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## USF St. Petersburg Entrepreneurship Program wins national honor

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**Nathan Schwagler, Dr. William Jackson and Daniel James Scott**

The [Entrepreneurship Program](#) at the USF St. Petersburg College of Business has been named the Outstanding Emerging Entrepreneurship Program in the United States.

The award was presented Saturday to Program Director William Jackson, Ph.D., by the United States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship at its annual conference in San Francisco.

The award comes less than three years after the program was founded and nearly a year after students in the Entrepreneurship Club won the prestigious 2012 CEO Startup Simulation Challenge.

The United States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship is the world's largest independent organization dedicated to advancing entrepreneurship. The award honors an emerging program that "reflects innovation, quality, potential viability, comprehensiveness, depth of support, sustainability and impact."

The breadth and scope of the Entrepreneurship Program seemed to impress the judges, Jackson said. The program includes innovative curriculum that crosses all disciplines and colleges at USFSP, a small-business development center, a business accelerator called [Gazelle Lab](#), the [\*Journal of Business and Entrepreneurship\*](#), an advisory board of experienced entrepreneurs and extensive community outreach that brought dozens of Tampa Bay business leaders into classrooms to interact with students.

The program also published "Tampa Bay's 6/20 Plan" that called for the creation of an entrepreneurial ecosystem to encourage collaboration among Tampa Bay entrepreneurs and the organizations that support them.

"This provides needed validation for us and the community that we have accomplished a lot here in a short period of time," said Jackson. "The success can be attributed to the hard work of everyone involved in the program."

Besides Dr. Jackson, that team includes Daniel James Scott, Associate Director of the Sustainable Entrepreneurship & Innovation Alliance and Instructor of Entrepreneurship; Nathan Schwagler, the Entrepreneurship Program's creative-in-residence; John Morrow, Entrepreneur-in-Residence; Elizabeth Markie, pitch coach; and Wayne Brass, a consultant with USFSP's Small Business Development Center.

"The program is an example of how the College of Business is working with the Tampa Bay business community in ways that directly benefit students," said College of Business Dean Maling Ebrahimpour, Ph.D. "I am very proud of the faculty, staff and students for the hard work that led to this honor."

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