



NEWS RELEASE

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**CONTACT:** Caron Blanton, APR  
Director of Communications, Mississippi Public Universities  
(601) 432-6333, (769) 257-4585, cblanton@mississippi.edu  
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### **Universities help turn dreams to reality for entrepreneurs**

Mississippians are known for their creativity, which may manifest itself through writing, music, or other artistic endeavors. However, Mississippians also express their creativity through ideas for a great new product or business. Bringing it from concept to profitability can be a daunting task. Mississippi Public Universities provide the know-how and assistance that can help students, businesses, and community members turn an entrepreneur's dreams into reality.

In addition to undergraduate and graduate business degree programs, including [an online MBA ranked among the nation's top by Fortune](#), the College of Business and Aviation at **Delta State University** offers a variety of resources to support entrepreneurs in the Mississippi Delta and beyond. Delta State's [Business Assistance Center](#) (BAC) provides high-quality services for entrepreneurial startups and women-owned businesses, including business planning, financial literacy and grant assistance. In addition, Delta State's new [Women Minority Business Development Center](#) (WMBDC), the largest single expansion of business development for women entrepreneurs across the state of Mississippi, provides minority women entrepreneurs with professional business support, financial counseling, mentorship and a variety of technical assistance services. Established in 2005, Delta State's [Center for Business and Entrepreneurial Research](#) serves as an educational, networking and consulting resource for entrepreneurs, governmental agencies and owners of privately held businesses.

**Jackson State University's** [Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship](#) (CIEED) leverages the best of JSU's STEM, business, and entrepreneurial capabilities, as well as collaborative potential in addressing some of society's most pressing problems (via university-industry partnerships). The CIEED takes advantage of expertise co-location and facilitates the intersection of widely disparate learning and idea generation; a place for constant learning, common vision, as well as creativity and innovation. The CIEED pairs entrepreneurs, designers, and businesses with subject matter experts. The elements of Research, Education, and Corporate Partnership will be uniquely interwoven to drive creativity and innovation, while accelerating technology transfer, entrepreneurship, and economic development. Primarily, the CIEED focuses on supporting the innovative activities of JSU faculty, staff, and students, and extending such capabilities to the Mississippi community, and other industry partners.

The [College of Business](#) at **Mississippi State University** offers an Entrepreneurship Minor, providing a path for students from any major to supplement their education with the skills needed to start their own business. This minor offers interdisciplinary coursework in management, marketing/branding,

entrepreneurial finance, and the legal aspects of entrepreneurship. Each course in the minor goes beyond traditional business courses by focusing on entrepreneurial applications.

The Jack Hatcher Engineering Entrepreneurship Certificate is an exciting program designed exclusively for engineering students interested in blending technical and business skills. This could include a business startup or working for an entrepreneur in the early years of the business. The certificate also enhances the engineering program for students interested in corporate management.

MSU's [Center for Entrepreneurship and Outreach](#) helps entrepreneurs launch new companies, grow existing businesses, build relationships and connections to seed funding, and master the essential skills needed to assess markets and operate a business. In 2019, the E-Center partnered with MSU's School of Human Sciences to open the Idea Shop, a 2,000-square-foot facility in downtown Starkville that includes a publicly available makerspace and a retail product accelerator. MSU was recognized as an inaugural Best Maker School in Higher Education by Make: magazine and Newsweek in 2021. The university's Office of Technology Management works with researchers across campus to facilitate the transition of MSU-owned intellectual property to the marketplace, generating economic activity in the state and helping faculty gain equity in startups based on their research activity. OTM maintains a registry of technologies available for licensing at <https://www.otm.msstate.edu/technologies>.

If you have ever dreamed of owning your own restaurant, the emphasis in culinary management at **Mississippi University for Women's** [Culinary Arts Institute](#) provides students with the business and legal aspects needed to make that dream a reality. Designed for a student interested in managing a kitchen or owning their own restaurant, courses include marketing, accounting and law courses which relate specifically to business side of the culinary world. The W's culinary program offers state-of-the art instruction at the only institution in Mississippi offering a major in culinary arts leading to the bachelor of science degree.

The [Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship](#) (CIE) at the **University of Mississippi** inspires students to create innovative businesses through excellent teaching, exceptional service and world-class research. Having established more than 50 student ventures since 2018, CIE provides student entrepreneurship education through focused major and minor degree programs; a graduate certificate; competitions and experiential learning opportunities; and, world-recognized entrepreneurship research. Specific activities include a pitch competition, a fall business model competition, a spring business plan competition, an entrepreneurship club, Discovery Grants to test venture feasibility, and the Rebel Venture Capital Fund for initial seed grant funding.

CIE also hosts the REDe Entrepreneurship Summit, an annual speaker event with the goal of encouraging, celebrating and enhancing entrepreneurial endeavors with students from varied academic backgrounds, such as the arts, engineering, pharmacy, or business.

At the University of Mississippi, the [Catalyzing Entrepreneurship and Economic Development \(CEED\) Initiative](#) of the [McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement](#) works with students and faculty to build partnerships with Mississippi communities to address social problems and identify actionable solutions. The CEED Initiative is open to undergraduate and graduate students from any major on campus to compete for scholarships and graduate fellowships.

CEED Innovation Scholars and Fellows research a social problem in Mississippi and provide solutions in partnership with a community organization. Since 2014, CEED has provided scholarships for more than 80 undergraduate and graduate students, funded almost 100 K-12 students and supported the research of 10 faculty members. Funded with support from the Robert M. Hearin Support Foundation, CEED

partnerships increase entrepreneurship and promote economic development in rural Mississippi communities.

The [Women’s Business Center](#) (WBC) at **Alcorn State University** began in October 2020, and provides outreach services to the rural, underserved communities of Southwest Mississippi and portions of Northeast Louisiana. The Women’s Business Center at Alcorn State University directs its efforts, with the U.S. Small Business Administration’s (SBA) assistance, to address a broad spectrum of economic needs for 11 Mississippi counties — Adams, Amite, Claiborne, Franklin, Jefferson, Lawrence, Lincoln, Pike, Walthall, Warren, and Wilkinson; and three Louisiana Parishes — Concordia, Madison, and Tensas.

The activities of the WBC at Alcorn are designed to improve the quality of life for the residents of these counties and parishes; to provide education, counseling, and resources; to provide training opportunities related to traditional business and e-commerce; and to create peer network groups.



Cutline: The REDe Entrepreneurship Summit hosted by the UM School of Business Administration at the University of Mississippi.



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The Mississippi Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning governs the public universities in Mississippi, including Alcorn State University; Delta State University; Jackson State University; Mississippi State University including the Mississippi State University Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine;

Mississippi University for Women; Mississippi Valley State University; the University of Mississippi including the University of Mississippi Medical Center; and the University of Southern Mississippi.