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# I-Cubed Creative Enterprises (I.3C.E.) Strengthening Ingenuity, Imagination & Innovation In Youth

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**Big iDeas at SMU Proposal**

**Title of Project:**

**I-Cubed Creative Enterprises (I.<sup>3</sup>C.E.)**  
Strengthening Ingenuity, Imagination & Innovation In Youth



**List of Student Participants**

Student name: Julene Fleurmond  
Email: jfleurmond@smu.edu

Major(s): Journalism, Pre-medicine, Minors in Advertising and Art  
Year of Study: Junior (Senior credit hours), Graduation May 2009

Team: Note: I have recently transferred to Southern Methodist University and was having trouble finding an exact person to partner with, but would like to involve members of the SMU student organization Sister Supporting Sisters and/or Association of Black Students, which I am involved in.

## Statement of Problem

According to the Salvation Army Dallas/Fort Worth website, “The U.S. Census Bureau's latest estimate indicates that Dallas County has a poverty population of 276,124, which is 14-percent of the county's total population. The Bureau speculates that this number could be as high as 330,377, meaning that as many as 16.7-percent of people in Dallas County could be living in poverty.”

Poverty in Dallas affects all types of people, including young people. Low-income youth may also be affected by other types of risk activities, such as teen pregnancy, substance abuse and destructive behaviors, and run the higher risk of dropping out of school early on. Without guidance, encouragement and resources, many lower-income youth may not have the opportunity to reach levels of educational enrichment that may prepare them for financial growth.

## Proposed Methodology

I-Cubed Creative Enterprises (I.<sup>3</sup>C.E.) addresses the issues of low-income youth financial development, educational performance and enterprise sustainability in Dallas. The goal of this project is to provide young low-income students with an artistic outlet where they can focus on creative initiatives and learn about aspects of entrepreneurship. In this way, the young people are able to learn about financial growth, as well as exercise their skills in a variety of hands-on activities.

The project will consist of the following segments:

- Art, writing, and graphic design contests targeted toward children in elementary through high schools (primarily schools in inner-city or low-income areas). Students will be able to create projects on a particular topics or theme (researching civil rights leader or hero, public health issues, how they hope to reach their future career goals, etc.) that will stimulate their creative interests.

Every student who enters will receive a certificate of participation, and the top creative projects that exceed the judging criteria will be awarded cash and/or other prizes (including art supplies, certificates, etc.) The top winners, their parents and their teachers will be invited to a special celebration dinner at SMU where the students will be awarded their prizes. All of the artwork and writing entries will be published in a special book/publication distributed to all of the participating schools as well as to the winning students, and will be featured on the ICE website.

- The ICE website will be an ongoing interactive media project where student’s work can be showcased and published through the program. The students can gain pride in themselves in that their work will be displayed for others to see. The website will also contain the program curriculum and include constantly updated inspiration,

encouragement of positive behaviors and project ideas that they can pursue on their own.

- Winning designs from art and graphic design projects can be turned into posters and other print materials that can be distributed among schools and libraries in Dallas. These student-created materials can promote reading, art and learning, or have messages relating to abstaining from drugs, violence, and other harmful activities.
- Students at select middle and high schools will receive training (by volunteers, and/or being provided printed and online tutorials and materials) in professional graphic and web design programs such as Photoshop and Dreamweaver in order to teach them about the importance of being able to use computers and producing digital media. They will learn how to design a variety of media such as print materials, logos, websites, apparel, digital storytelling projects, etc. These skills will be helpful to them in any future career they may pursue.
- Students at participating schools will receive entrepreneurial advice and training in the form of guest speakers attending their schools, being taught in classes, receiving entrepreneurial reading materials, and having access to a special interactive ICE website section that will feature advice, ideas, profiles and steps they can take to start their own businesses. Teachers at the schools may also receive entrepreneurship teaching guides and resources which can help them to teach core entrepreneurship principles and possibly connect them into their current teaching curriculum.
- A selection and application process will be created to choose students who would benefit the most for certain program aspects. Students will be taught how to create a business plan and how to develop products ideas that will produce a profit and meet a need. They will be able to design creative products such as greeting cards, t-shirts, bags, mugs, etc. and have their designs sent to print and produced so that they learn about the development and manufacturing process. This will also allow them to hold a professional finished product in their hands, and will spark pride and feelings of accomplishment in them.
- Students in select schools will be able to sell their products at a special marketplace to other students, parents and teachers. The raised funds will go back into their entrepreneurship programs and they will also receive profits and/or rewards.

### **Rationale and Case Studies**

When young people are given the chance to do something creative and with the possibility of rewards, they are able to channel their energies into being constructive and learning something new. They are also uplifted and have more self-confidence in their abilities, and learn that there are other ways in which they can make money besides the traditional models they may be used to witnessing in the neighborhoods where they live.

## Case Studies

Other programs that are similar in nature to I-Cubed Creative Enterprises are also effective in stimulating the energy and minds of low-income youth. I-Cubed was inspired by their models of teaching entrepreneurship and engaging students in creativity and real-world situations.

**Case Study: Kid Ventures,** <http://www.kidventures.org>



KidVentures, Inc. is a non-profit organization located in South Florida, which brings an innovative approach to educating children, especially those at risk. Students tally up their sales and put their math skills to good use.

The mission is to “introduce young people to entrepreneurship by developing and running their own business. By marketing products they create, students learn basic life-skills and enhance their self-worth.”

KidVentures helps students create and run a business, developing and marketing artistic products. They are exposed to a wide range of business and life skills, including the concepts of working, making a profit, and giving back to the community in which they live. These lessons, learned at an early age, can fundamentally change a child’s horizon and self-esteem.

Children are involved in a real-life business endeavor, learning product costing; advertising and marketing; business etiquette; and accurate record keeping. This can motivate them to improve in primary achievement areas, such as reading, writing and math.

Artwork done by the students themselves is the hallmark of this entrepreneurship program. Most importantly, students gain self-confidence, while working on projects that allow their creativity to unfold. Program profits go back to the community, and support a cause of the students' choice.

**Case Study: Sweat Equity Enterprises (SEE),** <http://www.sweatequityenterprises.org>



SEE is a project-based youth development learning program in New York, that takes place in a real professional environment where teenagers participate consistently and long term, year round for all four years of high school. Participants gain intensive design, technology and entrepreneurship training as they develop original graphic, product, or apparel designs from concept to prototype in partnership with a company partner. Past projects include cars for Nissan, bags for Marc Ecko Enterprises, graphic design for New York Cares and Abada Capoeira, shoes for Skechers, watches for Callanen/Timex, package design for Dr. Miracles Hair Care Products, skateboards for Zoo York, and outerwear for Marc Ecko Enterprises.

**Case Study: Big Thought,** <http://www.bigthought.org>



Big Thought is a national learning partnership inspiring, empowering, and uniting children and communities through education, arts and culture. The big thought is that a community, working together, can lift children up and better their lives using arts and culture as tools and catalysts.

Big Thought supports community partnerships, cultural integration for academic achievement, youth development and family learning.

Big Thought partners with more than 70 community agencies including school districts, library systems, child care centers, recreation centers and juvenile detention facilities to deliver programs that inspire and empower children, from preschoolers to teens, and help them become successful and productive adults. The organization also supports those adults who guide them, like teachers, parents, caregivers, librarians and mentors.

Research studies have shown that the arts, when deliberately integrated into the curriculum, have a profound ability to help children learn. They help raise test scores, improve literacy skills, boost cognitive development and keep students engaged.

**Case Study: Artists for Humanity, <http://www.afhboston.com>**



Artists for Humanity is a non-profit youth development organization that trains and employs urban teens to design, market and sell fine and commercial art products. AFH's mission is to bridge economic, racial and social divisions by providing underserved youth with the keys to self-sufficiency through paid employment in the arts.

AFH tackles the myriad of problems youth face today with tremendous impact. They celebrate the talents and wonderful energy of young people by giving them hands-on experiences in creativity, business, teamwork, and self-governance. Participants learn the techniques and tools of professional artists and the business world while engaging in education, employment, artistic exploration, and entrepreneurial experience. This produces life-transforming change for youth and for their communities. With support and donations, they are able to meet the needs of talented and hard working young people from Boston's urban neighborhoods.

**Case Study: Yellow Rose Society, [www.miami.edu/studorgs/yellowrosesociety](http://www.miami.edu/studorgs/yellowrosesociety)**







The Yellow Rose Society is a community service organization for women at the University of Miami. The organization's annual Art for Public Health Contest provides the opportunity for elementary and middle school children from the surrounding area to submit any form of art that depicts important health and wellness issues. The children are also required to research and write a short essay about the health issue.

The winning entries receive awards of excellence are published in a book distributed to the students and their schools. This project has enabled the students to become passionate about using art and writing as means of communication as well as learn about health issues that may affect them.



## Experience and Expertise



(Above) Julene's venture Art for Humanity gave toys and prizes to children after completing a Christmas art project and card decorating contest in a Miami Dade Public Library. (Below) As an alumni of the Miami Dade Institute for Youth Entrepreneurship, Julene was also able to give an award and cash prize to another developing young entrepreneur.



Dade College Institute for Youth Entrepreneurship Program, as well as *Black Enterprise* Magazines' Teenpreneur program.

One segment of Envibrance is called Art for Humanity, a nonprofit art enrichment program that mentors young children, sponsors toy drives and art contests, and provides graphic design services to schools and positive programs catering to youth. This venture has allowed her to reach out to children who are much like she was as a child. She has witnessed that using art as an outlet can give disadvantaged youth self-confidence to face struggles in their lives.

Julene has won various awards such as 2005 NFTE National Young Entrepreneur of the Year, two City of Miami Proclamations, a Nation Youth Venture grant, and the *Miami Herald* Silver Knight Award in New Media.

Julene has also been interested in science and health since she was a child and has been able to take part in research programs at Harvard School of Public Health and the National Institute of

Julene Fleurmond, one of the team members of this proposed venture, can attest to the truth that creative and entrepreneurial programs can positively affect low-income youth. Julene was raised in the inner-city of Boston, MA, by a single mother, and her family often struggled financially. Participating in and winning several art and writing contests as a child gave her confidence that she could achieve, and inspired her to use her imagination and time in constructive ways.

Julene developed a passion for multimedia and visual storytelling after she entered a web-design competition as a high school sophomore at Boston Latin School. The goal was to design a website honoring a civil rights leader; and though she had never used any design programs before, she attended a few tutorial sessions and learned how to use Photoshop, Flash and other design programs. To her surprise, her project won first place.

Subsequently, when she moved to Florida, Julene won other national and statewide multimedia and entrepreneurship competitions through the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship, *The Miami Herald*, Future Business Leaders of America, Independent Means, Inc., and other organizations. Then, in 2002, she created her company Envibrance Studios ([www.envibrance.com](http://www.envibrance.com)) as a way to share her abilities with her community by developing websites, multimedia, events, products, creative content and publications. Julene developed her entrepreneurial skills at the Miami

Health. She hopes to be able to leverage multimedia to expose young people to health awareness topics and helping them to abstain from risk behaviors.

Julene has since been chosen to be on the Ambassador Board for the international nonprofit National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) and is working to find new ways of teaching other young people, especially those from disadvantaged communities, the benefits of entrepreneurship and harnessing their creativity positively.

**Proposed Timeline**

I-Cubed Creative Enterprises will be an ongoing project that may follow a similar format from year to year, expanding its projects and reach capabilities as the membership and volunteer base grows. The following is a proposed timeline for the first year of operations.

**Spring 2008 – February - May**

- Planning and development of the entrepreneurship curriculum, program interactive website and special projects
- March – May 2008 - Recruiting period for potential sponsors, volunteers, and schools to be involved in the program
- Send letters of intent, program applications, sponsorship packets and contact other organizations for assistance or partnership

**Summer 2008**

- Beginning of summer art enrichment program and sending of art and writing contest applications to elementary and middle schools, and libraries

**Fall 2008**

- Selection process for entrepreneurship program
- Beginning of entrepreneurship training program at selected schools

**Winter 2008 – 2009**

- Development of student's business plans and products

**Spring 2009**

- Art and writing contest awards ceremony and publication of student's work
- Business Expo for select students to sell their products to teachers, parents, peers, etc.
- Program graduation and awards ceremony for students who have participated in and successfully completed entrepreneurship program

## **Sustainability and Growth**

In order to expand the project, it would be beneficial to partner with and seek counsel or sponsorships from other organizations that support youth entrepreneurship and empowerment. Possible partners or sponsors may include the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship, Youth Venture, KidVentures, and other organizations. These organizations might be able to provide textbooks, monetary donations, prizes, guest speakers, and other resources for the students. Also, Big Thought (<http://www.bightought.org>, listed in the case studies above) is a non-profit youth art organization in Dallas that has a partnership with the Meadows School of the Arts at SMU, and may possibly be able to provide assistance for this project.

To establish growth, I.C.E. would also recruit other college students to volunteer as guest speakers, mentors and facilitators of the various aspects of the program. An executive board structure can be established where different responsibilities are delegated to increase productivity and efficiency.

**Anticipated Budget**

<b>EXPENSES</b>		
<b>Activity / Items</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Expenses Per Year</b>
Art and Writing Contest Prizes	Ongoing	\$1000
Publishing publications with student works		\$600
Art and Writing contest and graduation ceremony dinner (Food, decorations, plaques)		\$600
Printing Expenses for Student Artwork and Products (lulu.com, spreadshirt.com, etc.) as well as promotional materials for events	Ongoing	\$1500
Art supplies, licenses and subscriptions for student design projects (orientaltrading.com, clipart.com)	Ongoing	\$200
Mailing Expenses to send materials to schools	Ongoing	\$200
Interactive curriculum website hosting (Ipower.com)	Spring 2008-2009	\$400
Purchasing licenses for student's design software and entrepreneurship software	Ongoing	\$700
Transportation to schools for volunteers	Ongoing	\$200
<b>Total Anticipated Budget</b>		<b>\$5400</b>

Note: These prices have been determined by estimations from similar previous events and projects I have programmed in the past, and the cost of items based on the prices on the listed websites. Other additional items that are needed can be donated by sponsors, or raised through various fundraisers.

Person responsible for funds:

Julene Fleurmond

Signature of person responsible for funds:




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Thank you for your time in reviewing this proposal.