



University of North Alabama
Submission for the
Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi
2018 Excellence in Innovation Award

SHOALS
SH/FT

INNOVATION LIVES HERE

Submitted by J. Douglas Barrett, Ph.D.
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SHOALS SHIFT

In 2014, as the aftermath of the Great Recession dragged on, the local economy lost another 1,900 manufacturing jobs to factory closures. University of North Alabama (UNA) students were asking University leaders why the region did not have appropriate jobs for their skills upon graduation, forcing them to seek opportunities elsewhere. At the Shoals Chamber of Commerce, young business leaders, including several UNA alumni, challenged the organization to justify why they should keep their newly established ventures in the Shoals. Responding to these dual demands required a focused economic development effort to drive the region's growth.

UNA heard the voices of its students and young business leaders as an urgent call-to-action. The University recognized that typical academic approaches like offering new majors and minors and convening community leaders might be a part of its response, but that it would need to fundamentally expand its traditional role to fully address the complex challenge of regional economic development and the depletion of the region's manufacturing sector.

As a result, the University partnered with the Shoals Chamber of Commerce and the Shoals Entrepreneurial Center to build a new collaboration that would change the region's economic trajectory. This would be no small feat; the Shoals is a rural community that has long relied on manufacturing jobs for its economic sustenance. Defined by Alabama's Colbert and Lauderdale county borders, the Shoals is home to many residents who face trenchant, generational poverty. Residents on average earn only 73% of the nation's per capita income. Only 20% of adult residents have a Bachelor's degree or higher educational attainment versus the US average of 30%, and family household poverty is 20% higher than the national average. Named **Shoals Shift**, this unique collaborative effort was launched to leverage existing assets and develop creative ways to grow a digital economy in the region. Long-term success equates to retaining UNA graduates in the area by promoting the development of new ventures and generating new 21st Century jobs in existing industries.



The collaborative team is deeply committed to this work and has consciously embraced an action-biased approach of “doing not waiting.” Like entrepreneurs, the team has been willing to experiment and try new ideas, even in the face of great uncertainty. For example, the first business plan competition it hosted in 2014 was announced and planned even though program funding was not yet secured. Via their network, they were able to raise the necessary \$15,000 and host a successful competition.

The partnership has arranged an array of open competitive events to create highly visible venues through which it can simultaneously spur student learning and community enthusiasm. Having students compete with community participants advances a real-world experience that is difficult to reproduce in the classroom. It also exposes community leaders to entrepreneurial students sooner than similar academic program models, resulting in deeper relationships earlier.

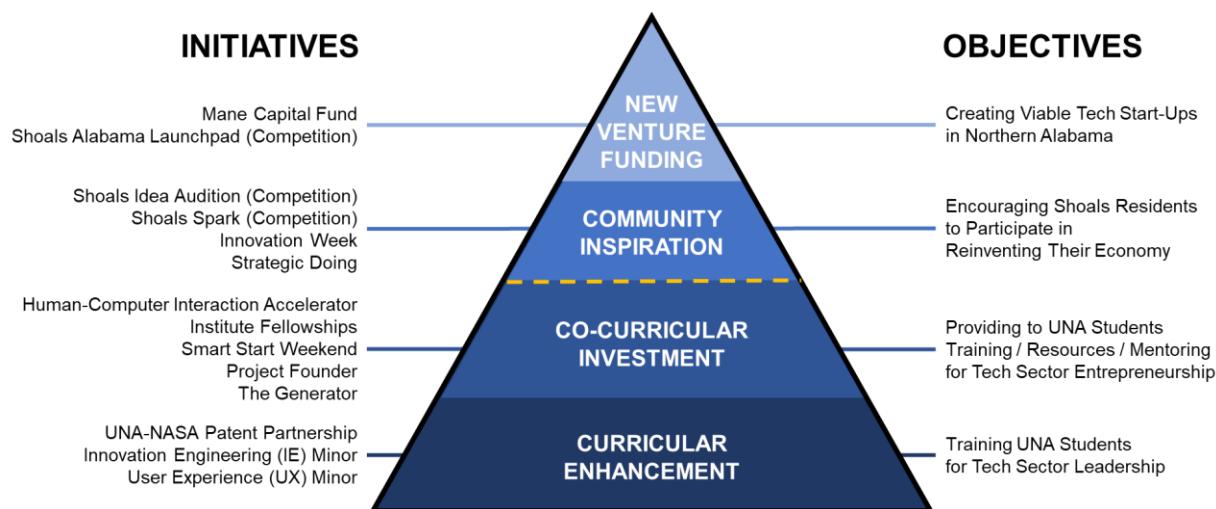
Another new methodology that the team has embraced is called Strategic Doing™ – an internationally recognized collaborative process – to create a transformative movement with the goal of expanding the digital technology cluster. Strategic Doing is a collaborative, flexible, agile strategy toolset and way of thinking that allows people that do not report to each other to work together to accomplish complex tasks. The team’s work in Strategic Doing has allowed it to reach and train broad audiences in collaborative problem-solving while building community enthusiasm and growing its network of supporters.

Over four years, progress has been extremely swift as the community has rallied around the collaboration. The Project hosts a suite of events with more than 250 competitors that are now part of the region’s business calendar and culture. The core team raises over \$150,000 annually, and in 2016, its efforts were rewarded with a \$997,150 Appalachian Regional Commission POWER grant. The Project has educated more than 200 UNA students in entrepreneurial approaches and assisted 15 UNA student startups that are raising capital and creating jobs – all to create a brighter future in a region that had grown accustomed to decline.

INNOVATION VIA TRANSFORMATION

Since its beginning, *Shoals Shift* has compelled UNA to carefully consider its community-facing role, and in many cases, to change what it does to participate fully in the region's journey away from its manufacturing-centric heritage.

The graphic below reflects the wide array of initiatives *Shoals Shift* has launched since 2014 and highlights the associated long-term economic development objectives of those efforts. At the base of the pyramid are innovative curricular programs – what universities know and do best. On that foundation, the University has created a layer of new co-curricular programs to spur student entrepreneurial action outside of credit-bearing coursework. By crossing the dotted yellow line in middle of the pyramid to inspire community participation, UNA has taken on a responsibility to act as something beyond a purely academic institution – moving beyond typical scholarly pursuits to foster deep-rooted regional change.



In fact, via *Shoals Shift* and its by-all-means-necessary approach, the University is living true to its stated mission.

As a regional, state-assisted institution of higher education, the University of North Alabama pursues its Mission of engaging in teaching, research, and service in order to provide educational opportunities for students, an environment for discovery and creative accomplishment, and a variety of **outreach activities meeting the professional, civic, social, cultural, and economic development needs of our region** in the context of a global community.

What follows are foundation-to-capstone summaries of the *Shoals Shift*'s innovative initiatives.



CURRICULAR ENHANCEMENT

Technology-Focused Minors: UNA's College of Business has added two minor courses of study: **Innovation Engineering (IE)** and **Human Computer Interaction/User Experience (UX)**, to train students to lead and work in technology businesses in the area. IE is a groundbreaking minor that provides a systematic approach to student-driven innovation using tools and methods for Creating, Communicating, and Commercializing meaningful, unique ideas. Students are taught in a flipped classroom style that allows them to work in teams. Learned skills apply to both individual entrepreneurship and leading innovation in existing companies. Introduced in 2014, 86 students have taken courses in the minor; ten have earned the minor thus far, and eighteen are on track to graduate with it. User Experience (UX) students learn to understand the expectations and needs of end-users in order to develop more efficient software and technology products. This interdisciplinary minor includes students from Art, English/Professional Writing, Psychology, Geography, Computer Science and Computer Information Systems. Thus far, 89 students have taken UX coursework, yielding thirteen graduates and fourteen more on track to earn the minor.

UNA-NASA Patent Partnership: Launched in February 2017, the NASA partnership was ratified and announced during the inaugural *NASA Day at UNA* event. The new collaboration engages undergraduate students majoring in science and business through a Business Plan Writing class. "The program is an innovative approach to engage students early on as undergraduates and employ nontraditional classroom methods to allow top students to engage in experiential learning," said Dr. Santanu Borah, UNA Professor of Management. Students gain entrepreneurial experience conducting market analysis and commercialization methods using actual NASA patents. NASA has committed to making selected patents available for student exploration; student teams prepare a classroom presentation and a written report focused on each patent's viability as a business. NASA benefits from the identification of new markets and commercial partners. From memory foam to invisible braces and the Global Positioning System, NASA research has a long history of yielding high-value commercial products.



CO-CURRICULAR INVESTMENT

The Generator: Opened in 2015, this incubator and co-working space for UNA students has blossomed into a hotbed of student-led energy and creativity. The Generator hosts a club of more than 30 students and serves as a place to gather and work on business ideas. To guide student efforts, the University has established connections with more than 150 business mentors in various sectors; these mentors have helped students launch their ideas into companies. In 2017, the University invested in maker space equipment for the Generator, adding a commercial-grade 3D printer and a CNC machine. In 2017-18, 15 businesses were launched by students, including four female and two underrepresented minority founders. These start-ups raised about \$290,000 in seed capital. As the Generator's momentum has increased, the University has set its sights on expanding its programming. In 2017, UNA acquired property adjacent to campus. While the Generator is now housed in an 1,800 ft² space, the new space will offer students about 5,000 ft².

Project Founder: UNA's Project Founder was launched in Fall 2017 to provide financial incentives for early-stage student-led startups. Using a tiered funding strategy in four cycles, students can apply and receive awards starting at \$500 and up to \$2,500, based on demonstrated entrepreneurial milestones. Five students are currently progressing through the program toward business launch. Program awards are provided by UNA's College of Business.

Smart Start Weekend: To generate student interest in business startups and entrepreneurial know-how, in 2015, UNA created an annual, intensive three-day training program that is open to UNA and local high school students and occurs in spring. The effort has attracted about 30 participants and 25 mentors yearly. About half of participating students have been female, and nineteen students later competed in Shoals Idea Audition. Two students went on to compete in the Shoals Alabama Launchpad described below. The weekend culminates with a panel of local investors providing encouragement to the students. Several mentors have become initial investors in these student startups.



Integration with Industry: To link student entrepreneurial energy with regional companies, UNA created an **Institute Fellowship** program in 2016. The Fellowships are an opportunity for established employers to engage UNA students for research and expansion initiatives to advance the company and provide a real-world project for students to practice and showcase entrepreneurial skills. These opportunities are paid, faculty-mentored experiences – driving toward an actionable, student-led project-end report. To launch the program, UNA attracted \$50,000 over two years from the Daniel Foundation of Alabama and utilized funding from its 2016 Appalachian Regional Commission grant. Thus far, fourteen students have served as Fellows, including six female and three minority students. Their work has helped to retain or create twelve jobs. These Fellowships are named after UNA's Institute for Innovation and Economic Development; the creation of the Institute is described further below in *Institutional Changes*. The **Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) Accelerator** was created in January 2017 with University funds and \$81,300 from the State of Alabama Innovation Fund. The Accelerator analyzes hands-on software projects for regional businesses – serving the dual-purposes of growing companies and offering real-world training for UNA students. So far, 23 UNA seniors have worked in teams to complete five user-experience and software design projects, including a scheduling app for the Shoals Golf Tournament and a mobile event application to serve the roughly 250,000 attendees of the W. C. Handy Music Festival.

COMMUNITY INSPIRATION

Strategic Doing™: To reach beyond campus boundaries and inspire energy, networking and know-how for regional-level change, three faculty and staff became certified as Strategic Doing Instructors. Strategic Doing is a flexible approach that allows previously unconnected people to collaborate to accomplish complex tasks often in a workshop setting. UNA now offers two-and-a-half-day practitioner training twice per-year that have been attended by 25 faculty and staff members and 29 community leaders. One of the twelve projects that arose during and after the



training is focused on reinvigorating an older neighborhood. This Strategic Doing Workshop is led by UNA student Jimbo Adkins, a senior Geography major. He said, "Strategic Doing provided an opportunity for the Seven Points community to collaborate and connect based off their assets. This created a high level of excitement in the room." The concept that large-scale collaborative change is not only possible, but achievable, is central to the Strategic Doing mindset.

Innovation Week: Responding to a student suggestion, the *Shoals Shift* team launched Innovation Week in 2017. Each February, public events focused on innovation and entrepreneurship are collaboratively planned throughout the region. The week begins with Shoals Alabama Launchpad competition and ends with Smart Start Weekend.

Shoals Spark: Created in 2015 to engage the region's middle school, high school and college students, this annual social innovation challenge seeks ideas that would make the Shoals a better place. Since inception, the event has attracted more than 120 participants and 46 winners. Community members and students annually advance upwards of 30 ideas. The contests thus far have yielded two active projects: solar-powered charging stations and a local producers market. The format of the competition is via video submission and attracts students from many regional schools. Cash prizes from \$125 to \$500 are funded by a local credit union.

Shoals Idea Audition: Started in 2014, this annual three-minute pitch contest is a public forum to introduce new ideas to a panel of business leaders and experts for \$8,000 in prizes. The event has attracted more than 100 participants and produced ten winners. The *Shoals Shift* team provides a training so participants can concisely describe their business ideas and pursue next steps. *Shoals Shift* raises \$15,000 annually from private sponsors to support this work. Several of the Audition winners have advanced to the local and statewide Alabama Launchpad.

NEW VENTURE FUNDING

The work described above has been pursued to spur deep-rooted entrepreneurial change in an economically underperforming region. The fruits of these efforts arise in the form of new viable



technology-based business ventures, but all ventures typically require up-front financial support. One major gap in the regional economic development landscape in 2014 was a lack of seed and angel funding. UNA and the *Shoals Shift* partners have since initiated two durable community resources to serve as incentive for business development and financial fuel for worthy startups.

Shoals Alabama Launchpad (ALP): The Shoals ALP is a regional spinoff of the statewide Alabama Launchpad competition and the first regional competition hosted by the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama (EDPA). This pre-seed \$100,000 competition is for startups that need additional capital to launch or scale their businesses. The organizing partnership is led by UNA's Institute for Innovation and Economic Development and includes EDPA, Shoals Chamber of Commerce, and Shoals Entrepreneurial Center. Individual awards are based on milestones submitted through the project budget required during the application phase. The judge's panel reviews applications and required attachments to determine which teams will be admitted. Teams accepted into the competition advance to the Pitch Phase. During the Pitch Phase, teams submit a full business plan and make an eight-minute pitch presentation before the panel at a live, public pitch event. Teams that advance following the pitch presentation submit a revised business plan for a market assessment by a third party. Each team receives a copy of their assessment valued at \$2,000. Finalists are to incorporate the assessment into their final business plan and pitch presentation. The Finale Phase culminates in a live pitch presentation, after which winners are selected and announced. Shoals ALP executed its first competition in 2017 with nine applicants leading to five finalists and awards totaling \$95,000. In the second competition in 2018, there were five applicants and two finalists with awards totaling \$100,000. UNA students competed and were awarded funds in each cycle. Prize money was raised 50% locally and the rest matched by EDPA.

Mane Capital Fund: Established in 2016, private investors launched a \$1,000,000 angel fund for local startups with three investments made to date. The UNA College of Business played an instrumental role in generating interest in the development of the Fund, and the *Shoals Shift*



partnership was the driving force underlying its creation. Grants provided by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs and Appalachian Regional Commission in 2015 supported a consultant to help establish the Fund. Twenty local accredited investors are now associated and have a strong desire to invest in regional sustainable companies, enhancing the region's economy. The Fund has teamed with the Angel Capital Group, which provides valuable expertise and national collaborations that will be critical to achieving the Fund's long-term goals.

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

The community needs that inspired the launch of *Shoals Shift* also spurred recognition within UNA that it needed a focal point on campus for economic development activity. As a result, UNA launched the Institute for Innovation and Economic Development in the College of Business in 2016. It invested in three faculty and staff members to drive its programs and outreach. The Institute focuses in four areas: economic development, corporate consulting, Strategic Doing facilitation, and business innovation initiatives. The Institute's public-facing presence has served to reinforce UNA's commitment to work with industry partners and local, state and national economic development agencies. Since forming, the Institute has bid on 35 projects and secured sixteen grants and contracts for \$557,050, including the UNA Economic Impact Report, two Daniel Foundation student fellowship grants, and an Appalachian Regional Commission POWER grant.

SUMMARY OUTCOMES

1. 15 student-led startups founded / 10 registered LLCs launched by students
2. \$290,000 student seed capital raised
3. Won 2016 University Economic Development Association Talent & Innovation Award
4. 110 Shoals Idea Audition participants, 11 winners, and 70 judges
5. 110 Smart Start Weekend participants, 100 mentors, and 15 investor judges
6. 14 Shoals Alabama Launchpad participants, 7 funded orgs, 10 judges, 10 jobs created
7. 80+ students benefitted from the Generator Club



8. 54 faculty, staff and community leaders trained in Strategic Doing
9. \$500,000+ raised from local businesses/agencies / \$1,000,000 raised in Angel funding
10. Major grants awarded from Appalachian Regional Commission and State of Alabama
11. 6 *Shoals Shift* presentations at National and International Conferences / 1 upcoming
 - International Business Innovation Association (InBIA) (MAR2017)
 - Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) (APR2017)
 - Development District Association of Appalachia (DDAA) (APR2017)
 - Society of Business, Industry, and Economics (SOBIE) (APR2017)
 - Network of International Business Schools (NIBS) in Leeds, UK (MAY2017)
 - Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE) (JUL2017)
 - Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER) LMI Institute (JUN2018)

SUSTAINABILITY

In 2016, Appalachian Regional Commission recognized *Shoals Shift's* role in diversifying the regional economy by awarding the project a \$997,150 Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) grant. Other sources of external funds have included: State of Alabama Innovation Fund (\$81,300); Daniel Foundation of Alabama (\$50,000); and annual local sponsorships (\$350,000 total). UNA's commitment includes faculty and staff, rent at the Generator incubator, equipment purchases, and sponsorships exceeding \$700,000 annually.

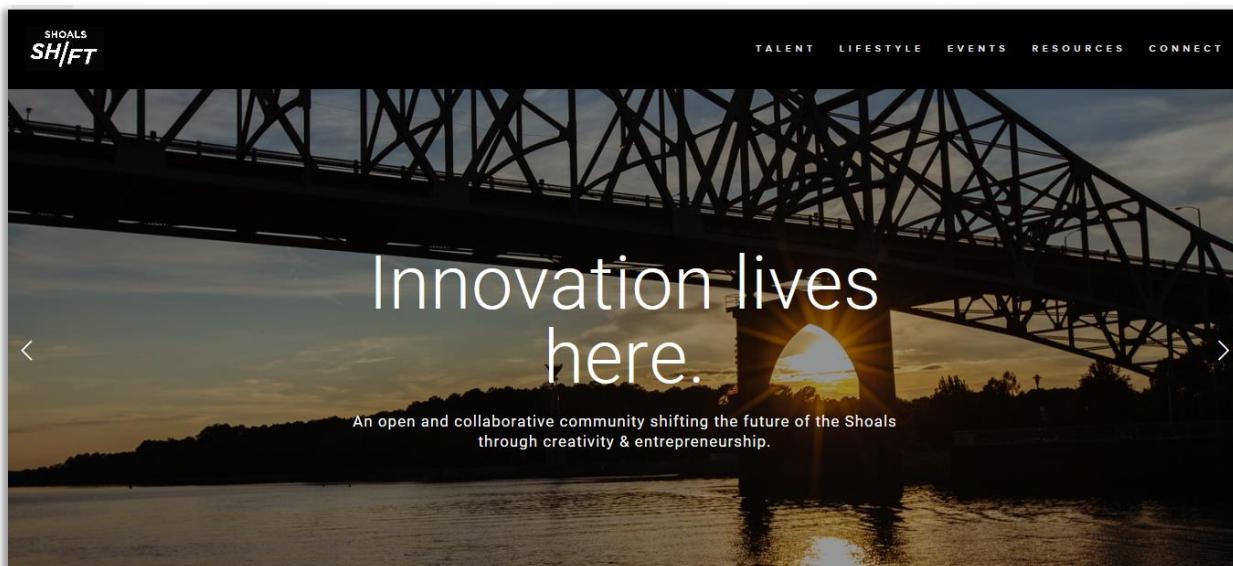
CONCLUSION

Over the last four years, *Shoals Shift* has undertaken an adventure involving experimentation, real-time learning, and substantial risk. UNA has heavily invested time, resources and funding in a partnership that is trying in the face of great uncertainty to do something extraordinary – reinvigorate a community and a regional economy which was until several years ago without a promising future. With determination and foresight, UNA and its *Shoals Shift* partners have created new energy and new momentum, giving students, businesses and the region's residents the means to participate in creating a brighter future.



SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

SHOALS SHIFT WEBSITE



SHOALS SHIFT SUMMARY (VIDEO)





STUDENT STORIES



Bryan Gonzalez: As President of the Generator Club at UNA, Bryan has an inquisitive mind. Intrigued by the facility's 3D printer, he quickly became the resident expert helping peers to develop early-stage prototypes. Recognizing a problem with moisture levels in relation to the filament printing materials, he developed a device used to both dry and store the filament. Bryan pitched his idea at the recent Shoals Alabama Launchpad and received \$15,000 to support his project. In addition, the Project Founder initiative has provided Bryan with \$500 to pursue the potential viability in the market.



Simone Fells: A resident of New York, Simone came to UNA to study Culinary Arts. She became an early member of the Generator Student Business Incubator, where she launched her business, Delights by Mo – a catering company specializing in cupcakes. In 2016, Simone formed a Limited Liability Company and registered *Delights by Mo*.



Grace Piper: Innovation Fellow Grace Piper is a Biology major with an Innovation and Entrepreneurship minor. She is a founding member of The Generator and has assisted many students and group in the development of their businesses. In addition, Grace is serving as a Institute Fellow, a fellowship sponsored by the Daniel Foundation of Alabama that places student interns with businesses within the community. Grace received a placement assisting a local Fitness Center with their Social Media presence.



Mason Royal: An Accounting major student in UNA's Generator Club, Mason was introduced to Venture for America when he attended the 2017 EDPA meeting in Birmingham. Venture for America is a competitive two-year fellowship program for recent graduates who want to work at startups and create jobs in American cities. Mason successfully reached the final in-person interview stage in New York, being one of the only students from a small regional university. Although he was not chosen to go forward, Mason credits the opportunity to the unique student engagement opportunities that UNA afforded him as an undergraduate.



Sydney Strickland: Sydney is a senior majoring in Marketing. When asked if she was interested in being a part of the Innovation Fellowship program, she said yes immediately. The thought of gaining experience in her field – something she loves – was exciting enough. But being paid to learn was something even more enticing. The Fellowship allowed her to not only gain experience, but also earn a paycheck. Sydney was placed with a local startup company called Sycamore Physician Contracting, one of the top finalists for the Shoals Launchpad last year.



Ryan Mason: As a UNA Innovation Fellow and Finance major, Ryan Mason, travelled with a group of students to Stanford University's D-School, the Google campus, and other places of innovation in Silicon Valley. This inspired Ryan to launch two business ventures – *Luxe Brand* and *Bizz Buzz*. *Luxe Brand* is a manufacturer of designer lambskin shoelaces and *Bizz Buzz* is a social media marketing B2B company. He was successful in receiving early stage funding for *Luxe Brand* through the Shoals Alabama Launchpad pitch competition while still an undergraduate student. His other business, *Bizz Buzz*, is now generating enough revenue to sustain his lifestyle.

RYAN MASON / LUXE BRAND (VIDEO)

LUXE BRAND
LUXURY SHOELACES



Brandon Gillis: One of the early successes of *Shoals Shift* is [PartCycle Technologies](#). *PartCycle* was the winner of the 2014 Shoals Idea Audition competition and is now operating. In 2015, Brandon, who was a Computer Information Systems major, was awarded funding in the statewide Alabama Launchpad competition, then received \$1 million in venture funding from a local angel investor. This allowed the company to hire 15 additional people and lease space.

BRANDON GILLIS / PARTCYCLE TECHNOLOGIES (VIDEO)



BLOG ENTRY (VIDEO)



UNIVERSITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (UEDA) AWARD OF EXCELLENCE FOR INNOVATION & TALENT 2016



UNIVERSITY
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
ASSOCIATION



Innovation + Talent

Projects and initiatives that synergistically connect TALENT and INNOVATION, to create innovators of many kinds—business entrepreneurs, idea or product makers, and problem-solvers. Entrepreneurship education projects/initiatives and experiential learning projects/initiatives to connect students with entrepreneurs are just two examples of the types of projects/initiatives included in this category.

Shoals Shift

Submitted by University of North Alabama

B-Start

Submitted by Indiana University

DIVE (Discovery, Innovation, and Venture Enterprise)

Submitted by Indiana University – Purdue University, Indianapolis

Santa Fe Community College Training Center Corporation

Submitted by Santa Fe Community College



**University of North Alabama
Named as Finalist for University
Economic Development
Association (UEDA) 2016 Awards
of Excellence**

By Staff | August 23, 2016 | Filed under: News



UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA COLLEGE OF BUSINESS NEWSLETTER | MARCH 2017

Dr. Greg Carnes, Dean
Raburn Eminent Scholar of Accounting



January brought a record breaking 1,761 students to the College of Business, up over 15% from last year's spring semester enrollment.



COB WINS UEDA AWARD FOR INNOVATION AND TALENT

The University of North Alabama College of Business keeps racking up the accolades, with the most recent being a University Economic Development Association (UEDA) 2016 Award of Excellence for Innovation and Talent.

The Chair of the Department of Economics and Finance at UNA, Dr. Doug Barrett, said the award speaks to the magnitude of the collaborative innovation and economic development efforts taking place in the Shoals.



UNA's Shoals Shift, developed in the College of Business, beat out a record number of applicants for the top spot at the UEDA's Annual Summit, which took place Oct. 16-19, in Roanoke, Virginia. The UEDA awards are designed to help accelerate these programs by recognizing cutting edge initiatives, and to promote their adoption by other universities. Program categories. Award recipients were selected by a panel of peers consisting of university faculty, as well as the intersections of and economic development professionals.





CURRICULAR ENHANCEMENT: UNA/NASA PATENT PARTNERSHIP



TUESDAY FEBRUARY 7, 2017

INTERACT with representatives from Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville to discuss their collaborative programs with the College of Business and College of Arts and Sciences. Discuss student coop programs, summer employment, and permanent career opportunities with the representatives. Learn about NASA's new Space Launch System rocket and the workforce needs that will be required from NASA and the Marshall Space Flight Center.



**ASK QUESTIONS AND GATHER INFORMATION AT INFORMATIONAL TABLES STATIONED AT THE
COMMONS & GUC • 9am to noon**

INFO:

Dr. Santanu Borah
SBorah@una.edu
256-765-4605

WITNESS

a historic signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Marshall Space Flight Center & President Kitts scheduled for:
12:30pm | Keller 3rd floor Raburn Wing Conference Room
Students, Faculty, and Staff are invited





CO-CURRICULAR INVESTMENT: THE GENERATOR

The Generator gives students access to a co-working space, connects them with the right mentors, and provides on-going guidance to help them overcome the challenges that faces every startup business. The Generator sets apart traditional classroom teaching methods and adds a critical total student immersion in entrepreneurship. Students are encouraged to collaborate and help each other's business ventures succeed. By offering a platform to promote innovation and entrepreneurship activities across campus, students are able to actively demonstrate and build leadership skills.

una.edu/generator

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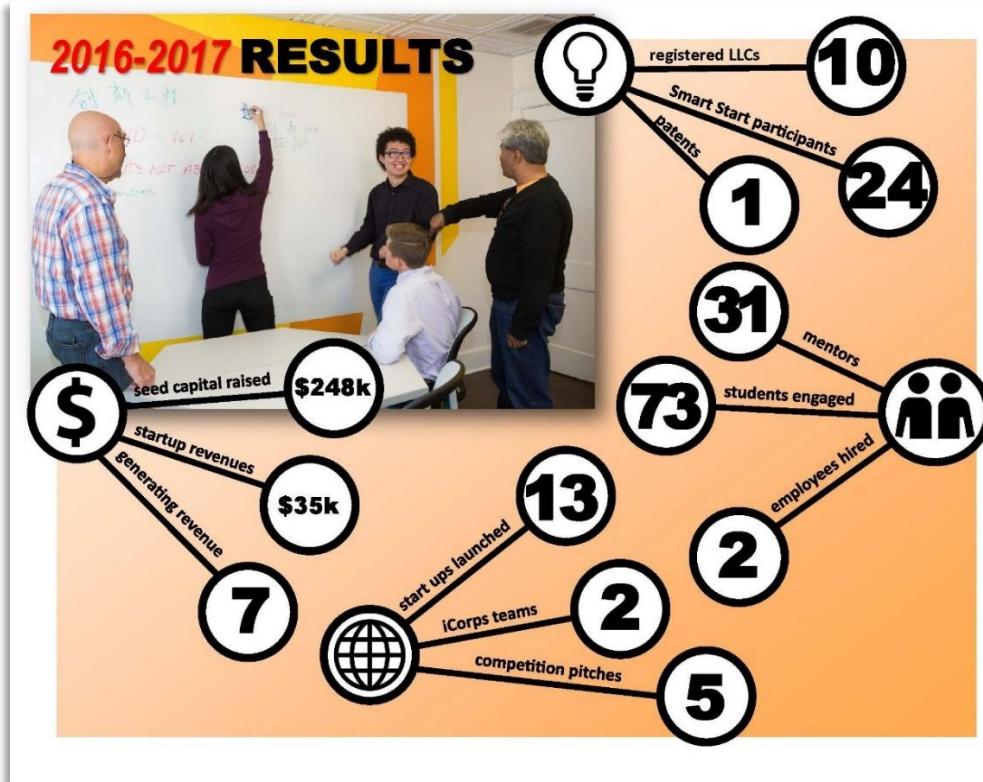




It's all about:

- Creative Space
- Collaboration
- Support System
- Doing Something Bias Toward Action







CO-CURRICULAR INVESTMENT: SMART START WEEKEND

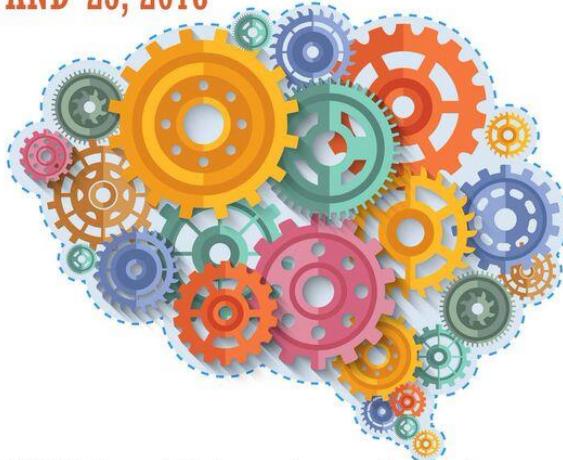
SPEND A WEEKEND AND BUILD A BUSINESS!

SMART START WEEKEND

! “ \$
INNOVATION
POWERED BY ENGINEERING

FEBRUARY 23, 24, AND 25, 2018

THE COMMONS



SMART START WEEKEND is a 72-hour learn-by-doing campus workshop that teaches entrepreneurial skills to students in an extreme hands-on environment. The idea is simple: start a company over the course of three days.

INFORMATION & REGISTRATION:
www.una.edu/smartzstartweekend

PARTIALLY FUNDED BY A GRANT FROM THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION





CO-CURRICULAR INVESTMENT: INSTITUTE FELLOWSHIPS

MAKE \$2,500 IN A SEMESTER
BY BEING AN
INSTITUTE FELLOW

Plus:

- Beef up your resume
- Gain experience
- Network with industry

There are twenty spots available that will be awarded for the spring semester of 2018. Student fellows will work on independent projects that support regional entrepreneurial and economic development activity. Each project will be in partnership with a local company, non-profit, or governmental organization and will be mentored by a UNA faculty or staff member.

OPEN TO ALL UNA STUDENTS REGARDLESS OF MAJOR

Fellowships are competitive and will be awarded based on review by University leadership and local businesses. Successful candidates for fellowship will demonstrate strong academic rigor and be involved in experiential learning such as clubs, internships, study abroad, and research.

Contact: **Dr. Doug Barrett**
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**PARTIALLY FUNDED BY A GRANT FROM THE
APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION
SUPPORTING THE SHOALS SHIFT PROJECT**

www.shoalsshift.com



COMMUNITY INSPIRATION: STRATEGIC DOING



Strategic Doing Certification Course

University of North Alabama
April 18, 19, & 20, 2018
Florence, AL

Take part in three days of engaged learning and join an active, national network of Strategic Doing practitioners

This course will help you design and implement agile strategies using Strategic Doing—an adaptable process that uses lean principles to rapidly build complex collaborations and leverage them to move toward measurable outcomes.

Expand your ability to lead collaborations

- **explain** this new approach to strategy
- **discover** what works and expand upon it
- **design** and lead Strategic Doing workshops
- **create** and guide sophisticated collaborations
- **find** new opportunities and quickly take action
- **lead** strategies without “command and control”

You can take this course as standalone endeavor or as a stepping stone toward certification. Certification in Strategic Doing involves classroom instruction as well as field work with coaching from Strategic Doing faculty.



Register today!

<https://www.campusce.net/una/Course/Course.aspx?c=344>

The cost for the two options is:

- Practitioner Training + Certification: \$1575
- Practitioner Training: \$1275

For more information, contact:

Janyce Fadden	Mary-Marshall VanSant
jfadden@una.edu	mmvansant@una.edu
(256) 765-4413	(256) 765-4184
https://www.una.edu/strategicdoing/	

Strategic Doing 301: Leading Complex Collaborations

April 18 @ 9:00 am - April 20 @ 12:00 pm

UNA has Hosted the International Strategic Doing Practitioners Conference Three Years in a Row



COMMUNITY INSPIRATION: INNOVATION WEEK

Shoals INNOVATION WEEK

FEBRUARY 20 - 25, 2018

Shoals Innovation Week was created to highlight some of the innovative practices that are going on with a growing number of entrepreneurs based in the local area. It also allows start-up businesses the chance to network and ask questions of successful leaders in their fields.

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 20

4:30-5:30 PM
SHOALS ALABAMA LAUNCHPAD
FINALE ROUNDS
SINGING RIVER LIVE
526 E. COLLEGE STREET
FLORENCE

Watch as Shoals Alabama Launchpad participants pitch in front of judges and an audience for a share up to \$100,000.00. Anyone interested in being a part of the entrepreneurship community is invited to this free event.

5:30-7:00 PM
NEXTGEN SHOALS INNOVATION AWARDS
SINGIN' RIVER LIVE
526 E. COLLEGE STREET
FLORENCE

Be a part of a fast-paced fun evening that recognizes and rewards startups that inspire us to be at the leading edge of tech communities. Led by the Chamber's NextGenShoals group, this premier event is certain to be an annual must go. The tech community, Chamber members, and interested community members are invited to attend.

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 22

11:30 AM-1:00 PM
SHOALS TECHSPACE LAUNCH
ROGERS BUILDING
131 N. COURT STREET
FLORENCE

The Shoals Technology Partnership invites the public to the launch of the new Shoals TechSpace in the heart of downtown Florence.

FRIDAY- SUNDAY FEBRUARY 23-25

SMART START WEEKEND
UNA COMMONS BUILDING
Friday night kicks off a three-day event for students to exchange business startup ideas, focusing on 6-8 ideas that cover the course of the weekend to develop a company. This annual program uses a format based on the very successful Innovation Engineering tool set. Students will come away with a clear path towards building a company and then present their ideas to a panel of local investors. The public is invited to be part of the finale starting at 5:00 pm on Sunday, February 25.



Innovation Week Sponsors:

BANK INDEPENDENT™
Radically Original™

The Joel R. Anderson Family Foundation

 PARTIALLY FUNDED BY A GRANT FROM THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION SUPPORTING THE SHOALS SHIFT PROJECT

**For more information about Innovation Week
call 256-765-4107 or email innovation@una.edu.**



COMMUNITY INSPIRATION: SHOALS SPARK

THE PURPOSE IS TO FOSTER THE INNOVATION WITHIN THE SHOALS' YOUNG PEOPLE TO GENERATE IDEAS TO MAKE THE SHOALS UNIQUE AND CREATIVE.

AN IDEA COMPETITION
FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL
AND COLLEGE STUDENTS LIVING IN
THE SHOALS.



Application Deadline:
February 5
Competition:
March 8: 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Visit **shoalsspark.com**

Do you have unique and creative ideas about how to make the Shoals a very cool place to live and work. There are no restrictions on the types of ideas. For example, ideas can be related to business, technology, education, the arts, recreation, families, entertainment, community development, social services, the environment, preservation, sustainability, health care, volunteerism, government, workforce development, philanthropy, special populations (e.g., elderly, homeless), etc. Students can present any idea they think would make the Shoals a better place to live and work.

Sponsored by **Listerhill Credit Union**
and THE SHOALS SHIFT MOVEMENT
Partially funded by a grant from the
Appalachian Regional Commission

COMMUNITY INSPIRATION: SHOALS SPARK FINALISTS 2017

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE SHOALS SPARK FINALISTS!

THESE 10 FINALISTS WILL BE PRESENTING THEIR IDEAS ON HOW TO MAKE THE SHOALS A BETTER PLACE AT THE UPCOMING SHOALS SPARK EVENT ON MARCH 8 AT 5:00 P.M. IN THE GUILLOT STUDENT CENTER AT UNA. JOIN US AND APPLAUD YOUR FAVORITE IDEA!



Joe Don Anderson and
Anthony Rutherford
Muscle Shoals Middle



Whit Martens, Josh Bannister, Will Phillips
and Riley Davis
Muscle Shoals Middle



Lindsey Conner
Muscle Shoals Middle



McKenna Crisler
Leighton Elementary



Gage Sherrill
and Dillon Edwards
Muscle Shoals Middle



Red Bay High School
Health Science Team 1



Red Bay High School
Health Science Team 2



Gage Isbell
Colbert County High



Tamia Jackson
Muscle Shoals
Career Academy



Nathan Pegram
Muscle Shoals
Career Academy

MORE INFORMATION AT SHOALSSPARK.COM



COMMUNITY INSPIRATION: SHOALS IDEA AUDITION



Bank Independent,
the Shoals Chamber of Commerce,
and the University of North Alabama
present the fourth annual

YOU COULD WIN \$5,000 ON OCTOBER 10

SHARE YOUR BUSINESS IDEA
AUDITION IT and you could WIN up to
\$5,000!

Part *Shark Tank*, part *American Idol*, this contest allows you to present your idea in front of a panel of business leaders and experts — and if your presentation is the best, you win! We promise it will be fun, and it could be very profitable!

For more information www.shoalsideaaudition.com

To reserve your audition spot contact Mary Marshall VanSant
at 256-765-4184 or mmvansant@una.edu.

Partially funded from a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission.



SHOALS IDEA AUDITION 2017 (VIDEO)





TESTIMONIALS

Caitlin Holland, President, Shoals Chamber of Commerce: "The Shoals area is already benefitting from The *Shoals Shift* Movement by heightened interest in establishing new businesses. The Chamber strongly embraces this entrepreneurial and innovative initiative."

Dr. Ken Kitts, President, University of North Alabama: "It is exciting to see our students engaged with business leaders and mentors in the many *Shoals Shift* project initiatives. This project continues to expand the ways in which UNA impacts the economic wealth of the region."

Mary Marshall VanSant, Director of Continuing Education, University of North Alabama: "The Idea Audition has offered people the opportunity to showcase their ideas in a creative and fun environment. It is exciting to see several of the participants launching their own companies and watching their success."

Dr. Doug Barrett, Director, Institute for Innovation and Economic Development: "The *Shoals Shift* project gives our students opportunities to experience real-world learning opportunities that can result in starting their own companies. All of the hundreds of students who participated have added to their future skill-sets as well strengthening their resumes."

Kristin Husainy, COO / Managing Partner, Sycamore Physician Contracting: "I am so grateful for UNA and the programming provided through the *Shoals Shift* initiatives. Participating in Shoals Idea Audition and Shoals Alabama Launchpad has provided the training and opportunities we needed to compete for funding and accelerate the growth of our new business."

Angela Wier, Vice President, Economic Development Partnership of Alabama: "There is a special collaboration going on in the Shoals. The culture of entrepreneurship was why we were so excited when this area signed up first for the regional Alabama Launchpad program."

Giles McDaniel, Executive Director, Shoals Entrepreneurial Center: "Watching the community embrace the *Shoals Shift* movement as a catalyst for Economic Development has made me proud of the role the Shoals Entrepreneurial Center has played in its inception. The collaboration with UNA and the Shoals Chamber of Commerce is successfully building a platform for the community to compete in a digital world."

Nancy Sanford, Director, Florence Lauderdale Public Library: "As a lifelong Shoals resident, I have witnessed the transformative powers that the *Shoals Shift* movement has offered to our area. The Collaboratory at the Library is pleased to be a part of this exciting initiative."

Wes Wages, Armosa Studios: "Shoals Shift has been an encouraging movement for our business that pushes us to new levels in digital technology."

Dr. Gregory Carnes, Dean, College of Business, University of North Alabama: "Our job as educators is to offer opportunities for students to explore their interests, engage their imaginations, and learn how they can contribute to our community and broader society. As the *Shoals Shift* partnership has gained steam, we've had to push ourselves to keep pace with student demand. We're finding out how innovative a college of business can be and what that looks like in the 21st Century. It's been an exciting experiment thus far, and we're all looking forward to what we can become."