



2016 Southern California Regional  
**IMPACTREPORT**





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**W**hen the Blackstone Charitable Foundation’s team came to Los Angeles in 2013 with the idea of fostering the next generation to start new businesses and increase job creation in the region, they had everyone’s attention. And they followed through with a program that has positively impacted California’s shared future and helped launch over 120 companies thus far.

The Blackstone LaunchPad concept of mentoring, advising, and connecting young entrepreneurs reinforces our fundamental belief about America -- that we are a country of opportunity and economic mobility where innovation and risk taking are encouraged and rewarded, and success comes out of hard work and collaboration.

Through the Blackstone LaunchPad program, three of our region’s leading universities have been able to provide an even greater number of students with a pathway to entrepreneurial success, many of whom would only have dreamed of starting companies, but never ventured to do so without the program’s encouragement and resources. The program has helped those dreams become real, creating hundreds of jobs, with the prospect that these entrepreneurs will move forward to start more companies and create many more jobs in the future as well.

Beyond its LaunchPad program, the Blackstone Charitable Foundation also facilitated the development of the Center for Innovation at Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC), and *InnovateLA*, an annual event (or rather a collection of more than 150 discrete events) celebrating the innovation ecosystem in our region. Through these programs, we are developing connections between the region’s innovation stakeholders to accelerate their progress and that of the Southern California region.

In total, the Blackstone Charitable Foundation has had an impact on hundreds of individual students, added a new dimension to our universities, contributed to a rapidly growing startup culture in L.A., and spawned successful programs like *InnovateLA*. In our role as regional coordinator for the Blackstone LaunchPad program, we honor Blackstone’s commitment, are overjoyed to see so many students newly engaged in job creation, and we are humbled by the opportunity to facilitate growth of regional entrepreneurship, which so closely supports our vision of raising standards of living for our region’s residents by increasing economic opportunity and regional prosperity.

Within these pages we document the progress delivered by Blackstone LaunchPad, which is strengthening and maturing at three universities: University of Southern California (USC), University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA), and University of California-Irvine (UCI).

**Bill Allen, CEO**

*Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation  
Regional Partner, Blackstone Charitable Foundation*





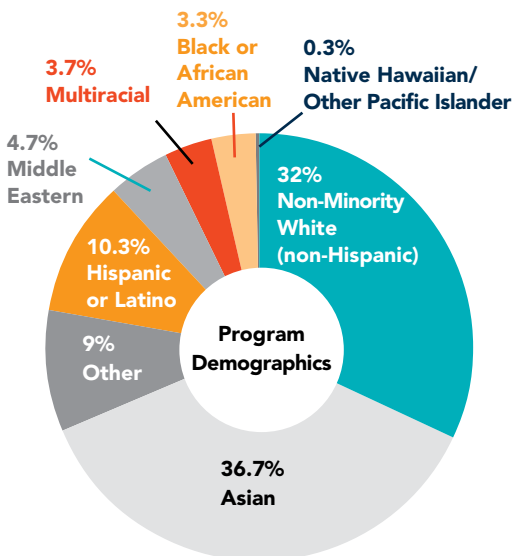
# WHAT IS LaunchPad?

A program dedicated to supporting the next generation of entrepreneurs. Blackstone LaunchPad California fosters connectivity between university campuses, the business community, and local entrepreneurs to create an environment that nurtures students and provides them with the skills and network necessary to succeed as entrepreneurs.

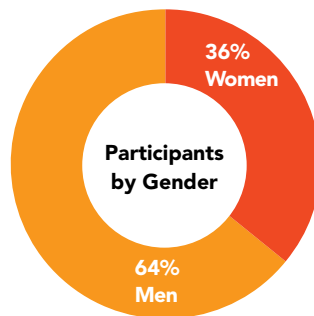
## OUR MISSION

To introduce entrepreneurship as a viable career option and provide university students, regardless of major, with a network of venture coaches and an entrepreneurial support system by partnering with local universities, LAEDC and the business community.

### PROGRAM RESULTS



**120** Companies Formed  
**698** Jobs Created by Entrepreneurs



*"We have seen firsthand the power that creative minds and the entrepreneurial spirit can exert in transforming a community. Public/private partnerships such as this allow us to continue to innovate as we move forward. Our students will now have the structure in place to transform an idea into a plan, and then move that plan to reality."*

- **MICHAEL V. DRAKE**,  
Former Chancellor of UCI and  
now current President of  
Ohio State University.

# Blackstone

# Charitable Foundation

## ABOUT BLACKSTONE:

**B**lackstone, based in New York, is one of the world's leading investment firms, with over \$300 billion total assets under management.

Influenced by the enterprising heritage of the firm and its founders, the Blackstone Charitable Foundation directs its resources and applies the intellectual capital of the firm to foster entrepreneurship in areas globally. Through its investment expertise across several asset classes and geographies, Blackstone has a unique perspective on the global economy and a heightened understanding of how entrepreneurial activity is often the crucial catalyst in the growth of successful businesses, industries, and communities.

## ABOUT THE BLACKSTONE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION:

The Blackstone Charitable Foundation was founded in California at the time of Blackstone's IPO in 2007 with substantial commitments from the firm's employees. In February of 2014, the Blackstone Charitable Foundation announced Blackstone LaunchPad's expansion into Southern California, with a three-year, \$3.5 million grant to establish a partnership between The University of California, Los Angeles, The University of California, Irvine, The University of Southern California, and The Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation. The grant funds a full-time staff on each campus to offer individualized coaching to students in areas such as finance, marketing, or legal. In 2015, the Blackstone Charitable Foundation continued its support of Los Angeles entrepreneurs by sponsoring LA Innovation Week. The event, which celebrates innovative thinking and doing all over the Los Angeles region, consisted of 160 events, 656 hours of programming, and had over 25,000 attendees.



Speakers at the Blackstone LaunchPad press conference on 2/21/14 included (left to right) LAEDC President and CEO Bill Allen, UCLA Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Scott Waugh, City of Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, Blackstone Chairman and CEO Stephen Schwarzman, USC Provost and Senior VP Elizabeth Garrett, and UC-Irvine Chancellor and Provost Howard Gillman



*“California is at the forefront of building the economy of the 21st Century. This economy will be based on the ideas and innovations of entrepreneurs who create their businesses through programs like Blackstone LaunchPad. The LaunchPad entrepreneurship program encourages and guides students on how to transform bold ideas into businesses and careers, lighting the way for entrepreneurs to create jobs and grow the economy.”*

**- LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
GAVIN NEWSOM**





## OVERVIEW OF BLACKSTONE LAUNCHPAD SOCIAL

Based on the LaunchPad program developed by the University of Miami, Blackstone LaunchPad at USC, UCLA, and UC Irvine initially pairs students with consultants who help them develop their business ideas. As their ideas mature, students are then connected with Venture Coaches -- entrepreneurs, lawyers, service providers, executives, investors, and others with professional expertise in the Southern California community and nationally -- to help them bring their ideas to market. Through Blackstone USC, UCLA, and UC Irvine have expanded their entrepreneurship and support programming while also serving as a gateway to an extensive network of mentors, experts, and services.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES (UCLA)

UCLA is California's largest university, with an enrollment of more than 40,000 undergraduate and graduate students. The UCLA College of Letters and Science and the university's 11 professional schools feature renowned faculty and offer 337 degree programs and majors. UCLA is a national and international leader in the breadth and quality of its academic, research, health care, cultural, continuing education and athletic programs. Seven alumni and six faculty have been awarded the Nobel Prize.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE (UCI)

Since 1965, the University of California, Irvine has combined the strengths of a major research university with the bounty of an incomparable Southern California location. UC Irvine's unyielding commitment to rigorous academics, cutting-edge research, and leadership and character development

makes the campus a driving force for innovation and discovery that serves our local, national and global communities in many ways.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA (USC)

The University of Southern California is one of the world's leading private research universities. An anchor institution in Los Angeles, a global center for arts, technology and international trade, USC enrolls more international students than any other U.S. university and offers extensive opportunities for internships and study abroad. With a strong tradition of integrating liberal and professional education, USC fosters a vibrant culture of public service and encourages students to cross academic as well as geographic boundaries in their pursuit of knowledge.

## THE LAEDC

Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) is focused on raising standards of living for residents of L.A. County by increasing economic opportunity and regional prosperity. Through collaborative economic development leadership the LAEDC promotes a globally competitive, prosperous and growing L.A. County economy to improve the health and wellbeing of its residents and communities and enable those residents to meet their basic human need for a job. Offering objective economic research and analysis, strategic assistance to government and business, and targeted public policy, LAEDC is guided and supported by the expertise and counsel of its business, government and education members and partners. LAEDC was established in 1981 as a private, non-profit, public benefit corporation.



*“Entrepreneurship shouldn't be viewed as a fringe activity. Entrepreneurship isn't even just an alternative career, it's a viable career. Setting up and running your own business is a perfectly legitimate way to have a career right out of college and we want to encourage students to take the steps to get there.”*

**- DAVID OCHI,  
Director of Blackstone  
LaunchPad UCI**





EVENTS/ACTIVITIES

Prominent external events/activities **1**

**40** Campus wide events/activities

INVOLVEMENT

**649** Coaching sessions conducted by BLP staff      **23** Strategic Partnerships  
**130** Venture Clients

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Companies Formed **45**      Total Jobs Created **289**

**28** Companies Generating Revenue

Revenues

**\$581,371**

Period from February 2014 to August 2016

**UCLA**

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,  
LOS ANGELES

Blackstone LaunchPad UCLA is a free campus entrepreneurship program open to all UCLA students and alumni regardless of academic major. The program introduces entrepreneurship as a viable career path through individualized coaching, ideation, and venture creation support. Their services cover all industries and avenues of entrepreneurship, from for-profit ventures to non-profits and even ventures in the B corporation sector.





THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES



Housed within Covell Commons, the LaunchPad has a newly renovated office space that promotes collaboration and creativity. UCLA Bruins are able to talk with consulting staff about their venture ideas in a non-judgmental, confidential, and supportive space. Their program allows students to explore entrepreneurship at their own pace and to engage with the services offered in a personalized manner when developing their ventures throughout the academic year.

The one-on-one consulting meetings offered by the LaunchPad are enhanced by a variety of events, which include weekly discussions with thriving entrepreneurs, workshops to further develop entrepreneurial skills and mindsets, and provide exposure to the business community outside of UCLA.



**ENTREPRENEUR FEATURE: Nandeet Mehta**

With a Bachelor’s Degree in History and a minor in Global Studies, on paper Nandeet Mehta is not the stereotypical entrepreneur. That did not stop him from pursuing his own personal business aspirations -- while also creating UCLA’s VENTURE club; a student club that aims to develop a culture of startup thinking on UCLA’s campus and facilitate entrepreneurship, business and finance among students by providing resources, networking, and mentorship.

Nandeet was able to create such a successful resource for students with the help of Blackstone LaunchPad UCLA. According to Nandeet, “Blackstone LaunchPad has been instrumental in assisting VENTURE in both scaling and thriving at UCLA! Our main mission is to develop a culture of startup thinking on campus; to facilitate entrepreneurship, business, and finance among UCLA students.”



*“Blackstone LaunchPad has been one of the greatest resources in helping me build and grow my company. From Red Gem Roasters conception, Blackstone LaunchPad has helped me develop my brand, create marketing strategies, facilitate outreach to companies and so on.”*

**- JOSEPHINE TEHRANI,**  
**CEO and founder of Red Gem Roasters, a premium coffee company**  
**committed to providing quality coffee at an affordable price.**







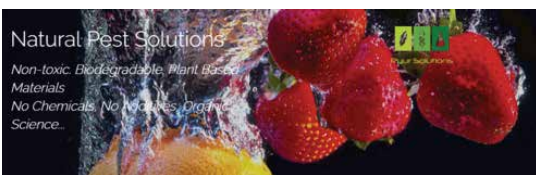
THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

### PYUR SOLUTIONS

Now, with the help of the LaunchPad, Nandeet has gone on to pursue his own company: Pyur Solutions. Pyur Solutions produces natural pest and home solutions that are non-toxic, biodegradable and use plant-based materials with no chemical additives.

The product uses proprietary botanical oil blends that attack octopamine neuro-receptor activity, thus killing and repelling a wide variety of household pests such as cockroaches, ants, dust mites, flies, wasps, spiders, crickets, and fleas. Pyur’s blends of natural plant oils are every bit as effective as synthetic chemicals yet have no effect on people, pets, or the environment.

Today, Pyur Solutions is a full-fledged success story. Additionally, Pyur has filed multiple US patents that are currently pending and is planning to pursue foreign patents as well.



*“Blackstone LaunchPad has been an incredible support system for our Los Angeles launch. The startup consultants, like RJ Jimenez, have helped us with anything from our launching strategy, to pitches, to marketing and branding.”*

**- ANAIS TADLAOUI, founder and CEO of Ezkie, an “Airbnb” for university students on the move for an internship, study exchange, accelerator program, or temporary job.**







**EVENTS/ACTIVITIES**

Prominent external events/activities **4**

**17** Campus wide events/activities

**INVOLVEMENT**

**879** Coaching sessions conducted by BLP staff     **12** Strategic Partnerships  
**98** Venture Clients

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Companies Formed **50**     Total Jobs Created **252**

**13** Companies Generating Revenue

Revenues  
**\$7,281,548**

Period from February 2014 to August 2016

**USC**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

Blackstone LaunchPad USC connects ideas, people, and resources to provide guidance to newbies and experienced entrepreneurs alike. In addition to custom mentorship, they offer students access to a coworking space with a thriving, innovative environment and invaluable resources regardless of the stage of the idea and experience of the entrepreneur.





THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



The LaunchPad, officially opened in the fall of 2014, was originally housed in USC’s Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. Within the first year, the LaunchPad transformed the existing restrictive offices to what is now the collaborative, entrepreneurial space known as the Annenberg Innovation Lab. Now, after two years, LaunchPad USC is moving across campus to the Marshall School of Business. This move will better integrate LaunchPad into the innovation community at USC. With an emphasis on entrepreneurship and innovation, collaborative research and social responsibility, and a global mindset, the USC Marshall School of Business is ideally positioned to address the challenges of a rapidly changing business environment and house the Blackstone LaunchPad at USC.



**COMPANY FEATURE: Q-Cigarettes, Inc.**

Q-Cigarettes is the first Quit Smoking iPhone App that delivers combination therapy, the most efficacious, evidence-based intervention to quit smoking. It is the first mobile app to offer counseling and nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) to help users and their loved ones successfully quit and stay quit.

The app combines counseling and nicotine replacement to give smokers the best chance to beat nicotine addiction. For instance, during high stress moments the Q-Cigarettes App can send text, pictures, or video message of support or counseling from a variety of sources, such as family and friends as your supporters, a pool of anonymous supporters, or even the app itself. The app also encourages the use of the tobacco-free, vapor-free Q-Cigarette Filters and nicotine gum available for purchase through the app to supplement the counseling.



As a medical student, a healthcare-oriented company played to founder Drew Park’s strengths. The inspiration for the app hit when he began taking care of lung cancer and COPD patients. As a smoker himself with many family and friends that were as well Drew became immediately concerned with finding an accessible and enduring method for quitting smoking. Thus Q-Cigarettes was created -- but it was not until Drew entered USC’s Blackstone LaunchPad that he was able to take it to the level of success that it has achieved today.

Through the LaunchPad, Drew was able to attend the CVS Retail & Health Innovation Challenge shown above at Wake Forest University in North Carolina. There he was able to meet and pitch Q-Cigarettes to industry executives and the world’s best corporate retail innovators. Ultimately, he took home the first place prize and \$25,000 worth of funding to help grow his startup. The Q-Cigarettes app is now free-to-download on the Apple App Store.







THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



*“How naive and innocent is it to say that I started this company to fight and win out against the tobacco epidemic? I put a hold on my M.D. at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine, moved out to L.A., immersed myself in the startup culture... but I was losing steam fast. Then I approached the Blackstone LaunchPad where Ian Donahue and James Bottoms’ enthusiasm and experience has carried and continues to carry me. I attribute a large part of our success to date to their close mentorship and personal relationship.”*

- DREW PARK, co-founder and CEO of Q-Cigarettes, Inc



**STUNT PLAYERS DIRECTORY**

(Above) Hunter Crowder (front middle) after winning the regional Los Angeles qualifier for the GSEA Entrepreneurs Organization Pitch during the Incubate USC Forum for his company Stunt Players Directory, a company which has revised and streamlined the process of finding stuntmen and women jobs in the film/television industry.



*“Blackstone LaunchPad has helped me from perfecting my pitch, to flying off to Chicago after winning the GSEA regional competition. Success doesn’t seem so distant thanks to Blackstone”*

- HUNTER CROWDER, CEO of Stunt Players Directory



**LAVALAB**

(Above) Alex Zhang is pictured with Elon Musk at a Blackstone LaunchPad sponsored dinner. Alex is the president of LavaLab, USC’s first student-run incubator whose mission is to give students the know-how, resources, and connections they need to successfully bring their ideas to market. LavaLab exists as a hands-on transdisciplinary student-run organization that aims to develop practical, profitable, and responsible solutions to real world problems.



*“Blackstone LaunchPad is the HQ for all of our operations. Without Blackstone, we would not have a centralized co-working space that has provided all of our incubated teams with mentorship and a general meeting area”*

- ALEX ZHANG, President of LavaLab







**EVENTS/ACTIVITIES**  
Prominent external events/activities **8**

**110** Campus wide events/activities

**INVOLVEMENT**

**974** Coaching sessions conducted by BLP staff     **22** Strategic Partnerships     **143** Venture Clients

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Companies Formed **25**     Total Jobs Created **157**

**15** Companies Generating Revenue

Revenues  
**\$2,299,178**

Period from February 2014 to August 2016

# UCI

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,  
IRVINE

Blackstone LaunchPad UC Irvine strives to introduce students of all majors to entrepreneurship. Through the LaunchPad, students can develop valuable entrepreneurial skills, enabling them to independently achieve success in whatever venture they choose to pursue.





THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE



Blackstone LaunchPad UC Irvine strives to introduce students of all majors to entrepreneurship. Through the LaunchPad students can develop valuable entrepreneurial skills, enabling them to independently achieve success in whatever venture they choose to pursue.

The LaunchPad, housed in the ANEntrepreneur Center on the second floor of the Student Center, is in an ideal, central location to entice UCI's entrepreneurial community. The center aims to turn UCI's Anteaters into Antreneurs by providing the diverse student body with a network of venture coaches and an entrepreneurial support system. By extending students free consultations and advice on how to turn their business dreams into realities the center fosters business endeavors and educates students on the possibility of pursuing a career as an entrepreneur.



Crystal Sanchez (middle) in a teal dress and white blazer with her Guardian Locket around her neck meets president Obama with other winners of youth entrepreneurship competitions

**COMPANY FEATURE: Guardian Locket**

Meet Crystal Sanchez, a business economic major at UCI and member of UCI's class of 2019. She is the inventor of the Guardian Locket, a locket that poses as a fashionable necklace while deploying hidden circuit boards to help wearer dissuade and protect against potential attackers. With one click of a button on the back of the pendant, the locket will send a false call to the wearer's cellphone that is aimed to scare off a potential attacker. Another two clicks will send the wearer's exact location, their photo, and other relevant information to local authorities and three emergency contacts.

Crystal originally conceived of the locket during her senior year of high school when she discovered that her best friend had been raped during her first year of college. Because mace is illegal in many states, including her home state of California, Crystal realized that there needed to be a better alternative to help potential sexual assault victims.

Though the Guardian Locket had already made its debut -- winning Crystal first place in the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship's 2015 National Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge accompanied by a visit to the White House and \$25,000 in funding -- Crystal was set on building the company as she moved to the next chapter of her life in college. UCI was the perfect fit.

"UCI was always my first choice," Crystal explained. With programs like the Blackstone LaunchPad at UCI, Crystal not only finds balance between her academic, social, and entrepreneurial lives but also receives the coaching and mentorship she needs to sustain and grow Guardian Locket.





## THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE

With the funding she received and the entrepreneurial support offered at UCI she hopes to establish a line of Guardian Lockets in different lengths and metals including interchangeable faces. If all goes well, Crystal plans to expand her line to include chunky bracelets, statement necklaces, and even watches for men.

Though her product had previously been designed and produced, without Blackstone LaunchPad at UCI Crystal would not have the guidance and connections to expand her inventory, market her product, draft a new line, and network. Crystal and her Guardian Locket are living proof that no matter what stage of the entrepreneurial process, Blackstone LaunchPad at UCI helps students and their companies to thrive.



### ENTREPRENEUR FEATURE: Alec Kriebel

UCI Computer Science major, freshman Alec Kriebel first demonstrated his entrepreneurialism in the fourth grade, when he established a small comics “company” with his classmates. “We would doodle comics during class. We wouldn’t even copy them to hand them out. We would just sell the handmade comics. . . . It was the first thing I did, business-wise,” he says.

This enterprising attitude followed Alec to UCI, where he created a comprehensive “How to Develop iOS Apps” course before completing his first year. With 11 apps already published in the iOS app store, he conceived of a course that would guide novice beginners through the ins and outs of app development. He found a platform for his concept at Blackstone LaunchPad at UCI.

Alec was drawn to UCI as a place that would nurture his programming needs and entrepreneurialism. UCI was an ideal school for Alec, being positioned less than an hour from the city of Los Angeles and rapidly emerging as the next big hub for innovation.

Today Alec’s app development course spans nine chapters with 68 total video lessons. From programming language lessons to User Interface (UI) design tutorials, Alec guides beginners through every aspect of app development with candor and ease. The course, sold in three different packages all under \$50, culminates with students’ app releases in the iOS store.

Though he has found success with his video course and plans to maintain it, Alec is still focused on continued entrepreneurialism. “My dream is definitely founding entrepreneurial business,” he says. “I really like making things that benefit people.” Through Blackstone LaunchPad at UCI’s resources, Alex will be able to fuel this dream, continuing to create and innovate.

*“The consulting at the Blackstone LaunchPad is great,” says Alec. “It really helped with the business aspects of [the course] like business planning, how to price your product, how to get it to the most people possible, marketing, and press releases.”*





THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE

**NEGÓCIOS&ETC.**



*“Blackstone LaunchPad helped me personally all along and Negócios&Etc. as well. When I first got to UCI, as an exchange student, I already had the idea of building this business strong in my heart and after Kim from the Study Abroad center told me about Blackstone LaunchPad I ran straight over there”*

**- CAROLINE CYPRIANO,**  
Brazilian exchange student and founder of Negócios&etc.



**INSTABUTTONS**

*“Blackstone LaunchPad helped me get my first sales by giving me coaching on how to advertise my product properly. Because of the coaching, we were able to get our first sales online and on campus. We got 36 sales in 16 days”*

**- THE FOUNDERS OF INSTABUTTONS**





# LAEDC

## CENTER FOR INNOVATION

The LAEDC coordinates the LaunchPads programs at UCLA, UCI, and USC as regional partner with the Blackstone Charitable Foundation. Through this partnership, LAEDC has introduced new programs and events highlighting innovation and entrepreneurship in the region, leading to crucial exposure and networking opportunities for companies big and small. LAEDC connects the universities with each other, allowing resources and knowledge to be shared with multiple students across universities and regions, and facilitates access to a broader venture coaching community.

# LAEDC

## CENTER OF INNOVATION

Blackstone’s funding has been a catalyst for directed initiatives at LAEDC. In 2014 the Center for Innovation launched Innovate Los Angeles (inLA), with a mission to promote L.A. County as a leading global center for innovation and entrepreneurship rooted in boundless creativity and diversity.

InLA has led to numerous programs, most notably LA Innovation Week (LAIW), a county-wide annual celebration of the breadth of innovation within the greater region. In 2015, the Blackstone Charitable Foundation sponsored the event, helping LAEDC create and solidify over 75 partnerships with organizations and companies in the region who are dedicated to supporting and growing the innovation ecosystem in Los Angeles.



In addition to promoting and furthering Blackstone LaunchPad’s reach and accessibility, LAEDC has worked to promote numerous organizations at the forefront of LA County’s innovation economy. Among these companies is the Long Beach Innovation Team, a.k.a. i-team. The team was founded in May of 2015 and extends the City’s capacity to rapidly advance research and development through a bold, data-driven and transparent approach to innovation.

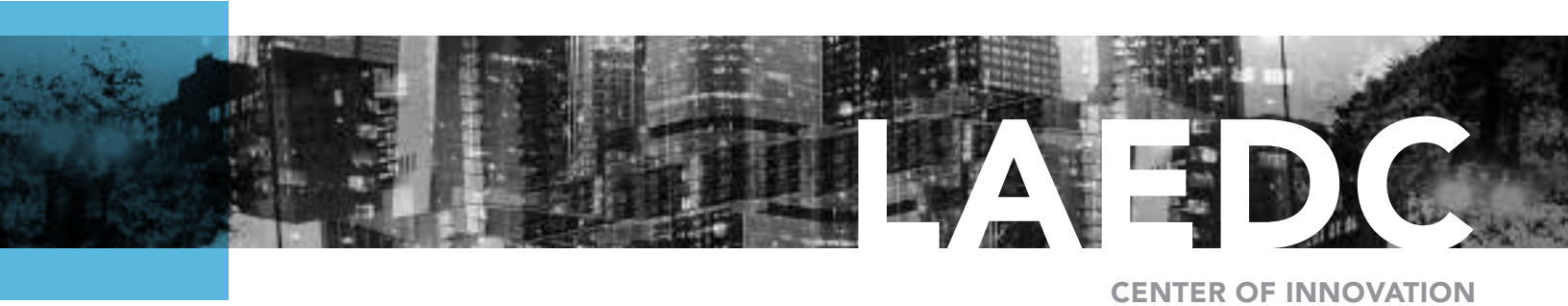
The Center for Innovation has also worked to promote projects such as the Elevate Project of Los Angeles, a year-long program that pairs female startup founders with mentors from City of L.A. Mayor Garcetti’s Tech Council and other high-level tech industry experts.

By raising awareness for the many innovative companies, programs, and events, the Center for Innovation is facilitating a culture of entrepreneurship and raising awareness of vital resources. In the years LAEDC has received Blackstone funding, the Center for Innovation has endorsed and partnered with over 70 companies, programs, and events to help popularize innovation and entrepreneurial information and resources.

*“The L.A. region has long been known for legendary entrepreneurs like Jack Northrop and Walt Disney and more recently Elon Musk and Patrick Soon Shiong. With the resources of the Blackstone LaunchPad, and the participation of talented venture coaches, we are now able to help many more such dreamers and innovators turn their inspired ideas into successful new companies that will form the foundation of our future economy. We are thrilled that the Blackstone Charitable Foundation has chosen the LAEDC to be the regional partner working with three outstanding universities to grow the entrepreneurial capacity of our great region.”*

**- CHRIS RICO,**  
Director of Innovation at LAEDC





# LAEDC

CENTER OF INNOVATION

Participating companies, programs and events that are working with LAEDC's Center for Innovation, fostered by the investment of the BLACKSTONE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION:



The Elevate Project



California Arts Council & Laura Zucker



INNOVATION TEAM

i-Team Long Beach



Santa Clara Valley Economic Development Corporation



Innovation Village Cal Poly Pomona



Asian Society of Southern California



Southern California Association of Governments



USC Price School of Public Policy



Maple SoCal



Torrance Chamber of Commerce



USC Gould School of Law



G'Day USA



USC Marshall School of Business



San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership



Girls Who Code



UCLA Anderson School of Management



City of Long Beach



China Week





# LAEDC

## CENTER OF INNOVATION



San Fernando Valley Small Business Expo



LARTA Institute



California State University Northridge



LA National Association for Business Economics



Advanced Clean Technology (ACT) Expo



LACI - LA Incubator



LA2050



Port LA



Biocom



Department of Consumer & Business Affairs



TechFire



Port of Long Beach



Girls in Tech



BizFed



California State University Pat Brown Institute



PortTech



Digital LA Silicon Beach Festival



TownHall



FWD.us



CALED



California Biotechnology Foundation



California State University Dominguez Hills

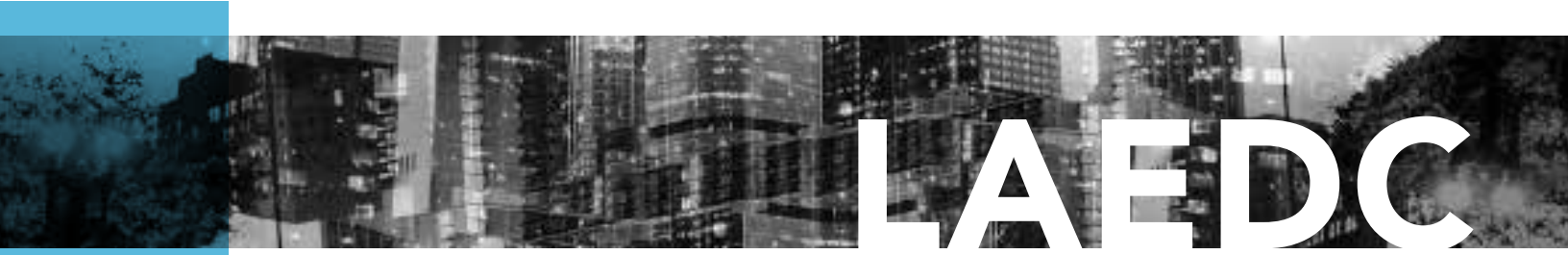


Urban Land Institute



Tesla Foundation





# LAEDC

## CENTER OF INNOVATION



**Larta Institute**  
LARTA Institute



California State University Northridge



**SONY PICTURES**  
Sony Pictures



**railLA**  
railLA



**LACI**  
LACI - LA Incubator



**LA2050**  
LA2050



**GO-BIZ**  
Go-Biz



**MAKE IT IN LA**  
Make It In LA



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY CONSUMER & BUSINESS AFFAIRS**  
Department of Consumer & Business Affairs



**TechFire**  
TechFire



**U.S. COMMERCIAL SERVICE**  
United States of America  
Department of Commerce  
US Commercial Service



**SyncFab**  
SyncFAB



**BizFed**  
Los Angeles County Business Federation  
Strengthening the Voice of Business  
BizFed



**PAT BROWN INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS**  
California State University Pat Brown Institute



**VERDEXCHANGE CONFERENCE**  
VerdeXchange Conference



**WC3**  
Westside Council of Chambers of Commerce  
Westside Council Chamber of Commerce: The Digital Economy (WC3)



**Town Hall Los Angeles**  
TownHall



**FWD.us**  
FWD.us



**IDE**  
International Drone Expo  
Los Angeles Convention Center  
November 11-12, 2015  
International Drone Expo



**STARTOUT**  
StartOut



California State University Dominguez Hills



**ULI** Urban Land Institute  
Urban Land Institute



**GROWTHCON 2015**  
ENTREPRENEUR MAGAZINE'S  
GROWTH CON 2015



**UNCoded** Long Beach



# LAEDC

CENTER OF INNOVATION



INNOVATE PASADENA

Innovate Pasadena



Caltrans

Caltrans



IDEAS LA



CODE Conf LA 2016



Urban SOS



The California Endowment



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
GRANTMAKERS

Southern California Grantmaker

## PASADENA TECH JOBS

Pasadena Tech Jobs



Social Media Week LA



Startups in the Sky



United States Mexico Chamber of Commerce  
Cámara de Comercio México-Estados Unidos

U.S. Mexico Chamber of Commerce



MENA Consultants

Blackstone LaunchPad

Blackstone Launchpad



Creating Solutions

CMTC



## USC

**DAVID BELASCO**  
Executive Director  
Blackstone LaunchPad  
at USC



David is an experienced entrepreneur, educator, and lawyer. Starting his career as a lawyer in Los Angeles, he went on to start, build, and sell companies in environmental services and manufacturing. Co-founding two successful companies, David applies his personal experience to running the Blackstone LaunchPad program at USC.

## UC IRVINE

**DAVID OCHI**  
Executive Director of the  
ANTrepreneur Center,  
Blackstone LaunchPad at  
UC Irvine



David has over 20 years of experience in early-stage companies, having started his first enterprise at the age of 13 which he ran throughout high school, college, and graduate school. In addition to being the Executive Director of the ANTrepreneur Center at UCI and operating the Blackstone Launchpad program, he currently sits on the Board of Directors of a half-dozen companies and is actively involved in the growth of 7 early-stage companies.

## UCLA

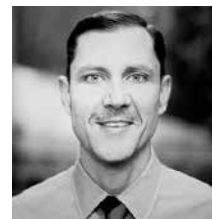
**DEANNA EVANS**  
Executive Director of  
Entrepreneurial Programs,  
Startup UCLA



Deanna is focused on creating student centered, co-curricular programming to help students see entrepreneurship as a viable career, thus enhancing the student academic experience and expanding career opportunities after graduation. Deanna's tenure at UCLA and previously with Columbia College Chicago has provided her with a strong management perspective focused on implementing best practices and academic initiatives in higher education to enhance the student experience. With a bachelor's in Psychology and a masters of science in School Counseling Leadership, Deanna's counseling background strengthens the Blackstone LaunchPad's student coaching framework.

## LAEDC

**CHRIS RICO**  
Director of Innovation  
at LAEDC



In his role as Director of Innovation for the LAEDC, Chris leads the continued development of an innovation program for L.A. County, where he builds broad external support and provides thought leadership and strategic direction for the mission of the Innovate LA program. Chris manages the day-to-day operations, programs, and initiative of the Innovate LA program, including LA Innovation Week, the Blackstone LaunchPad program in support of Southern California's entrepreneurial economy, and communications, marketing and social media for Innovate LA. Chris also coordinates activities at the USC, UCLA, and UCI Launchpads.





# HIGHLIGHTS: MEDIA COVERAGE AND COMMUNICATIONS

*“For members of Orange County’s entrepreneur community, like alumna and donor Carol Choi, the center provides an exciting opportunity to help students find their way, stimulate the economy and promote education”*

**- THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER**

*“The resource is invaluable because UCI students are ready to start their own businesses”*

**- UCI IRVINE STUDENT AND UCI ENTREPRENEUR ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT CANDACE WU**

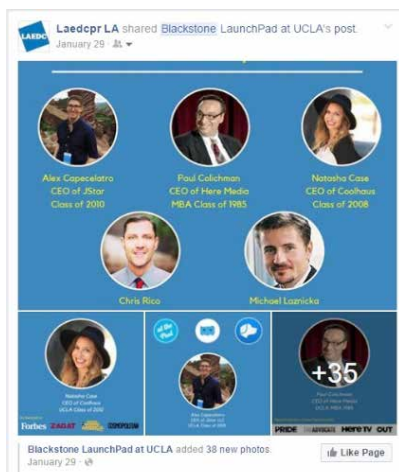


*“The Blackstone Charitable Foundation on Friday announced it was making a \$3.5 million grant to three local universities to set up an entrepreneur support program...”*



*“The Blackstone Charitable Foundation announced Friday that it is bringing its entrepreneurship program for college students to Southern California.”*

## SOCIAL MEDIA

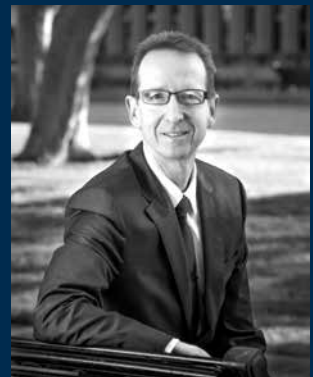


*The charitable arm of private equity firm and investment bank the Blackstone Group is making a grant of \$3.5 million to establish its “LaunchPad” program on the campuses of UCLA, USC, and UC Irvine. The Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) will manage the program...”*





# Blackstone LaunchPad



*“I know that some folks have made the argument that young people may be better off taking their entrepreneurial vision and doing it outside of academia and maybe giving up on pursuing that college education, but through efforts like the LaunchPad we are rejecting such false choices and recognizing that one can do both and this gives students a leg up in their career to be both well honed in academics and well honed in entrepreneurship.”*

**- MICHAEL QUICK,**  
Provost and Senior Vice President  
for Academic Affairs at USC

**LAEDC**

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY**  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

[www.LAEDC.org](http://www.LAEDC.org)

213-622-4300