

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Hawaii Student Entrepreneurs Club and The Entrepreneurs Club at the University of Hawaii at Manoa merge organizations

June 29, 2015, 11:00 AM, Honolulu, HI — Hawaii Student Entrepreneurs (HSE) and The Entrepreneurs Club (EC) at the University of Hawaii at Manoa announce to the business community, stakeholders, alumni, current members, and the public at large that the organizations have reached an agreement to merge organizations. The merger was agreed upon on April 15, 2015.

Under this new merger, the new organization will adopt the HSE brand identity and will continue under the name “Hawaii Student Entrepreneurs.” All assets and association memberships will be consolidated under the HSE name.

Both organizations have been serving students interested in entrepreneurship with similar missions and programs. Through this merger, the new organization will strengthen its ability to provide educational programs and opportunities for students interested in starting and running their own business.

Outgoing HSE president and co-founder Jessica Ching said, “David Holt (outgoing EC president) and I have been in discussions about a merger since the Fall 2014 semester and we have come to the conclusion that by joining forces, the synergy of a combined organization will produce greater value than two separate organizations. HSE has worked hard the past three years, and we’ve been able to have 23 awesome student-run companies as part of the club. With the merger, we’ll be able to increase that number and continue to inspire more student entrepreneurs.”

Outgoing president of The Entrepreneurs Club, David Holt, said, “When I joined EC, it inspired me to think differently and pursue the entrepreneurial path. I’m confident that HSE will deliver that same mission to future students and the combined efforts will only enhance the entrepreneurial value.”

Former HSE president and co-founder Kurt Cullen said, “I joined The Entrepreneurs Club when it first started while I was a freshman and have a close relationship with the organization. It gave me a sense of what entrepreneurship was all about and inspired me to want to be an entrepreneur. As a past member of The Entrepreneurs Club and as the co-founder of the Hawaii Student Entrepreneurs, I want to make sure all the members of this merged organization get the most valuable entrepreneurial experience and that we can continue to inspire future entrepreneurs. I’m excited to see my past and present come together for a better future.”

Kurt was a member of EC when it first started in 2008. Jessica became a member since 2011. Both had positions on the executive board before leaving to start HSE on May 1, 2012. When HSE started, it focused on students in the business and idea stage, while EC focused on the discovery stage of

entrepreneurship and building the entrepreneurial mindset. The merged club is now focused on all stages and levels of entrepreneurship, from those interested in learning more about entrepreneurship, to those student entrepreneurs that have existing businesses. The merged organization is currently open to all students of the University of Hawaii system campuses, including UH Manoa, all UH community colleges, Chaminade, and Hawaii Pacific University students, of all majors and class standings.

The Entrepreneurs Club was founded by Joey Aquino and Alex Ching. Joey said, "I started The Entrepreneurs Club back in 2008 simply because, at that time, there were no programs that really focused on supporting aspiring entrepreneurs at UH like I had seen in other communities. I saw the potential of students at UH but they just needed the proper resources, programs and density of like-minded individuals to chase their ambitions. The spin out of the Hawaii Student Entrepreneurs club was great at the time because it showed an even bigger support to the mission and I think it is great now that these two parties have aligned their programs and learned from their best practices to make a bigger impact for UH."

Current president of the merged organization, Evan Young, said, "I was a member of both The Entrepreneurs Club and Hawaii Student Entrepreneurs club, and now I have the privilege of taking the best out of both organizations and leading it with a combined effort to provide the best learning experience for future entrepreneurs."

Future plans and goals for the merged organization include creating a 501c3 non-profit entity and building a board of directors. The merged club is currently a Shidler College of Business student organization at UH Manoa and is headquartered out of the Pacific Asian Center for Entrepreneurship office at the college.

A big reason for keeping the Hawaii Student Entrepreneurs brand identity goes along with the longer-term vision of the merged organization: to open as many chapters across Hawaii as possible at the different colleges and high schools, and reach out to as many Hawaii students as possible in order to give them the entrepreneurial experience. Kurt said, "Most would think we are just a student club, but we are more than that and are driven by a bigger purpose. The club is part of a bigger system and is more like a distribution channel/lead generation to other organizations that will help students along their entrepreneurial journey. We're like the first step, where we introduce you to entrepreneurship, what it takes to be an entrepreneur. You might build your first business while in the club, but when you graduate, where do you go? There are organizations like Startup Weekend, accelerators and co-working spaces, government agencies, associations, etc. that the students can use to continue on their path to starting real game-changing businesses."

The newly merged HSE will strive to do its part in creating and developing the talents of the future entrepreneurs of Hawaii.

The Entrepreneurs Club

Started in 2008 by Joey Aquino and Alex Ching at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. The entrepreneurs club is a Shidler College of Business Student Organization. It was formed with the mission of creating a dynamic environment for innovation through a network of inspired students about the realities of the business world. We give students experiences that will expand their creative minds. We want to inspire our students to exercise their abilities to take calculated risks and start their own businesses. We aim to build the great leaders of tomorrow. Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheEcmanoa>

Hawaii Student Entrepreneurs

Started in 2012 by Jessica Ching and Kurt Cullen. Hawai'i Student Entrepreneurs (HSE) is an entrepreneurs club at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa and a Shidler College of Business Student Organization. Our mission is to inspire students to be entrepreneurs and to help students start and grow businesses. All of our members will learn how to start a business, meet established entrepreneurs, and learn about various entrepreneurial topics. We are open to students of all majors and all levels of entrepreneurship. We are the future entrepreneurs of Hawai'i. Website: www.hsentrepreneurs.com

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