Have an Ice & Chill- APKC Client Mt. Everetts Frozen Creations Creates CBD Infused Italian Ice

Written by Sarah Matarella

Troy Everetts, Wilkes University graduate ’17, went on a trip to Colorado during the winter in 2015 expecting to take in the scenery and spend time with his aunt. He did not expect to leave with the impending inspiration to develop a business.

The idea behind Mt. Everetts Frozen Creations all started when Troy took his Colorado trip.

“We went to one of the marijuana dispensaries and I was fascinated by it and did not see any frozen products there containing CBD oil,” said Troy Everetts.

His father, Al Everetts, has worked in the Italian ice industry for 25 years and owns Josie’s Italian ice in Kingston, Pa., sparking Troy’s observation of the lack of frozen edibles.

When Troy returned from Colorado, he immediately went to his father and insisted that they dip their hands into the world of frozen, edible CBD oil infused products.

This inspiration, combined with his participation in his Entrepreneurship senior capstone class at Wilkes in 2017, his father’s experience in the Italian ice industry, and mentorship from the Allan P. Kirby Center for Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship, resulted in the Everetts’ innovative business plan.

CBD oil or cannabidiol is hemp derived. It is directly extracted from the cannabis plant, but it does not contain the psychoactive component, THC, found in marijuana. CBD has also been shown to help patients who

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A Letter From the Executive Director

A Profile on APKC Mentor Jerry Lisman
Written by Ashley Abbey

Typically, high-powered business professionals are assumed to have expensive college educations. But what we can learn from Jerry Lisman is that hands-on experience and mentorship are the education that money cannot buy.

Lisman, born and raised in northeastern Pennsylvania and a high school graduate, started his career in consulting, doing sales and traveling. Ultimately, he ended up back in northeast Pennsylvania. The self-proclaimed “workaholic” has a passion for the area, claiming that the region “is a great place to live and build a business.”

Lisman founded and is CEO of Lisman Holdings, a consulting company that specializes in taking products to market. He has acquired many day-to-day responsibilities with this title, yet has still managed to find time in his schedule to help others.

When he is not managing Lisman Holdings, Lisman’s schedule is packed with volunteer activities. His volunteer experience encompasses participating in the Annual Business Plan Competition as In-Kind Committee Chair and Session Advisor at tecBRIDGE, as well as being a key participant in Junior Achievement of Northeastern Pennsylvania, Inc., and working with Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Bridge.

While reflecting on his volunteering experiences positively, Lisman joked that if he was not the CEO of his own company, he would be the CEO of another company. He said that his workaholic nature is credited to his ambition and passion for northeast Pennsylvania region.

Along with volunteer work, Lisman also prioritizes his mentorship to students and young entrepreneurs. Lisman says that mentoring is a way for him to share his experiences, “the good and the bad,” and that it is rewarding to see young entrepreneurs utilize and appreciate his mentorship.

Due to Lisman’s variety of experience, he possesses extensive knowledge in many different business ventures which he attributes to work and personal experiences where he was able to be involved in many aspects of business development. He stated that his ultimate goal of mentoring is to help promote the opportunities in the region for graduates and young entrepreneurs.

Lisman recalled some of the best advice he has received from his own mentors in his journey, which he passes along to his mentees. He said the best advice a past mentor told him was that “the selling begins when the customer says no.”

It is this kind of advice that gets passed down through generations of mentoring. In a 2017 episode from tecBRIDGE radio, Lisman also talked about being mentored, and says that his mentors taught him everything he knows about sales. Lisman said that persistence is important in all aspects of the business, especially in sales.

A final piece of advice that Lisman disseminates is that “the devil is in the details.” This advice is not only passed down to his mentees, but are also words that he continues to remind himself every day.

Lisman admitted that his attention to detail has been one of many habits that have helped push him forward in his career as it is a key aspect of the industry.

Lisman frequents the Wilkes University campus to mentor both clients and students at the Allan P. Kirby Center for Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship. He also guest lectures in classes at Wilkes University’s Siddhu School of Business.

In 2015, Lisman was awarded the Mentor of the Year Award from the Kirby Center for his outstanding contributions and efforts in mentoring at Wilkes University. As a mentor, professionals like Jerry Lisman have spent a lot of time sharing their experiences and guiding others in their personal growth.

Lisman also mentioned that mentoring has contributed to his own personal growth along the way as well. “Mentoring has exposed me to new connections and business associates,” said Lisman.

Not only has mentoring been a networking opportunity, but it has also allowed him to get involved in academic work. Jerry reflected on his experience being mentored and attributes 90 percent of his knowledge to mentorship. He said that the best mentees are open to learning and listening.
Continued from Page 1

The Everetts started taking the next steps to kickstart this project immediately. They sent our their samples for labs to test and continued educating themselves about CBD and any regulations and laws related to it. Troy even presented the idea to Jerry Ephault, executive in residence at the Allan P. Kirby Center who was also the professor for his senior Entrepreneurship capstone class at Wilkes University and Rodney Ridley, the director of the Center. “They actually opened up to the idea pretty well. At the time, no one really knew about CBD. It was still a gray area,” said Troy Everetts.

Ephault explained that they knew CBD was not illegal, but they were still unaware of many of its applications. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) currently does not have any rules or regulations on CBD yet, however, that has not stopped the Everetts from taking precautionary measures.

“With Al’s chemical knowledge, they obtained their trade secret by successfully infusing the CBD oil into the Italian ice and began their journey. The Everetts started taking the next steps to kickstart this project immediately. They sent out their samples for labs to test and continued educating themselves about CBD and any regulations and laws related to it. Troy even presented the idea to Jerry Ephault, executive in residence at the Allan P. Kirby Center who was also the professor for his senior Entrepreneurship capstone class at Wilkes University and Rodney Ridley, the director of the Center. “They actually opened up to the idea pretty well. At the time, no one really knew about CBD. It was still a gray area,” said Troy Everetts.

Ephault explained that they knew CBD was not illegal, but they were still unaware of many of its applications. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) currently does not have any rules or regulations on CBD yet, however, that has not stopped the Everetts from taking precautionary measures. Even so, the building for me, it’s the substructure,” said Yacuboski. Now construction and redesign is in full throttle and the building in Hanover is set to be ready in the fall of 2019. While the manufacturing facility was being redesigned, the Everetts were also working on the packaging and branding for their product. They added a wrapped spoon underneath the lid and made the lid childproof even though no regulations exist requiring it to remain compliant. They also decided to include a brightly-colored paper wrapping with their logo around the product container to reflect the flavor on the inside. “The packaging took me through hell and back,” said AI Everetts.

With the product solidified, the facility underway, and the packaging and branding in place, the Everetts are equipped to be leaders in the industry of frozen edibles.

Above: Mt. Everetts’ CBD-infused ice for sale at Primal in Wilkes-Barre.

Ephault, Ridley, the Kirby Scholars and other Kirby Center staff, have also helped the Everetts continue to grow. “It went from a purely academic relationship to an actual, functional business development,” said Ephault.

Ethan Schwartz and Spencer Yacuboski, Kirby Scholars of Engineering at the Kirby Center, worked with the Everets and Enterprise Systems Partners Inc. (esp), a management consulting agency, to start building the Everetts’ new facility in Hanover, PA. When finished, it will allow them to start mass producing and shipping their product. “This included assisting in the construction of an ‘AS IS,’ or how the building currently looks, an equipment matrix, which was a spreadsheet that included the features as well as any movable equipment within the facility, and the ‘TO BE’ which represented how the Everetts envisioned their dream building,” said Schwartz.

They assisted the engineers in drawing on AutoCAD, a computer-aided design and drafting software application, taking measurements in the building, curating the overall design and even did some of the actual manufacturing work. “We went through the whole process of how you go from a blank canvas to a manufacturing facility,” said Yacuboski.

This was the first time that both scholars got to work with an engineering firm on a project before, it took some time for Schwartz and Yacuboski to get used to using AutoCAD the way that engineers do. Once they finalized the drawings, it took about three weeks for them to get the desired formatting.

When asked about their favorite part of working on this project, Schwartz and Yacuboski both said that it was the final meeting between the Kirby Center, the esp consultants, and the Everets. During this meeting they went over the final design packets created by the lead consultant on this project. Within Design/Drawing Packet were the drawings that Schwartz and Yacuboski made. Schwartz said they each had put nearly 100 hours into creating them. “It was just cool to see it all come together. The final document that we got was this full, bound (packet). I’m not a construction guy, so the final product isn’t especially since many of our clients, partners, and Wilkes University affiliates are utilizing social media to elevate their businesses. With that, the center is finally jumping on the bandwagon. Look out for the accounts in the near future and give us a follow, like and share.

APKC Social Media is Coming To A Screen In Front of You

Written by Caroline Rickard

In the fall of 2019, the Allan P. Kirby Center for Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship will officially launch on Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn. The channels will highlight events and projects as well as feature all of the programs and services the center offers. The need for a social media presence has been prioritized, essentially since many of our clients, partners, and Wilkes University affiliates are utilizing social media to elevate their businesses. With that, the center is finally jumping on the bandwagon. Look out for the accounts in the near future and give us a follow, like and share.
Scholar Spotlight

Ethan Schwartz and Spencer Yacuboski, Kirby Scholars of Engineering

What has your favorite project at the Kirby Center been that you have worked on so far? Why?
S.Y.- My favorite project that I have worked on so far would have to be the Mt. Everetts Production Facility Design because of the sheer complexity and professionalism I experienced throughout its course.

Do you have any hidden talents? 
E.S.- A talent that one may not know is that I am an amateur bowler.

What is something that most people do not know about you or your personality?
E.S.- One thing that most people do not know about my personality is that I am very involved in Boy Scouts.

What is the most important lesson you have learned thus far? 
E.S.- The most important lesson I have learned in life thus far is that regardless of what you are going through keep your head up and be nice to the people around you. Pain is truly temporary.

Who is your role model and why?
S.Y.- My role model is my mom and that is because she is without a doubt the hardest working person I know within my personal life.

What is your dream job at this moment in time? 
E.S.- I would really like to be a business owner and run the internal organization of running a business. I would really like to be a project manager in an engineering space.

What do you like to do in your free time?
E.S.- In my free time I like to ride my motorcycle, go bowling, and/or play tennis.

Who is your role model and why?
S.Y.- My role model is my mom and that is because she is without a doubt the hardest working person I know within my personal life.

What is something that most people do not know about you or your personality?
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What is your dream job at this moment in time? 
E.S.- My dream job at this moment in time is working for an engineering firm in the mechanical design department, either maintaining equipment or designing new.

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1. The APKC helps bring the business ideas of students, faculty and staff at Wilkes University to life.

The APKC has been thoroughly involved with student, staff and faculty clientele and there are several success stories up on our website. If you have an innovative business idea, come to the APKC building and the well-equipped teams of scholars and staff will help you kickstart your business plan and facilitate all of the necessary steps for moving forward with your idea.

2. The second floor of the APKC used to be a living space, but is now a fully functioning office.

Dr. Jeffrey Alves, former Director of the Allan P. Kirby Center for Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship used to live in the upstairs apartment of the APKC. The space was then turned into office quarters for the scholar program when Dr. Ridley became the director in 2014.

3. The building might be haunted.

Throughout the years, many people have experienced sightings of spirts and ghosts in the APKC. Each floor seems to have their respective ghosts. In the attic, there’s a young boy who apparently opens and closes the attic door from time to time. Our office assistant Lorna reported hearing footsteps coming down the stairs and closes the attic door from time to time. Y ou can find the chocolate at Lorna’s desk right when you walk into the center which is usually accompanied by some nuts or other candy as well.

4. There’s a hidden restroom under the main staircase.

The Harry Potter-esque bathroom under the staircase blends right in with the wall. You can barely tell there’s a door, but inside is a fully functioning restroom, with a Wilkes paper towel dispenser and all.

5. The APKC offers intellectual Property Training for Scholars and Interns.

The director of the center, Dr. Rodney Ridley, specializes in intellectual property.

6. The APKC always has coffee and chocolate...always.

There is an espresso machine and a Keurig in the kitchen on the second floor. The kitchen is also fully stocked with creamers, sugar and K-cups at all times. You can find the chocolate at Lorna’s desk right when you walk into the center which is usually accompanied by some nuts or other candy as well.

7. All Kirby buildings have fully spelled out Kirby name.

The buildings that are owned by the members of the Kirby family are always resolved to the Kirby name. This helps differentiate the buildings as there are several other buildings with Kirby in the name in the Wilkes-Barre area such as our center, the FM Kirby Center on public square and the Allan P. and Mary Sutherland Kirby Center for Creative Arts at Wyoming Seminary.

8. The APKC Scholar Program started in 2014.

The program was designed to provide the top-performing students in various fields of study with hands-on experience in such fields. It was also designed to facilitate recognition for the scholars’ outstanding work as well as to allow them to form relationships with mentors in their perspective fields to adequately prepare them for the future.

9. The art featured throughout the building highlights the pioneers in entrepreneurship.

The huge paintings in the downstairs conference rooms on the right hand side of the main entrance display all of the pioneers in business and entrepreneurship.

10. The APKC also works with external clients outside of Wilkes University.

Not only does the APKCFFEE work with clients from Wilkes University, but it also works with clients in and beyond the community as well. Be sure to check out our metrics report in the fall to see some of our client success stories.

For more information regarding the APKCFFEE, please visit the website at https://www.wilkes.edu/kirby, or refer to the back of this newsletter for necessary contact information.

Center Recognized for 25 years at Annual EPIC Awards

Written by Ashley Abbey

The Allan P Kirby Center for Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship was recognized for their 25th Anniversary at the Annual EPIC Awards hosted by the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce.

The Wilkes Barre Chamber of Commerce hosts the EPIC awards to recognize inspiring and influential people and businesses in the Greater Wyoming Valley. This year, the awards took place at Wyoming Seminary on Tuesday, June 11. Ryan Brown as a Volunteer of the Year and Innovator of the Year were given to the community leaders who have put the Greater Wyoming Valley on the map through their hard work.

A cocktail hour preceded the awards program along with a live stream hosted by Chamber of Commerce Ambassador Anthony Melf. Many community leaders mingled and enjoyed the company of colleagues and friends. When everyone took their seat for the program, a large screen appeared with an intro video.

The video showed chamber representatives delivering balloons to each award recipient and played on humor to emulate the fun, yet professional atmosphere of the night. The decor reiterated the elite theme with red and gold highlighting the venue.

“I was extremely impressed with the layout and professionalism of all involved,” said Charles Pierce, vice president of the Allan P. Kirby Center for Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship.

Four individuals were recognized along with four community organizations. Each award recipient was welcomed to the stage with a pre-recorded video of individuals who were impacted by the honorees hard work. Each community organization was welcomed to the stage with a live performance by Abbey Cooke-Gnoinski, Madison Donopkosky and John Tousissant who sang overture for each of the videos respectively.

The Allan P Kirby Center for Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship was among the 2019 community organizations recognized. The center received an award for 25 years of service to the community. Rodney Ridley, director and Charles Peirce, vice president received the award on this EPIC evening. Although it was Pierce’s first time in attendance, Ridley has attended three EPIC award events before, including 2017 when he was named Innovator of the Year.

Ridley’s acceptance speech highlighted what the center’s current focus on putting the principles of entrepreneurship and economic development into action beyond textbook theory.

“We are going to be a private institution with a public mission. Our role is to be a small but an effective catalyst in the region’s entrepreneurial ecosystem,” said Ridley.

Over the course of 25 years, the center has also grown to incorporate students into active roles developing the economy in the Wyoming Valley. These students achieve the status of a Kirby Scholar through hard work and dedication at the center. Some of the scholars attended the awards event, affirming their pride at the center.

“Through the Kirby Center, I was able to begin gaining experience working in my chosen field of photography and digital design early on in my college career,” said Madison Kaminiski, Digital Design Scholar at the center.

Ridley said he is grateful for the connections the Kirby Center has developed over the years through its “small but mighty” mentality.

He thanked “entrepreneurs, students, faculty members, business owners and community leaders who trust us to help them reach their business goals and try to help mentor them in the commercialization process.”

The Allan P Kirby Center plans to continue to grow the economy in the Greater Wyoming Valley for another 25 years.

RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT: LISA REYNOLDS

Lisa is a graphic designer, art director and educator. She has spent nearly 20 years working in the Northeast Pennsylvania market. She is an assistant professor of digital design and media art at Wilkes University with a research concentration in Experiential Graphic Design.

What is some advice you could offer scholars as a mentor?

For scholars who are truly serious about advancing their chosen field, I think the most important thing is to figure out the areas of your field that are broken and why.

How is your research prominent?

I feel that research in experiential design is extremely important in today’s communication environment. With so many of our everyday tasks moving online, we must seek to create more meaningful experiences in real life. That’s not to say we should leave screens behind, but be more thoughtful about how we interact with them as we are present.
Business Development Scholar Attends UIIN Conference in Finland

Written by Sarah Matarella

Kirby Scholar of Business Development Ashley Abbey had the distinction of being the only student to participate in a professional role in the University Industry Interaction Network (UIIN) Conference in Helsinki, Finland in June 2019.

Abbey, who is a senior marketing and management major at Wilkes University, attended the 7th annual UIIN with Rodnay Ridley, director of the Allan P. Kirby Center for Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship. Although there were student interns from Lehigh University who were volunteers that facilitated the conference, she was the only student serving a professional role as an attendee and presenter.

It was Ridley’s third time attending the conference and he is known for bringing student scholars to the UIIN. Ridley served as part of the leadership team responsible for putting the entire conference together. Abbey explained that all of Ridley’s colleagues were eager to meet and get to know her.

“I felt like a celebrity,” said Abbey.

The conference is geared toward student scholars to the UIIN. Ridley served as their incubator and tech transfer officer.

He also addressed the scholar program, which many colleges across the United States and internationally do not have. Ridley and Abbey both explained that student engagement with tech transfer is quite minimal internationally. Students are involved at the Allan P. Kirby Center through the scholar program.

“I realized that for a small center, we do a lot compared to other places around the world, even some of the biggest universities around the world...There’s nothing even close to the scholar program. One student intern who does simpler tasks is considered progressive, and we have 20,” said Abbey.

Ridley agreed, stating that the conference positions the center internationally. According to him, the international validation of the concept provides him, other staff members and the scholars with even more opportunities.

Through the scholar program, Abbey said that she has learned about the importance of networking. The conference enhanced her networking skills and allowed her to build relationships that she would have never been able to make.

“When I found out that I got the opportunity to be mentored by Dr. Ridley and learn networking from him, I was very excited. Networking is one of the most valuable skills in the industry and I have the chance to learn from some of the best. It also helped that the topics of university and industry interaction is interesting to me as I want to be a professor one day,” said Abbey.

While they were in Finland, Ridley and Abbey also enjoyed the sights and experienced the different culture. They visited an aquarium and several museums, took a bus tour of Helsinki, visited a local market, went on a boat ride and many other activities.

“Abby is very organized. Without her, it would not have been fun...I call it ‘Tours by Abby’. We must have visited six museums in two hours. It turned out to be a lot of fun. She conquered Finland,” said Ridley.

Abbey specifically recounted going to a public sauna, which was a completely different than any other social setting she has experienced in the United States. She also noted that the sun set around midnight and rose around 3:30 a.m. and that there is a seven-hour time difference between Finland and Pennsylvania.

Abbey and Ridley highly recommended that other scholars and students should take advantage of these opportunities if they are offered. Ridley stressed that it will give people a unique perspective that you cannot get by just talking about what is happening internationally.

Above: Andrew Potter, Ashley Abbey, Heloise Ridley and Dr. Ridley at Suomenlinna Fortress Island.

Above: Ashley Abbey at the Finland Parliament House.

New Kirby Scholars and Interns - 2019

Katie Hestor
Devin Lindley
Sarah Matarella
Caroline Rickard
Jivan Sidhu
An FAQ for the Clients of the APKCFEE

Michelle Lehman, a graduate assistant and Kirby Scholar of Marketing, answered a few of the Allan P. Kirby Center’s commonly asked client questions. Lehman has been a scholar at the Center since 2016, and has worked with a multitude of clients in that time span. These are a few of the questions she has encountered from clients over the past three years.

Q: What are the unique services offered at the Center?
A: The Center offers an array of different services in accounting, business development, engineering, communications, marketing and science, that can be found on our website, wilkes.edu/kirby. I am excited to announce that in Fall 2019 we will be offering new services like social media training, branding portfolios, and website development!

Q: What is the Allan P. Kirby Center for Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship?
A: The Allan P. Kirby Center is an economic development center that fosters entrepreneurship through business development, education and community outreach.

Q: What can the Center do for entrepreneurs?
A: The Center can transform an entrepreneur’s epiphany into a reality. We take entrepreneurs through a structured step-by-step process that provides them with the tools and support to develop, advance and launch their venture.

Q: What is the first step in starting a business?
A: Validate the concept! I always tell all my clients that the first step in starting a business is researching the concept and conducting a feasibility analysis. A feasibility analysis is a test of the product’s or service’s likelihood to survive, based on financial, marketing, operational and technical components. Validating the concept will save the entrepreneur time, money and energy.

Q: Do I need to have a background in business or management?
A: NO! The majority of our clients have no background in business or management, but they use their experience in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) or other industry sectors to discover gaps in the market and create innovations. Any person, anywhere, with any background can be an entrepreneur - that is the beauty of the career.