



# MONDAY MORNING MEMO

from Dean Avi Mukherjee

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## Marshall University iCenter Annual Report 2019-2020



**iCenter**  
Center for Entrepreneurship  
and Business Innovation  
*part of the Lewis College of Business*

**Annual Report**  
2019-2020

The Center for Entrepreneurship & Business Innovation (iCenter) at Marshall University spearheads a critical strategic area of focus for the Brad D. Smith Schools of Business in spreading innovation and entrepreneurship throughout the college, campus, and community. Inspired by Intuit and themed around design thinking, the mission of the iCenter is to inspire the inner entrepreneur in everyone by empowering them with the innovation and entrepreneurial knowledge they need to reframe the future of our state and region.

The iCenter Annual Report 2019-2020 is available at:

<https://www.muicenter.com/annual-report>





## **Brandon Dennison and Collin Meadows named iCenter's first Entrepreneurs in Residence**



The Marshall University Center for Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation (iCenter), part of the Lewis College of Business, has announced Brandon Dennison and Collin Meadows as its inaugural cohort of entrepreneurs in residence (EIRs). We are excited to have Brandon and Collin as our inaugural entrepreneurs in residence. Their expertise in social entrepreneurship and technology will elevate and impact the level of start-ups generated by the iCenter and their grant partners.

Dennison, a lifelong West Virginian, is the founder and CEO of Coalfield Development. Coalfield Development has helped generate over 50 new social enterprises and trained over 1,200 people facing barriers to employment. Meadows is a Marshall University graduate with degrees in computer science and applied mathematics. He is a founding member of Tech304, a West Virginia-based technology development firm with a hyper focus on stimulating the local economies and communities.

The EIR program is made possible through the Simulated Workplace Entrepreneurship Education Pathway (SWEET) grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). This grant is operated by the EdVenture Group Inc. in partnership with the iCenter and the West Virginia Department of Education. Dennison and Meadows will provide expertise in social entrepreneurship and technology, respectively, to support the development of student-founded entrepreneurial ventures and an entrepreneurship career pathway for high school Career and Technical Education students.

Amber Ravenscroft, is the manager of innovation at the EdVenture Group, Inc. "The goal of the SWEET program is to infuse entrepreneurship into existing career and technical education programs to encourage the emerging workforce to explore and create new opportunities within their local community," Ravenscroft said.

Both Dennison and Meadows look forward to providing their expertise and skill sets to Marshall University and the iCenter team. "I am excited to work with students and faculty to explore social entrepreneurship, which I view as a key strategy to rebuilding the Appalachian economy and advancing a more just community," said Dennison.



Joining the iCenter as an EIR will provide Meadows with new opportunities. “It’s an opportunity to harness my experiences and help others to grow the greater Appalachian region, so our area can become one of the areas that those across the country look to for inspiration,” said Meadows.

Dr. Ben Eng, executive director of the iCenter, said the addition of Meadows and Dennison is key. “The addition of Meadows and Dennison perfectly aligns with the iCenter’s strategic focus on creating start-ups that are high growth and high impact. We feel both fortunate and excited to have EIRs of their caliber and character at the iCenter,” Eng said.

Dennison and Meadows will hold their residency until September 2021.