

Transforming Leadership in University Entrepreneurship: From Assistant to Director



“I believe the program would be beneficial for anyone doing work related to university entrepreneurship centers. It will provide information that is both helpful for a current position or a new position.”

Jamey Darnell
Director, Center for Penn State Student Entrepreneurship
Penn State University

Background:

Jamey, Clinical Associate Professor of Entrepreneurship at The Pennsylvania State University, has been deeply involved in fostering student innovation as the Director of the Center for Penn State Student Entrepreneurship (CPSSE). The center facilitates the intercollege minor in Entrepreneurship and Innovation (ENTI), helping to shape future entrepreneurs across disciplines.

Why Join the Program:

Jamey joined the program with a clear goal: to transition from Assistant Director to Director of the center. With his director soon to retire, Jamey recognized the need for enhanced knowledge and leadership skills to confidently step into this role. *“I had hoped the program would give me more knowledge and confidence as a center director candidate, and it did.”*

Key Learnings:

The program provided Jamey with the tools he needed to succeed, including critical skills in stakeholder management and budgeting. His understanding of entrepreneurship centers deepened, and his ability to navigate leadership challenges grew. Most impactful, however, were the personal coaching sessions. *“Initially, I wasn’t really interested in the one-on-one coaching sessions, but these with Gups really stood out as some of my best experiences.”*

Impact on Career:

Jamey’s participation in the program was directly tied to his career advancement. Armed with new insights, he successfully applied for the director position, marking a significant milestone



in his professional development. *"I applied for the center director position and was successful in getting it."* His story serves as a powerful testament to how the program helps participants meet their career goals.

Looking Ahead:

Jamey now champions the program within his own institution, having already encouraged his new Assistant Director to enrol. *"I'm paying for her program expenses out of my budget. I've made arrangements for my assistant director to complete the program so that she will be ready to replace me when the time comes for me to move on to bigger and better things."*