

NEW COLLEGE CHOICES

Student-Run Label Enters Music Business

What's the best way to learn about the music business? By starting your own record label, especially if you're a student at the University of Saint Francis (USF) in Fort Wayne.

Marble Lounge Records launched during the fall 2017 semester as a student-run interdisciplinary venture of the Media Entrepreneurship Training in the Arts (META) and Music Technology programs.

During the first semester, students developed a business plan, selected a name and logo, and reviewed submitted materials from musical artists for the inaugural record. The entries were narrowed down to 10 finalists.

The winning artist was announced in early February. The five-piece Americana Indie group Rosalind & the Way from Fort Wayne will record an extended play record or album in the USF studios and have an original composition produced by Rob Mathes, an award-winning producer, arranger/composer and music director.

When selecting the finalists, students considered factors such as music composition, originality, social media presence and Franciscan values, explains Miles Fulwider, music department chair and assistant professor of music technology, and Andrea Robinson, META director.

"We had 50 solid submissions from all over," Fulwider notes. "A lot were from Fort Wayne, Ohio and this region, but we had some coming out of major music markets," including Nashville and New York.

"Ultimately, we wanted to find something



Fort Wayne's Rosalind & the Way will be the first band to have an album recorded and promoted by Marble Lounge Records, a label run by University of Saint Francis students (Ruth Yara photo).

new, something fresh, something we could bring to market that people hadn't heard."

While the Music Technology students focus on music production and recording, they also are learning real-world lessons about the music business, including working with professional musicians and watching the bottom line, Fulwider says.

"There's a whole other side of how to actually monetize this, and how to be careful of overhead, and those kinds of things that students are getting at this level, which we believe strongly will greatly prepare them for the ebbs and flows of this industry," he stresses.

The META team handles most of the business and marketing side of the label. They also are planning a launch party April 27 at the USF Performing Arts Center in

downtown Fort Wayne.

"Starting this business is obviously an entrepreneurial experience where the students have seen everything from the ground up," Robinson discloses. "They have to figure out what our expenses are, even if it is an in-kind expense from the school, like utilizing the studio. They had to figure out trademarking and copyright."

The students have also "had the opportunity to really critically analyze how to go about doing this," she continues. "We hear from employers all the time that the graduates they are employing do not have the capacity to critically think through a project. I think this hands-on experience for them is going to benefit them in ways we don't even really know yet."

RESOURCES: Miles Fulwider and Andrea Robinson, University of Saint Francis, at art.sf.edu/student-run-record-label | Marble Lounge Records at www.facebook.com/marbleloungerecords

University Seeks Direct Workforce Connections

Indiana companies interested in developing their talent pipeline and addressing skills gaps can partner with an East Coast-based university that customizes workforce development plans and makes its education programs available anytime, anyplace.

The workforce partnership division of Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) works with employers "to understand their workforce development challenges, their goals and strategies," outlines Jennifer Callicoat, SNHU director of partnerships for central Indiana. "Then we develop plans with them that may include our different programs – standard and tailored learning paths – and some of our services, such as workforce consulting and research services. We partner with them to skill up their incumbent workforce."

SNHU offers more than 200 online postsecondary education programs, from certificates to master's degrees, with many aimed at

working adults. While the accredited, nonprofit institution educates more than 3,000 students on its campus in Manchester, New Hampshire, it boasts over 80,000 online students.

Although the majority of SNHU offerings are credit-based, its College for America programs are competency-based and created specifically for working adults and their employers.

"One group where the skills gap is particularly acute is with the frontline workforce," Callicoat mentions. "This is one of the areas we are focusing on at SNHU – across the country and in Indiana."

College for America programs provide built-in flexibility with self-paced progression, and they assure that students have mastered the concepts or skills. Tuition is paid in six-month increments, so cost is based on time, not credits or classes completed.

This type of arrangement works well for students who are

balancing jobs, families and other competing demands, Callicoa points out. The average College for America student is 36 years old; 95% work more than 30 hours a week and 68% are first-generation college students.

College for America options include several nonclinical health care and business-oriented degree offerings. The health care programs are “stackable,” so students can move from a certificate to an associate’s degree and then to a bachelor’s degree, Callicoa explains.

She also highlights a relatively new program for frontline workers that focuses on customer service. “We recently launched an associate of arts degree in general studies, but with a specialization in transforming customer experience. The program grew, in part, out of

our experience in working with organizations such as Anthem and from our own workforce-related research.”

The employer partnership also doesn’t end with plan development and enrollment. “What we bring by being this B-to-B model is better insights into their investment around employee development programs at the individual employee level and at the company level,” Callicoa adds.

SNHU’s workforce partnership division is working with 11 businesses employing Indiana workers.

“When you combine the flexibility, the work-applicability and the affordability, it’s really opening doors to a lot of people who previously didn’t think that they could be college material,” she concludes.

RESOURCE: Jennifer Callicoa, Southern New Hampshire University, at www.snhu.edu/workforce-partnerships

Notre Dame Students Swap South Bend for Silicon Valley

A select group of computer science and engineering students from the University of Notre Dame traded South Bend classrooms for California office space this spring as part of the university’s Silicon Valley Semester.

“The Silicon Valley Semester program provides undergraduate students, typically in their junior year, the opportunity to spend a semester in the Bay Area with the main goal of completing an internship with a local

and professional development opportunities with coursework at the Notre Dame California facility, which is on the third floor of an AT&T building in Palo Alto.

This semester, 14 students will experience firsthand the innovation and culture of the Bay Area while interning at companies like Ople and Kyndi that develop artificial intelligence platforms; software and information technology companies Rhumbix, Wonolo and

companies in the area – Yahoo, Google, Tesla, Apple,” Taylor mentions.

They also enjoy social activities, like networking with Notre Dame alumni, and visiting cultural and tourist attractions.

To remain full time, students take at least three courses in addition to the typical 20-hour-per-week internship. Currently courses are taught by Notre Dame faculty visiting for the semester, streamed from the South Bend campus or available digitally where students work on their own time.

Next spring Notre Dame may hire local adjunct faculty, Taylor adds. He also plans to expand the program to include other majors and hopes to have 30 to 35 students. A fall semester may be added in 2019.

“I hope to attract a critical mass of students in some other majors that may have a more scientific slant, such as biology and neuroscience, to connect students with companies in the biotech sector,” he shares. “But that’s in its early stages.”

The Silicon Valley Semester is just one initiative of Notre Dame California, which is, in part, a West Coast-based resource for students who want to intern or work in the state. The office also reaches out to students who are considering the university, alumni, and companies and academic institutions that may be interested in interacting with Notre Dame faculty, research and programs.

“With the sixth largest economy in the world, and as an area of significant innovation globally, we would like the state to influence our programming, influence our research and influence our education, as well as have the university be able to influence it,” Taylor declares.



University of Notre Dame students toured Tesla Motors during the 2017 Silicon Valley Semester program, which focuses on internship opportunities in the Bay Area as well as coursework and professional development.

company in their field of interest,” explains Richard Taylor, interim director of Notre Dame California. “It provides an opportunity to get some real experiential learning to complement what they do in the classroom.”

Now in its second year, the program combines a paid, credit-bearing internship

Hytrust; and Thryve, a wellness company that sells do-it-yourself gut-testing kits and tailored supplements.

In addition to learning about companies through internships, students also visit other businesses and meet Silicon Valley industry leaders. “We will go to some of the big

RESOURCE: Richard Taylor, University of Notre Dame, at www.california.nd.edu