

The Institute for Entrepreneurial Excellence names Victoria Hassett as Director of PantherlabWorks

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University of Pittsburgh, Institute for Entrepreneurial Excellence

PITTSBURGH – PantherlabWorks (PLW), the commercialization center of the University of Pittsburgh’s Institute for Entrepreneurial Excellence (IEE), announces the appointment of Victoria Hassett as its new director. Hassett, a Washington County native, began the role on March 1.

Hassett first joined the IEE in 2015 as a consultant with its Small Business Development Center (SBDC), helping guide local businesses and entrepreneurs in Washington, Greene, and Allegheny Counties. Her work with SBDC clients has resulted in \$2,000,000 in capital formation per year and helped her clients cumulatively support more than 300 jobs annually. Most recently, she served the Pitt SBDC as Manager of the Emerging Enterprise Program, an initiative in which she led a team of student consultants in assisting local entrepreneurs and small businesses with strategic planning and consulting services.

“The entrepreneurial spirit is an important part of our region’s history and heritage. Working with hundreds of small business owners over the last seven years has shown me just how alive and vibrant that spirit is today, and how critical our work to support them is,” said Hassett. “The opportunities for impactful product development in western PA are vast. I’m excited to lead PantherlabWorks as a center that is integral to the economic vitality of our region.”

PantherlabWorks assists startups and established business owners in the Pittsburgh region by providing product development-based consulting, educational workshops, and networking opportunities. PLW is dedicated to helping entrepreneurs turn original ideas into profitable action through activities like market research, financial planning, and securing funding to aid in the development and launch of new products. PantherlabWorks also helps existing companies identify innovative opportunities such as product and process improvements.

Prior to her time at the IEE, Hassett worked at Washington, PA’s Penn Commercial Business/Technical School with its financial aid, career services, and in its education department teams. While there, she developed curricula for technical skills majors that are still being used today. In 2018, Hassett became the youngest recipient of the Young Athena Leadership Award presented by the Power of Southpointe. She is actively involved in her community and with charities and organizations focused on tourism, education, and business development, and serves as a member of the loan review committee for the Regional Development Funding Corporation (RDFC).

“Victoria has been an instrumental team member at the IEE for many years, and we look forward to her continued professional growth and impact on small businesses as the new leader of PantherlabWorks,” said Bob Stein, Associate Vice Chancellor of Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Executive Director of the IEE.

Institute for Entrepreneurial Excellence

About the Institute for Entrepreneurial Excellence

The Institute for Entrepreneurial Excellence (IEE), part of the University of Pittsburgh's Office of Innovation & Entrepreneurship, has served businesses throughout Western Pennsylvania for more than 25 years. Offering a dynamic mix of consulting, education, and networking opportunities, the IEE strives to be an innovative leader in economic development in the region.