



## Connecting Bridges and Borders Program

### Entrepreneurship and Innovation NJCU—Jersey City Connect Project

#### Young Entrepreneurs Participate in the Mind Your Own Business Pitch Program

Jersey City, September 23, 2020—Earlier this week, students in Professor David Weiss’s “Mind Your Own Business” course at New Jersey City University participated in the MYOB Pitch Program, an initiative aimed at connecting young, business minded individuals with business professionals, as well as fostering a familiarity with real local issues. Professor Weiss’s students were assigned a topic related to New Jersey’s economy, and researched to develop their own business plans for dealing with the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Topics/roles included: the Hudson County Chamber of Commerce, NJ Economic Development Authority (EDA), Special Interest Group (SID), JP Morgan CSR Representative, Community Events Planning, Ecommerce Business focusing on AI, Small Business, and the State of New Jersey.



Working together in small groups, the students developed detailed strategies for staying afloat in the post-pandemic world. The students presented their ideas to a panel of three business professionals. Zachary Witman, Founder and CEO of GrowSquares, is a strategic and financial leader with over a dozen

years' experience in capital markets. José I. Ortiz is currently serving as the Program Director for Services, with the Division of Community Development of the City of Jersey City. Deana Lantigua is a Human Relations Business Partner for the City of Jersey City, and is an NJCU alumna.



Paolo Amelio: "There is a lot to be said when young minds come together collaboratively, with passion to selflessly deliver and share innovative ideas that can benefit society in so many verticals. It's inspirational and embracing—these young adults need our support as they continue to grow to become invaluable contributors to our community."

David Katz: "Via Zoom I had the privilege of meeting remarkable students at a recent IDR event. The event struck a personal chord for me; that it is imperative for young people, to have a forum that exposes them to the world so that they are empowered with every opportunity to participate fully in the lives of their local communities, and the world societies. The IDR is a platform that fosters and promotes empowerment and gives a sense of dignity, self-worth, and confidence to those students. In viewing the world from Jersey City, it's vibrant Small businesses and Corporate Institutions a framework for their road to a life of success is being natured. One key message that I took from the IDR is that hard work, courage, and preparation can overcome fearfulness so that each individual can be the instrument of change for their lives, and community."

Professor David Weiss was more than pleased by the results of his class event. "I am very proud of the engagement by both our professional innovation community and New Jersey City are supporting our students to advance innovation and entrepreneurship at NJCU," he said. This is exactly what the New Jersey City Connect Project is all about: bringing all facets of the community together to collaborate on amazing projects and exchange innovative ideas.

You can learn more about the work being done in and around NJCU's community on the New Jersey City

Connect Project webpage:

<https://www.njcu.edu/academics/schools-colleges/school-business/institute-dispute-resolution-idr/entrepreneurship-and-innovation-njcu-jersey-city-connect-project>

### **About Us**

The Institute for Dispute Resolution at NJCU is a platform under the School of Business that seeks to promote international negotiation and mediation techniques to manage disputes in cross border commercial and general conflict resolution forums.

### **Contact**

Darby Zelaskowski, Public Relations  
dzelaskowski01@manhattan.edu

<https://www.njcu.edu/academics/schools-colleges/school-business/institute-dispute-resolution-idr>