At the Dale and Katy Carlsen Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship at Sacramento State, we believe the most exciting and promising innovations arise from encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit and drive of our students. We encourage students across all academic disciplines and backgrounds to think and lead with an entrepreneurial mindset. We foster rich interactions between students and faculty as they work together to create innovative projects, startups, and research.

The Carlsen Center exemplifies Sacramento State’s Anchor University mission in action, where we are committed to working with communities to address local needs and issues. We provide services that help communities thrive. The Carlsen Center helps students forge strong, strategic partnerships with the entrepreneurial community. With more than 60 percent of Sacramento State graduates working in the region, our alumni play an integral role in the social, economic, business, and leadership fabric of Sacramento—the capital city of the fifth-largest economy in the world.

Through innovative programming and services, hands-on learning experiences, and mentorship, the Carlsen Center helps accelerate the economic growth and vitality of the Sacramento region. The Carlsen Center is empowering the innovators, business professionals, and entrepreneurs who will lead our region forward and make a difference in the world.

Elevate your impact

Driving innovation and entrepreneurship forward.

On the Rise: The Campaign for Sacramento State is supporting the Carlsen Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship as it seeks to raise critical funds for these important initiatives:

- Help drive entrepreneurialism and economic growth by providing personalized mentorship, education, and support services to Sacramento State students and our region’s innovative thinkers.
- Strengthen Sacramento State’s partnership with community stakeholders by making innovation and entrepreneurship accessible and pervasive throughout the region.
- Launch novel programs focused on accelerating innovation and entrepreneurship.

Together, we will nurture tomorrow’s leaders—and keep Sacramento State On the Rise.
Azriel Nicdao opened an online store as a high school senior. Nicdao, nicknamed “AZ” like the letters of the alphabet, picked a product he thought would be a hit. White tapestries—1,000 in all—were delivered to his doorstep in Vacaville. A solo entrepreneur, he barely sold a dozen before going out of business.

“Failing so early in my journey gave me the motivation to continue to push forward to where I am today,” said Nicdao, who studies management information systems at Sacramento State.

He recalled his first month at the University—he was sitting in the Library one day when he noticed a sign pointing to the Carlsen Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship. One visit and Nicdao was hooked. He spent the rest of his freshman year participating in entrepreneurial boot camps and intensive online programs.

With support from the Carlsen Center’s Virtual Mastermind Cohort program, he launched his newest business. His technology startup, Stair, creates investment data software.

“When I first entered the Carlsen Center, I was convinced I could accomplish my goals all by myself. I’ve since learned to better collaborate with individuals and discovered how much I love working with other people. I will always thank the Carlsen Center for inspiring me to continue as an entrepreneur.”

Campaign Priorities

Expand entrepreneurial programming

- **Startup Weekend Sac State:** This exciting annual event brings students and members of the community together to build a startup in 54 hours. Gifts to this program provide a platform for hundreds more to pitch their ideas and create their own startup teams.

- **Entrepreneur-in-Residence:** The Carlsen Center hires experts from various industries to bring real-world experience to students and the community. Gifts support other programs that include the Lean Startup Boot Camps, Mastermind Cohort Program, and Lean Innovator Series.

- **Woman Entrepreneur-in-Residence:** An expert entrepreneur leads FourthWave, an accelerator program for women-led tech companies. Gifts to this program empower women to grow into entrepreneurial leaders.

- **Social Entrepreneur-in-Residence:** Gifts allow the Carlsen Center to hire an expert to lead social innovation. Accelerator programs inspire innovators and entrepreneurs to tackle the most challenging civic and social issues and create solutions.

- **Virtual Entrepreneurship Toolkit Series:** Participants are learning to build the foundation of an enterprise. Gifts support virtual workshops and hands-on activities. Entrepreneurs take the startup tools they learn and apply them to their own businesses.

- **Global Entrepreneurship Week:** Presented by Western Health Advantage, this event features pitching competitions, networking evenings, and informational panels. Gifts support programming by providing funding for speakers, workshop presenters, and awards. Students celebrate their entrepreneurial spirit. With representation from each academic college at Sacramento State, Global Entrepreneurship Week has grown into a signature event at the University.

Strengthen public partnerships

- **Mentorship Network:** This network is a critical element in ensuring an entrepreneur’s success. Gifts to the Carlsen Center’s Mentorship Network foster relevant entrepreneur-mentor relationships and provide the resources and guidance they need to be successful.

- **Multi-University Collaborative:** The Carlsen Center brings together Sacramento’s higher educational institutions through strategic alignment to discuss and develop a plan that advances innovation and entrepreneurship in the region. Gifts foster even greater collaboration that benefit students and entrepreneurs.

- **Carlsen Center Startup Fund:** Gifts to this fund allow students to gain practical experience in venture funding and investing. The Carlsen Center team and board provide invaluable support. Students conduct due diligence on early-stage companies, invest in emerging local startups, and build a portfolio of companies.

At Sacramento State, we are On the Rise and need your support to reach the next level of excellence for our students and community. Your investment will allow us to do even more for our students, our region, and the world.

**GIVE ONLINE**

csus.edu/campaign

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**ABOUT ON THE RISE**

The goal of the $225 million On the Rise campaign is to amplify Sacramento State’s impact in the region, the state, and the world by doubling our current level of private support. The campaign has three priorities: supporting students through increased financial aid and student programs; advancing knowledge through innovative learning approaches; and strengthening the larger Sacramento community through diverse, engaged, and impactful teaching and research.

On the Rise campaign is committed to uplifting generations of people in an equitable and sustainable way.