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## Babson to partner with The BASE to teach entrepreneurship to urban teens

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Babson College is partnering with Roxbury nonprofit The BASE to create a two-year program to teach teenagers about entrepreneurship.

The BASE has increased opportunities and access to academic programs for young urban men and women since the nonprofit started seven years ago, according to Robert Lewis Jr., president and founder of the organization, which currently works with roughly 1,200 students through a variety of programs.

“It was important for us to turn around and ensure that our young folks were going to get some of the same academic preparation readiness that young folks who could afford it get,” Lewis said in an interview.



STUART GARFIELD  
Robert Lewis Jr., the BASE

Cheryl Yaffe Kiser, executive director of The Lewis Institute for Social Innovation and The Babson Social Innovation Lab who also sits on The BASE’s board of directors, helped orchestrate the partnership.

“Youth, particularly those from underserved communities, will be increasingly called on to create the future they want for themselves and everyone around them,” Kiser said in a statement. “By working with our partners to connect the dots between passion, purpose, and action, we empower them with the skills and confidence to create the sustainable positive change they want to see in their world.”

The new initiative, which officially kicked off with an event on Feb. 13, is in partnership with the Babson College’s Lewis Institute for Social Innovation and is funded by the Cummings Foundation. Babson expects to train about 40 BASE educators and reach 150 students each year.

This spring the Babson Youth Impact Lab will create monthly entrepreneurship workshops for the teenagers, and BASE educators will learn through watching Babson instructors so they can then teach BASE students about entrepreneurship in the fall.

“BASE students are the next generation of leaders we need,” Lewis said in a statement. “They have an intuitive understanding of the world around them, are relentlessly optimistic team-players, and are oriented to take action. Our young people are growing up in a time of unprecedented uncertainty. The world is complicated, the problems we face are complex, and they will continue to be called upon to solve the challenges in our communities and around the globe.”

“Babson College has such an amazing track record of producing some of our country’s most successful business leaders, entrepreneurs, and changemakers,” Lewis added. “This partnership with the Babson Youth Impact Lab is an incredible opportunity to help shape the next generation of entrepreneurial leaders.”

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