

The Hub

A new center opens its doors ...



... to student entrepreneurship

THE SOCIAL CAMPUS NETWORKING startup Friendsy began with a single campus network at Princeton and has since expanded to 230 campuses nationwide.

This June, Friendsy was one of the first startups to move into the University's Entrepreneurial Hub, a new incubator space for faculty, students and alumni. Located in downtown Princeton, the Hub houses the Keller Center's annual eLab Summer Accelerator Program — a launch pad for student startups — as well as an eLab Incubator program that enables students to pursue their entrepreneurial ambitions during the academic year. The Hub also offers shared working space for startups founded by faculty, students and alumni, and serves as the center for Princeton's entrepreneurship education programs.

"eLab has been tremendously helpful for our growth as a startup company," said Michael Pinsky, one of Friendsy's founders, who graduated from Princeton this year with a degree in psychology. "The ability to work with mentors in the field and use the working space at the Hub with what became a very large Friendsy team was incredibly valuable, and it is undoubtedly a major reason for our success."

Now in its fourth year, the eLab program runs for 10 weeks in the summer and culminates in Demo Days, held in New York City and Princeton, at which the teams present their work to entrepreneurs, investors and innovators. The program has become an integral part of the University's effort to assist students with pursuing new ventures.

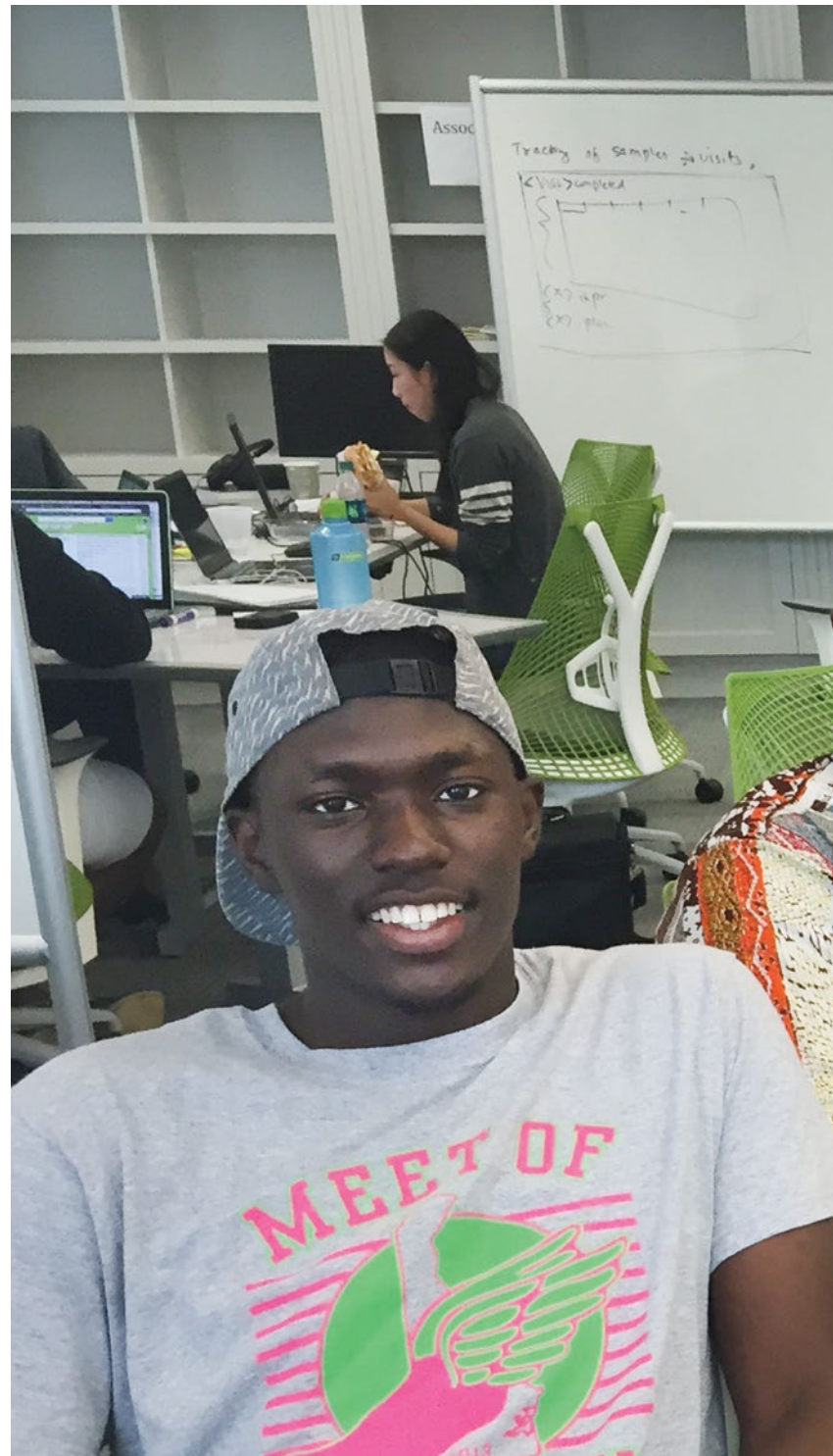
The Hub was established in response to recommendations made by a committee set up to explore ways to expand entrepreneurship education and help University students, faculty and alumni advance their creative ideas and make important contributions to society.

Mung Chiang, who chaired the committee, said the new space provides "an essential anchor" for a wide range of entrepreneurial activities at Princeton. The 10,000-square-foot facility offers meeting rooms, offices and information technology support for startups sharing the co-working space. The Hub is also the home of the Princeton Entrepreneurship Council, led by Chiang and established in July 2015 to coordinate entrepreneurship programs on campus.

"The University has taken an important initiative in creating space for entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship education," said Chiang, the Arthur LeGrand Doty Professor of Electrical Engineering and director of the Keller Center.

Celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2015, the Keller Center's mission is to educate students as leaders in a technology-driven society by innovating education and fostering entrepreneurship, creativity and design. The center bridges disciplines to ensure that all students are prepared to put science and technology to use in solving critical societal challenges. —By John Sullivan

PHOTO BY JILL FELDMAN



Seven teams of students participated in the eLab Summer Accelerator Program at Princeton's Entrepreneurial Hub this summer. From left to right: Kehinde Ope, a student at the University of Delaware, and Achille Tenkiang, a member of the Class of 2017 at Princeton University, have formed a startup called BLOC with Saidah Bishop, a student at Dartmouth College (fourth from left). Third from left is Diogo Adrados, Princeton Class of 2015, from the startup Rodeo. On the far right, Michael Pinsky, Princeton Class of 2015, is a co-founder of Friendsy.



This year's eLab summer accelerator teams include:

BLOC

An online professional network for black collegians on the rise

ClickStick

Innovative dispensing technology with accurate dosage control for personal care, cosmetic and pharmaceutical products

Bodhi Tree Systems

An enterprise software system that facilitates the design and management of pharmaceutical trials

Friendly

A college-based social networking service that promotes friendships and relationships among members

KLOS Guitars

A durable, affordable and comfortable carbon-fiber travel guitar

Rodeo

A mobile platform for users to browse and discover live events in their community

TeachMe

A platform that connects college students to share knowledge, skills and experience with others in their community