

JUST BUILD IT! A Prototyping Workshop for Launch Time (Entrepreneurship) Club members transforms the SJE Middle School Cafeteria into a Makers Space

Tampa, FL (SJE Middle) On Friday, November 20 from 3pm to 6 pm the St. John's Middle School Cafeteria was transformed into a "Maker Space" for the Just Build It! Prototyping Workshop.

Over 40 members of the Launch Time Entrepreneurs Club were supported by faculty, staff, parents, local business professionals and college students from the University of Tampa's entrepreneurship program, who acted as coaches through mentoring and feedback.

The workshop facilitated a professor of business administration at HCC and cofounder of E2Ventures, was affiliated with the annual Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW), founded by the Kauffman Foundation. Further, it allowed the students to use their school IPADS for a new ancillary use, designing a mobile app! Mrs. Strauch and the Ed-Tech team worked behind the scenes to preload the I Pads with the software to ensure the kids had the tools they needed to complete mobile app prototyping on the day of.

Educator and club founder, Anne Gold who believes "workshops should utilize people's creativity from the outset" immediately kicked things off with a team ideation activity. Students randomly selected an object from the mystery bag then worked as a team to come up with a new product that used each member's unique item, all in under 30 minutes.

The ideation prototype creations ranged from humorous, fun and games to practical - even life changing and included: The Cat's Out of the Bag - cat cleaning service, Charge My Way a GPS system for outdoor recreation enthusiasts that does not require an external power source, and creates electricity of its own, Bug Be Gone, among others.

A team driven by the desire to create social impact designed *Well Done*, a prototype for a mobile filtration and water purification system. During their pitch this all-female team said they envisioned their model could one day be used to provide clean water to people in remote, poverty stricken communities currently struggling to find access to this basic life source. In the second session this same team designed a mobile app called Petitions for a Purpose.

SJE parent Mrs. Ann Park whose daughters were members of "Well Done" team said "Learning how to develop and pitch both an ideation prototype and prototype app through the Launch Time Club has been a standout experience for my 7th grade daughters. Graduate level mentors, insights from real entrepreneurs and fun with friends made for an unbeatable combination."

Mobile apps development was introduced during the second part of the workshop Dr. Gold challenged the teams to brainstorm an idea for a mobile app they would one day like to build or improve upon. They selected a team idea then sketched it out, created wireframes and produced a digital prototype on their IPADS, using a mobile app called Prototyping On Paper (POP) that turns hand-drawn wireframes into interactive prototypes.

Students took turns presenting their mobile app ideas to the room filled with fellow aspiring entrepreneurs. The pitches of their mobile apps incorporated a demonstration of their POP creation projected on a big screen. Pitches included an app for Pets owners to find other pets for their pets to meet and play with, a fishing gaming competition app, EZ price for price sensitive consumers, Vend-Up app that allows parents to purchase points that their children can redeem at the school's vending machine, among others.

One of the mobile apps designed, Animus, was a follow on for an anti-bullying program created during the all-day Idea Launch event held last Spring in the SJE gymnasium; and the original team mentor, Kim Randall, returned to encourage the students. Kim is the CEO and founder of Ki Media Social Media Strategies. She said, "with bullying in schools being such a real problem it's amazing to see a group of middle school girls that want to provide a resource to help anyone dealing with such tough situations.

During their pitch, team "Animus" said their goal is to make it easier for students to seek help for and have a way out of being bullied. The app offers a place for bully victims to seek advice as well a place for caring teens to provide advice.

Commenting on the significance of the Just Build It!: Prototype Workshop, Middle School Head Ted Pearre, and champion of the Launch Time club, shared his observations. He said "observing the collaboration between our University of Tampa mentors and nearly forty St. John's students during SJE's Launch-Club workshop was a highlight of my Fall. I was inspired by our students: They were infusing creativity, technology, and problem solving skills throughout this twenty-first century three hour after-school program."

Ms. Gold is committed to expanding the Launch Time club's offering into the new year and will keep striving to encourage students to move their ideas out into the world.

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About Launch Time Club

An Entrepreneurship Club was founded in 2014 by Anne Gold to encourage students to have an entrepreneurial mind-set, learn about finance, and pursue business opportunities.

Recently Launch Time sponsored a field trip to tour the brand new University of Tampa (UT) Lowth Entrepreneurship Center in the Sykes College of Business and took part in an Introduction to Entrepreneurship class where they met many of the college students who volunteered for the prototyping workshop

Mr. Don Murray chaperoned the UT field trip. He said, "the field trip to the University of Tampa was well received by both SJE and UT students. SJE students got a chance to see education "outside the box". My son Mark's impression of the traditional classroom was shattered with UT's amphitheater class seating over 150 students in the round. Also it was clear that UT

students were impressed with the questions asked by SJE about their product pitches...new ideas thrown at them from a different mobile angle.”

Launch-Time (formerly Start-Up) mission is to help students turn their ideas and passions into businesses and nurture future entrepreneurs. Launch- Time Meetings are held as a working lunch during student’s Lunch Time.

Launch-Time provides learning opportunities including field trips, socials, pitch competitions and more for SJE students to connect with entrepreneurs, experienced business professionals as well as professors and college students from two area colleges, UT and HCC.