The Essence of Entrepreneurship

In his New York University dorm room in 1984, Russell Simmons and his college roommate Rick Rubins had $5000 and a vision—to promote a fresh breed of talented Rappers and DJs from the shadows of the clandestine world of Hip-Hop to the mainstream. Twenty-two years later, as he made his way through the halls of the University of Rochester, Simmons had not only become “the Godfather of Hip-Hop” by singing Kurtis Blow, Run-DMC, LL Cool J and many more successful groups, but he had revolutionized urban culture by bringing Hip-Hop to unprecedented places in the form of music, magazines, clothing, and television. Growing up in Queens, New York, in the 1970’s, Simmons witnessed entrepreneurship in the form of the drug dealers that brought violence and decadence to his neighborhood. “I was surrounded by bad influences, but with some good luck and good choices, I got by. A lot of my friends didn’t make it,” Simmons said in a September appearance at the University during an interview forum with Vice President Paul Burgett. “You’re only as good as those who surround you.”

At the inception of his career, Simmons epitomized the elements of an entrepreneur; the shrewdness of seeing an opportunity; the ingenuity of creating a business using extremely limited resources; the tenacity of driving his vision when no one else seemed to share it. Entrepreneurship is more than simply taking a business risk. It is about generating an idea to enhance an existing process or, like Simmons, to create and promote an entirely new concept that challenges the status quo.

“Struggle is your greatest teacher,” said Simmons as he spoke of the days when businessmen shut their doors to Hip-Hop and its artists. After tireless promoting acts around New York City night clubs and record labels, he met success in the form of record deals that brought unprecedented success to the artists that his label endorsed. In 1986, Simmons signed a $600,000 production deal with CBS—a small figure compared to the millions of dollars that he amasses every year from his business ventures. In the light of his success in the music industry, Simmons sought to expand his influence and in 1991 created Def Poetry Jam, an uncensored poetry performance on Broadway that he turned into a series shown on HBO. Four years later, he created the clothing line Phat Farm, which capitalized on urban fashion by bringing it outside the city limits to suburban youth.

Today, Simmons continues to run his business, Rush Communications, a conglomerate of his multiple business enterprises. But he has turned his focus on political activism and uses his influence as a billionaire entrepreneur to combat animal cruelty, anti-Semitism, racism, sexism, and urban violence. At the University however, Simmons was promoting a newly established program in conjunction with Jefferson High School that encourages high school students from Rochester to consider the possibility of starting their own business. While the foundations of the city of Rochester were built on the ideas created by pioneers George Eastman of Kodak and George Pake of Xerox, it took an outsider to summarize the quintessence of entrepreneurship.

“It should never be a pursuit of money,” Simmons explained. “Your time on earth should be spent for the pursuit of dreams.”

UPCOMING SPRING EVENTS

Inside this issue

Cover Story:
How Russell Simmons turned a vision into a billion dollar enterprise.

Students

Alumni Spotlight........................03
Student Spotlight...................05
Hispanic Heritage Month...........06
Kudos...................................11

Faculty & Staff

Entrepreneurship @ESM..........04
Staff Spotlight.......................05
New OMSA Staff......................06
FDI: Pre- and Post-docs..........09
KEY Program.........................10

Events & Programs

Meliora Weekend...................03
Hispanic Heritage Month........06
Emerging Leaders Program......12
What else do we do? We create and implement a wide

The Office of Minority Student Affairs provides

The OMSA staff would like to congratulate you for

Deans List

2006

John Abrams
Anthony Alongi
Iman Criner
Ernesto Carcamo-Cavazos
Vanessa Cruz
Vicente Ditto
Nina Fernandez
Fabiana Ferracina
William Fullwood
Jeremy Goico
Meghan Jean
Puliy Joa
Asha Khachane
Jordan Kirkling
J’Miri Lamour
Kella Mayes T/5 ’07
Gregory Meditz
Nicholas Metendez
Matthew Morgan
Solomon Otim
Bobbi Stewart
Lorena Suarez-Delgado
Benjamin Tejblum
Eddy Toribio
Arthelma Tyson
Anthony Vargas T/5 ’07
Katherine Wang
Gaylen Williams

2007

Dominic Anderson
Irina Barahona
Danyra Chavez
Arien Darby
Amanda Duran
Jomo Edwards
George Gilmore
Lauren Goodwin
Cecil Hernandez
Jennifer Hong
Crystal Lane
Maria Mann
Joseph Martinez
Natalie Modzelewski
Christina Montano
Ashley Moore
Onika Noel
Eboni Richards
Enarcelis Santana
Brett Stark

2007 cont.

James Viveros
Matthew Wampler-Doty
Molly Williams

2008

Martin Fernandez
Omar Figueredo
Arthur Goldfeder
Amanda Mack
Camille Madison
Hayley Miskiwecz
Gordian Ndobuizi
Chin-Ho Poon
Pamela Reese-Smith
Jason Robin
Kevin Royo
Ashley Van Vechten
Donté Watkins

2009

Alejandro Campos
Danae Campos
Jessica Chery
Martin Cozens
Edgard Duque
Sara Fagan
Ellisabeth Ginsburg
Sara Goico
Henry Henderson
Melissa Jones
Diana La Torre
John Luebs
Carly Mendoza
Erica Perra
Samantha Ruiz
Roger Smith
Christina Wehbe
Brandon Zimmerman

2010

Lindsay Mulgrew
Deborah Obebedo

Study Abroad

The Chronicle staff would like to recognize

KUDOS!!!

*Other Academic Achievements

Crystal Lane ’07 was elected as President of the Society

Carly M. Mendoza ’09 received an A+ in JPN 101 at midpoint

Imoh Ikpot ’10 is a Writing Fellows finalist

Marlin Harper ’10 is a Gates Millennium Scholars recipient.

Renea Faulkner ’10 is a Gates Millennium Scholars recipient.

Congrats to our UR Cheerleaders!!!

Sharmaine Givens
Livnat Blum
Hitia Fuller
Danielle Jones

Study Abroad for the 2006-2007 academic year:

Cynthia Arvizo ’08 - Paris, France
Gretchen Garcia ’07 - Rome, Italy
Antonio Haynes ’07 - Paris, France
Cecil Hernandez ’07 - Cairo, Egypt
Christine Kenison ’08 - Cologne, Germany
Gregory Meditz ’08 - London, England
Christina Montano ’07 - England
Gabriela Perez ’08 - Venezuela
Donte Watkins ’08 - Cologne, Germany

*Information obtained by students response to call for KUDOS!
Kauffman Entrepreneurial Year by Lisa Norwood

The University of Rochester’s Center for Entrepreneurship, located in Lattimore Hall room 127, has been established to serve as the clearinghouse for the University’s entrepreneurial activities. There are already more than 25 courses from ten disciplines offered, with plans to create a cluster, minor, and major pertaining to entrepreneurship. UR Entrepreneurs is a new undergraduate organization devoted to “promoting and facilitating entrepreneurship in the UR community by providing education, inspiration, and networking opportunities for students.” The center offers courses, programs, clubs, and activities taking place on and off campus.

Among the new programs developed as a result of this grant is the Kauffman Entrepreneurial Year (KEY) Program. Modeled after the existing Take Five Scholars Program, the KEY Program provides accepted students with the opportunity to devote one or two semesters, tuition-free, to the study of women and entrepreneurship, creating a plan for annual musical theatre productions at the University, developing an on-campus organic food co-op, and creating a video game software company. They are working on their conceptual project, Rana, which focuses on civil rights lawyers’ practices and the significance of “linking fates” with one another, drawing on her personal experiences for examples.

Omar Figueroa

Although it may be difficult and unappealing for some students, Meliora Weekend can be a valuable and rewarding experience. Guinier’s lecture and her co-authored book, The Miner’s Canary: Enlisting Race, Resisting Power, Transforming Democracy stresses the importance of “linking fates.” That is to say that all members of a community (or nation) should feel the urgent need for change in their social atmosphere when one member of a group of that community is seen to be in distress. Rather than having civil rights lawyers “parachuting in” to fix the problem of one individual’s misfortunes, as Guinier confessed being guilty of once, she emphasized policy-making as being structured from the outside in, and allowing the people at a grassroots level rather than from the top-down.

Guinier’s message can be particularly salient to OMSA students because she advises people to be conscious of the risks involved in self-victimization based on one’s cultural, national or racial heritage. She advises one to keep in mind that there’s a larger set of problems beyond our own personal experience. In Guinier’s personal case, she endeavored to be “a woman with a cause not a grievance,” so that she could use her experience to telegraph to the rest of the polity, to make visible the problem that is threatening all of us.

Life after Rochester Education as an entrepreneurial adventure

By René N. Herbert ’05

When I think about how much I have gained from the University of Rochester both academically and socially; to say that I am an alumnus of this institution makes me very proud. I am originally from Trinidad and Tobago and came to the United States in 1993 to “get a better education.” In the States, I lived in Brooklyn, New York and went to Lafayette High School in Corona Island, Brooklyn. I am currently a second year Masters candidate at Yale University School of Epidemiology and Public Health focusing on women and child health policy. My future goal is to pursue my doctoral degree in health policy, practice in the field and then teach at the University level. Coming from Trinidad and Tobago and going to an American school was not as difficult a transition as coming from a public high school labeled worse high school in Brooklyn to higher education.

When I think about where I am today, any self-reflection was difficult because I always compared myself to some false ideal. I think deep down inside, I was afraid of the how much I would accomplish, how much I would achieve and ultimately how much I had inside me to succeed. I look back on what I learned from the University of Rochester that got me to my current place; and it was the life lessons that I learned from the faculty, the OMSA staff, and my peers; that is: to test your fears and test your limitations, to explore your passions and let others share an experience that fostered every curiosity you had. I think every success that I have accomplished thus far has been because I learned not to be afraid to take the chance because I knew that greatest opportunity to take chances was at the U of R.

What resonated with me during my four years here and continues to stay with me occurred at my first meeting with an OMSA staff. I was an EC0201 student, and Mr. Crews was my counselor. I sat down, scared and nervous, wasn’t sure if I was suppose to have my whole life planned out at 18 years old, but I knew I was highly unprepared. Mr. Crews asked me how my experience was thus far, and I smiled and said okay. Then I looked at him and told him I don’t think I am cut out for such an institution. I expressed all my fears. Mr. Crews smiled and told me everything would be fine, that your greatest strengths are hidden strength within that have taken you thus far. Your greatest strengths are yet to be discovered, and that coming to an institution such a U of R would be the best time to fine tune and channel those strengths. To me that meant all of my fears were barriers to all of my inner drive and strength that I possessed that would take me forward. What I took from that experience was the opportunity to go OMSA or go to any faculty and staff and be open with my uncertainties and reservations without feeling vulnerable and weak.

This issue of the OMSA Chronicle focuses on entrepreneurship, and I think that your education and following your personal goal is your business operation. Your self-motivation continues to build your business with which the support of your family, peers and mentors planted the seed within you. Some define an entrepreneur as what he does, I think that is very true. I think I am an entrepreneur because my enterprise and my venture is my education. I continue to build and take risks with my passions for academia.

I have taken the lessons I have learned at the University of Rochester and tested my fears by concluding that my greatest failure was only if I gave up. I tested and conquered this fear when applying to graduate programs in Public Health and I continue to do so when I take the next step in applying to doctoral programs. As a person and student of color, I think that you will always be tested and questioned about your adequacy. I think the greatest way to denounce that mentality is to turn that into a success story. No longer should you question your ability to succeed; it is your ability to endure that is the next step to fulfilling your goals.

Life after Rochester: (continued from page 3)

...Life after Rochester (continued from page 3)

Among the new programs developed as a result of this...
Preparing Tomorrow’s Entrepreneurs

By Bobbi Lombard, Eastman School of Music Office of Communications

Committed to leading the music profession into a new era, the Institute for Music Leadership (IML) at the Eastman School of Music was formed in 2001 with generous support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Since then, we have sought to implement cutting-edge ideas and programs to ensure the vitality and relevance of music in the 21st century. As the first center of its kind in the country, IML reflects the longstanding role of the Eastman School of Music as an international leader in its field.

The role of IML is to help Eastman students, alumni, and professional musicians get the broad education, specialized skills and diversified experiences they need—along with their exceptional musicianship—to become the next generation of musical and cultural leaders. The IML strengthens and sustains core programs that prepare graduates to serve as artists and leaders. It serves as the “umbrella structure” for Eastman’s diploma, certificate and partnership programs—one of which is the Entrepreneurship in Music cluster within the Arts Leadership Curriculum.

Ramón Ricker is Director of the IML and also serves as Senior Associate Dean of Professional Studies and Professor of Saxophone at Eastman.

IML programs are not only for Eastman students. Former River Campus student Daniel Israel ’05 (BA), a 2006 Kauffman Entrepreneurial Year Scholar, completed an IML course and did part of his Kauffman project—Sculpting the Performing Arts at the University of Rochester: A Plan for an Expanded Collaborative Annual Musical Theater Productions—through Eastman.

Isreal recently landed a coveted spot as a composer in the BMI Musical Theatre Writing Workshop—the developer of A Chorus Line and many other successful musicals. He has some exciting professional plans for the near future and credits the program for preparing him.

“The curriculum is a valuable experience on so many levels, and I made professional connections in the theatre and musical theatre industries,” says Israel. “The year was superb.”

Catherine Filene Shouse Arts Leadership Program (ALP) was created in 1996 as part of the “Eastman Initiatives,” a restructuring of Eastman’s curricular and co-curricular programs and is now under the IML umbrella. The ALP is designed to prepare students for a rapidly changing musical culture and an increasingly competitive and diversified marketplace.

Success as a professional musician requires more than superb technique and artistry—it also requires entrepreneurial savvy, strong communication skills, fluency with emerging technologies, commitment to audience education and public advocacy for music and the arts.

All University students can take advantage of the ALP, but access to certain program components requires that students apply for and be accepted into an Arts Leadership Certificate Program. Students can take courses in the Arts Leadership Curriculum (courses typically are restricted to 15 students), attend Kauffman events, and obtain internship counseling and career counseling through Eastman’s Career Services Office.

The Arts Leadership Undergraduate Certificate Program is open to undergraduates in their junior and senior years. Students apply by the end of their junior year and must be enrolled full-time in a degree program.

The Arts Leadership Graduate Certificate Program is open to all graduate students, but is designed particularly for MMA and DMA students. Students must participate for three to four semesters and must be enrolled full-time in a degree program.

Students who wish to participate in an ALP certificate program must have a strong academic record, a proven evidence of past leadership, and demonstrate an awareness of the challenges and opportunities facing the professional muscians and artists. The application consists of three short essays and a faculty recommendation. All finalists undergo a personal interview before they are accepted.

The IML received a major part of a $3.5 million grant to the University from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation to support entrepreneurship education. Classes offered are designed to help students develop practical skills that will allow them to transform ideas into enterprises to strengthen cultural life and sustain classical music, and various guest speakers who are entrepreneurial leaders in the music industry visit Eastman several times during each semester.

If you think you have an idea that can revolutionize the music world, check out the Eastman New Venture Challenge. It’s a contest to encourage new thinking and innovative ideas in music and gives students the opportunity to fulfill a business plan that could result in the launch of a new entrepreneurial enterprise. Winners must create and present a thorough business plan that demonstrates creativity and potential for success. It’s not too late to compete—Business plans are due January 29.

For more information, call 274-1113 or send an e-mail message to iml@esm.rochester.edu. Or, visit http://www.esm.rochester.edu/iml/

FALL 2006 UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER OFFICE OF MINORITY STUDENT AFFAIRS
WELCOME, NEW STAFF!

As a Puerto Rican male whose parents were involved in the Latino community in central Massachusetts, Joe Latimer grew up knowing the importance of a cohesive and educated community. His father is a Police Officer and his mother worked (and still works) as a director of an agency that serviced a growing Puerto Rican, Dominican, and South American population. Watching his parents dedicate their lives to disenfranchised and disadvantaged people, Joe grew up understanding the importance and power of mentors, role models, education, and community-based organizations.

After graduating from Northeastern University with a Masters in Criminal Justice, Joe accepted a position in the Undergraduate Admissions Office in his undergraduate alma mater, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. The position focused on recruiting underrepresented “minorities” to UMass Dartmouth. Understanding the importance of education in his life, and the lives of his peers growing up, helped him to see this opportunity as a way to promote higher education and help transform lives of young people of color in this community.

After admissions was totaling 12 years, at UMass Dartmouth, Northeastern University, and Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Joe then became a Regional Director of Admissions for the University of Rochester. This was his chance to recruit diverse students who are the best and brightest from one of the most amazing cities in the world – New York City. New York City has it all, and this can be found in the secondary school arena. While in the boroughs of New York, Joe is dedicated to recruiting students from schools that have high teenage pregnancy rate and where more than 70% of the population is eligible for free or reduced lunch. Within all of these schools, he seeks to find students who are interested in and qualified for the University of Rochester. And, is successful in finding them. After visiting high schools and attending college fairs, the admission staff has also created supplemental opportunities for NYC students and their counselors so they may learn more about the U of R. These activities are offered throughout the fall, summer, and spring.

With help from Michelle Thompson Taylor and other staff members in the office, these recruitment efforts in metro New York are being mirrored in other hotbeds of diversity, such as Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago, D.C., Detroit, Miami, and Philadelphia. While they target events in these areas, they continue to try to interface with diverse students from interesting places such as Los Angeles, El Paso, and Washington, DC. It would also be a remiss to not mention the newest hire to the office, Cortney Harris, who comes from the Mayor’s Office in Rochester. Cortney will provide leadership to the Admission Office’s renewed

Jessica Guzmán is the new Counselor in the Office of Minority Student Affairs. Born and raised in Rochester, she is a recent graduate from Columbia University where she received her Master’s of Science in Social Work. While at Columbia University, she had the opportunity to complete her Social Work Internship in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where she worked for a semester with youth and adolescents on a myriad of environmental, ecological, sustainability, leadership and academic issues. Jessica also earned her Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Spanish from Case Western Reserve University. While at Case Western, she studied abroad for a semester in Madrid, Spain and after graduating, received a fellowship to work in an orphanage in São Paulo, Brazil. Besides traveling the world, Jessica loves watching romantic comedies and international films, eating spicy ethnic food and dancing!! She is also the owner of random useless facts, which for some reason always finds a way to sneak in conversations.

Additionally, Jessica is a member of the National Association of Social Workers and the National Association of Puerto Rican/Hispanic Social Workers, and has nearly completed the requirements to attaining a NYS License as a Master Social Worker. Jessica is very excited to be working at the University of Rochester with such an enthusiastic group of colleagues and students. As an OMSA Counselor, she provides individual counseling, academic and study abroad advising, and assists with career and post-college planning. She will also be heading up the Emerging Leaders Program and workshops, so keep an eye out for more information! Her door is always open and she always has candy on her desk. Please feel free to stop by any time, call 275-6476 or e-mail her at jguzman@adm.rochester.edu.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT
Michelle Taylor-Thompson
Community Relations Manager in the Office of College Enrollment

Michelle began in this role July 1st 2006. The position was created in response to Mr. Boone’s expected departure from the Admissions office after over 20 years of service.

In making the announcement, Dean Burdick wrote - “In her new role, Michelle will serve as the point person for the many important relationships the Diversity Teams have built and sustained over the years with national organizations. These community-based organizations (CBOs) and national organizations focus on educational development activities in historically underserved communities.”

In addition to the national organizations, Michelle will also be liaison with various on-campus offices, groups and organizations such as OMSA, MSAB and Students Activities.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT — Damian Garcia, ‘07

Birth Place/Home Town: Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
Date of Birth: April 17, 1983
Major(s): African American Studies
Activities: Diversity Roundtable, Minority Student Advisory Board, Messenger Magazine, OMSA Chronicle, Black Students’ Union, Spanish and Latino Student Association, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, Meridian, Presidential Search Committee
Hobbies: Music, Dancing

Future Plans: MBA

How Have I matured at UR?
At the University of Rochester, I have grown mentally aware of many issues on a national and global scale. Thanks to the plethora of activities and events lead by our peers, staff and faculty, I am privileged to be presented with the many opportunities that allowed me to broaden my horizons and my perspectives on a variety of issues and events in life.

Favorite Quote:

Matthew 7:3-5
1. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?
2. Or how can you say to your brother, “Let me take the speck out of your eye,” when there is the log in your own eye?
3. You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.

Sondest memory:
My sophomore year, I was invited to dinner with a group of seniors during Senior Week at Dinosaur BBQ. After we were seated, we noticed that Vice-President Paul Burgett came in and was seated a couple of tables behind us. One of the seniors decided to throw a joke at Vice-President Burgett, and have the waitress deliver our check (for about 12 or 14 people) to his table. The waitress agreed to play along, so she delivered our check to his table and we had a good laugh. Vice-President Burgett, got up walked over to our table and asked if we were seniors, the majority said yes, and he ended up paying for the dinner. He paid approximately $400 for the entire table. When he noticed a nearby table of rugby team members, who witnessed the entire event, he decided to pay for their dinner as well. It really all comes down to FREE FOOD!! That is one of the things I will miss dearly about college.

Role Model:
Rev. Willie Branch, my high school mentor and advisor. He provided the role of a father figure in my life throughout high school and nurtured me into the young man I am today. All or most of what I do represents and mimicks his personality – giving, caring, loving, strong, adaptive, exemplary leader and countless other endearing qualities and traits.
What were the goals of the events your group hosted during Hispanic Heritage Month?

We believe it is very important to host events highlighting the Hispanic culture because of the lack of Hispanic representation on this campus and so many others alike. The Hispanic culture goes unnoticed throughout so many instances in every day life, and we feel that it is essential for us to promote awareness of such a presence and our heritage in our community. Hosting events that highlight important aspects of Hispanic culture also serves as a tool to fortify and unite the Hispanic Community on campus and contributes to an overall campus-environmental contentment amongst the entire student body.

~Lambda Pi Chi Sorority, Inc.

What events did students seem to enjoy most and how do these events contribute to the Hispanic experience at the University of Rochester?

The events that people enjoyed most were the ones in which they were able to share their opinion on Latino issues. We had a program called “English Only In America” and people enjoyed it a lot because they were able to become informed about the issue and share their opinions on it. This contributes to Latino awareness on our campus.

~Lambda Upsilon Lambda Fraternity, Inc.

~Sigma Lambda Upsilon Sorority, Inc.

~Omega Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.

~Sigma Lambda Upsilon Sorority, Inc.

Which Hispanic issues did your organization focus on?

This year our theme was “Our People, Our Workers: The Latino Impact on the US Economy.” With all that is occurring right now in Congress regarding immigration laws and the future of millions of undocumented immigrants, we felt it was the best topic to focus on. From September 26th to October 1st we hosted events on the four campuses we have sisters, UR, RIT, St. John Fisher College, and Nazareth College. The discussion panel we hosted focused on “Immigration or Your Nation?” We co-sponsored with the Hermanos of La Unidad Latina/Lambda Upsilon Lambda Fraternity Inc. It was a great success. We not only educated our participants on the laws that currently are in effect and those that are in the pipeline, but we also our feelings about the whole immigration situation and alternatives ways the government should deal with it.

~Spanish and Latino Students’ Association