entrepreneurial Leadership &
Co-Director Reh Center for Entrepreneurship*



Christian Felzensztein



Clarkson™

DAVID D. REH SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Top 40 in the Nation — Best Entrepreneurship Programs

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT 2023

A CULTURE OF INNOVATION AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT FUELS STUDENTS' ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS

Immersed in a campuswide culture that promotes and rewards collaboration and innovation, Clarkson students learn how to develop and transform ideas into valuable new products, systems and services.



Allay founders Tonia Kousmanidis '24, Alexis Johnson '24, Jessica Blanchard '25 and Lauren Fox '25

Competition Spurs Innovation and a Commitment to Social Entrepreneurship

One consequence of the global pandemic has been an increase in levels of anxiety and depression among young adults. Students **TONIA KOUSMANIDIS '24, ALEXIS JOHNSON '24, JESSICA BLANCHARD '25** and **LAUREN FOX '25** decided to address that issue head on. Their start-up company, Allay, focuses on the development of a unique journaling system designed to help college students manage anxiety and stress.

Last May, Allay won the top prize at the 2022 Reh Cup Business Competition that challenged teams of first-year business students to create a sustainable business with a social purpose. Nine teams competed for \$20,000 in start-ups funds.

The students will use their \$15,000 grant to support the development and launch of the business. Once profitable, the company will sell journals and donate funds to college counseling centers. The group will also work with Clarkson alumni to develop a social media and web platform to expand exposure to colleges and high schools nationally

From Pizza to High-Tech Born Global Firms

Generations of Clarkson students know Sergi's pizza restaurant in Potsdam, New York. This successful family business was started by Italian immigrants in the 1960's.

Today, third generation descendants of the family are students at Clarkson, building new start-ups and high-tech born global firms in the Designing and Leading Innovative New Ventures class led by the Reh Chair in Entrepreneurial Leadership **CHRISTIAN FELZENSZTEIN**.

"In this class, all of our students are designing and leading businesses that can make our world a better place to live," says Professor Felzensztein. "These new ventures range from innovative food waste management solutions in dense urban areas to new apps for mobile parking solutions for large cities in the U.S. and Latin America."

They also gain global competence by studying the complexities, challenges and opportunities of the global marketplace and by applying what they learn to hands-on business creation. In addition, all business students are required to participate in a global learning experience. This helps students gain intercultural competence and a deeper understanding of entrepreneurship and technological issues affecting global business trends today.

Clarkson Innovation Recognized at Educators Conference

Felzensztein and **ASHLEY SWEENEY**, director of Clarkson IGNITE, represented Clarkson at the XXII Experiential Classroom conference, jointly organized by the University of Notre Dame and the University of Tampa Lowth Entrepreneurship Center.

Sweeney was nominated for the experiential entrepreneurship-teaching award, while Felzensztein shared best practices for implementing entrepreneurship education and research across university campuses and discussed his current research into entrepreneurship as a vehicle for solving poverty among disadvantaged rural communities worldwide.

Reaching Students a Half a World Away

Felzensztein, together with **JOSHUA LAFAVE**, director of graduate business programs at the Reh School of Business, gave a seminar on entrepreneurial leadership to more than 30 students in Mumbai, who are planning to enroll in Clarkson's MBA and executive education programs. The topic of the presentation included new skills for globally minded entrepreneurial leaders in an era of technology disruptions and global geopolitical changes.

Industry & Innovation in the Classroom

Diverse guest speakers from industry and the entrepreneurial ecosystem visited the Creativity and Innovation class led by Felzensztein. Among the visitors were Sweeney and **CARMEN FORRESTER**, former director and CIO of General Motors aerospace and technology division, who emphasized the importance of multicultural and diverse teams in innovation and the design of new products.



Carmen Forrester, former director and CIO of General Motors aerospace and technology division, with students in the Creativity and Innovation class

SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH AND COMMERCIALIZATION WITH A GLOBAL IMPACT

Clarkson faculty-researchers are working with colleagues across the campus and throughout the world at the intersection of entrepreneurship, innovation and sustainability to develop new technologies, find solutions to global environmental challenges and improve human life.

From Lab Innovation to Market

PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) are a class of synthetic chemicals that were used in everyday products and are now pervasive in the environment.

MICHELLE CRIMI, professor of Environmental Engineering and dean of the Graduate School, and **SILVANA ANDREESCU**, Egon Matijevic Endowed Chair in the Department of Chemistry & Biomolecular Science, discussed emerging technologies to clean PFAS-contaminated groundwater and soil at a workshop at Clarkson's Capital Region Campus. **JAMEY HOOSE**, director of The Shipley Center for Innovation, and **CHRISTIAN FELZENSZTEIN**, Reh Chair in Entrepreneurial Leadership, also participated.

The program included discussions with external stakeholders and industry leaders on commercializing these technologies to meet consumer and end users' demands.



Michelle Crimi, dean of the Graduate School; Christian Felzensztein, Reh Chair in Entrepreneurial Leadership; Silvana Andreescu, Egon Matijevic Endowed Chair; and Jamey Hoose, director of The Shipley Center for Innovation, at the PFAS conference in Schenectady



Clarkson University President Marc P. Christensen, Ph.D., P.E., and Kevin MacVittie '11, PhD '14

Funding Innovation: \$80,000 in Prizes

In October, Clarkson faculty and alumni representing 10 start-up companies met with investors and industry leaders and competed for more than \$80,000 in prizes to accelerate the commercialization of new technologies at the 2nd annual Technology Showcase & Competition held in Buffalo.

V-MARKINGS, a Buffalo-based start-up founded by Clarkson alumni **KEVIN MACVITTIE '11, PHD '14**, took home the top prize of \$40,000. V-Markings uses live data to detect road changes in real time to provide advanced driver assistance systems, HD maps and other end users with an accurate picture of current road conditions.

DMAX PLASMA, founded by Clarkson Professors **SELMA MEDEDOVIC** and **TOM HOLSEN**, received a \$20,000 prize to help commercialize their patented process to destroy harmful PFAS in our water supply. While **SENSOLIFE**, which

was developed by Professor Andreescu and features a unique rapid testing technology to detect low concentrations of PFAS, received a \$10,000 prize.

The competition was sponsored by NYSTAR and The Shipley Foundation for Innovation at Clarkson.

Electric Vehicle and Smart Grid Symposium

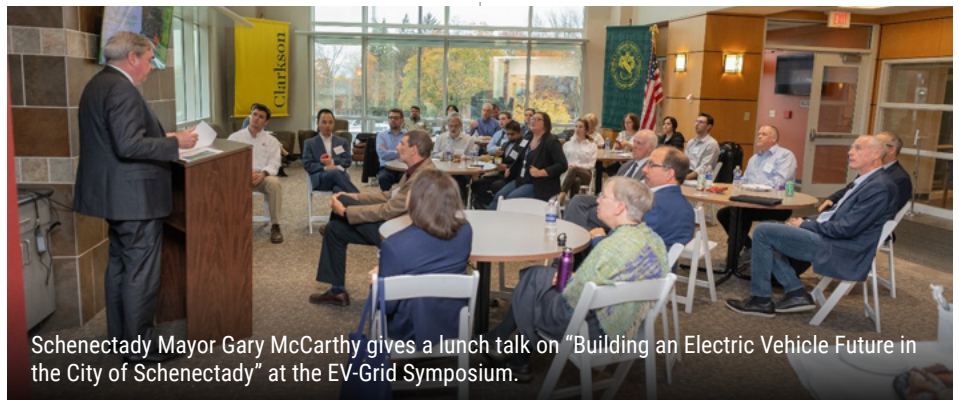
New York state is making a substantial investment in electric vehicle (EV) and electrical grid technology that will fundamentally change power generation and transmission operations in the state.

In response, a group of Clarkson faculty, led by **QINGRAN LI**, assistant professor of environmental economics and sustainability, organized the EV-Grid Symposium, which brought together academic researchers, energy industry representatives, state and local authorities and community stakeholders.

Topics included opportunities for research-industry partnerships to study and develop EV policy analyses, grid decarbonization modeling and research tools and technologies to support the state's energy transition.

Global Sustainability Conference

Last July, Felzensztein participated in the conference "How to Succeed in Global, Sustainable Innovation," organized by the Centre for Innovation Management Research at the University of London. He joined experts from around the world to discuss how to build sustainable industry clusters and new sustainable entrepreneurial ventures.



Schenectady Mayor Gary McCarthy gives a lunch talk on "Building an Electric Vehicle Future in the City of Schenectady" at the EV-Grid Symposium.



INDIGENOUS ENTREPRENEURSHIP – A NEW RESEARCH DOMAIN

How does an Indigenous entrepreneurial ecosystem develop along with the social, economic and political development of mainstream society?

This question is addressed by Reh Chair in Entrepreneurial Leadership **CHRISTIAN FELZENSZTEIN** and colleagues from New Zealand in new research comparing Indigenous entrepreneurial ecosystems in regions from two countries (Chile and New Zealand) at different stages of development.

Published in the *Journal of Management & Organization*, the study argues that the transition from an early stage to an advanced stage of Indigenous entrepreneurial ecosystem development is likely to be driven primarily by the development of economic and political contexts.

Professor Felzensztein shared his research with Clarkson students and faculty in October to coincide with Indigenous Peoples' Day.

[Click here for full access to the study.](#)

"Policymakers in developing countries should ensure that the benefits of economic and political development are available to Indigenous entrepreneurs as early as practicable. Such benefits are not limited to direct financial help. Rather, opportunities to gain experience by working outside the region, or even overseas, and to build networks may be more important."

FDI IN CUBA

Opportunities, challenges and its role in sustainable development

Felzensztein discussed his recent research on entrepreneurship in Cuba with other global experts in an online forum organized by the London School of Economics and Political Science and CEPAL (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean). Felzensztein's research is informed by ethnographic studies with several family entrepreneurs who started their small firms after Raúl Castro's reforms.

The published studies can be accessed online:

["Facilitating entrepreneurship in the failing Cuban economic model?."](#)

Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies

["The emergence of family entrepreneurship in the transition economy of Cuba."](#)

International Journal of Emerging Markets

EXPERTISE IN THE FIELD

Felzensztein has been invited as an expert reviewer on entrepreneurship and family business for the next Babson College Entrepreneurship Research Conference (BCERC) to be held in June at The University of Tennessee.

Felzensztein is also an expert reviewer on industry cluster and entrepreneurship for the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

He is currently collaborating in a global research project on "coopetition" in the wine industry with **DAVID CRICK**, the Paul Desmarais Professor of International Entrepreneurship & Marketing at the Telfer School of Management, University of Ottawa, and other colleagues from the UK, Europe, Asia and Latin America.

BRINGING THE WORLD TO CAMPUS

Global entrepreneurship expert **NICOLE COVIELLO**, who holds the Lazaridis Chair of International Entrepreneurship and Innovation at Wilfrid Laurier University in Canada, gave a seminar related to international entrepreneurship research trends. Her talk focused on the technological shift in the international entrepreneurship orientation of new born global firms.

World entrepreneurship expert **DR. LÉO-PAUL DANA** from Dalhousie University in Canada gave research workshops on entrepreneurship and seminars to students in the Leading and Designing New Ventures class.



Dr. Léo-Paul Dana with students in the Leading and Designing New Ventures class.



Clarkson™

DAVID D. REH SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
Clarkson University
Box 5765, 8 Clarkson Avenue
Potsdam, NY 13699