20 Years of Moonshot Thinking
Taking Disruption & Turning It Into Businesses

Moonshot at NACET
20th Anniversary
As a concept, the term “moonshot” entered our collective consciousness in 1961, when John F. Kennedy challenged us to envision a world in which an American astronaut could climb aboard a spacecraft, rocket hundreds of thousand of miles into the void, leave his boot prints on the moon and return safely home. No one knew how to do it, everything was theoretical and lives would literally be on the line.

WHAT IS MOONSHOT?

The term resonates with particular meaning in Flagstaff, where Moonshot at NACET is based. Every Apollo astronaut trained here, whether that involved mapping the moon with the astronomers at Lowell Observatory or studying with geological experts from the USGS or testing their equipment at Cinder Lake Crater Field. Local expertise surrounded these space pioneers, providing data and support that increased their odds of success.

When we were looking to rebrand our entrepreneurial development program in 2017, we had an epiphany. The role Flagstaff played in the Apollo moon landings was not unlike what NACET gives to business startups. We provide expertise and support to increase the odds of entrepreneurial success by taking ambitious (even radical) business concepts and surrounding them with business acumen, experts and data.

Hence, Moonshot at NACET was born.

We are unlike many business incubators across the country. We are agnostic to a specific focus or sector, in part because we are based in a smaller community and don’t have the option of being industry-niched. We are not a breeder of “unicorns” looking for a billion-dollar payday on Wall Street; we are in service to those hardworking, bootstrapping founders who plan to create jobs in their own communities and impact local economies.

And we aren’t interested in the ethereal, unrealistic status that can float around the word “entrepreneur,” as if a person must be the next Steve Jobs or Jeff Bezos to qualify. The dictionary definition of an entrepreneur? A person who organizes and operates a business or businesses, taking on greater than normal financial risks in order to do so.

It’s important to us to “democratize” entrepreneurship and eliminate barriers to would-be business founders. Our job at Moonshot is to cultivate entrepreneurs who have an idea of how to do something faster, stronger or better than what’s on the market now and teach them how to bring their ideas and company to life.

In the past 20 years, the companies started with our help have ranged from home solar financial lenders to gluten-free/non-GMO/vegan cookies to ice clamps for shoes to medical engineered devices that fight Barrett’s esophageal cancer. Along the way, we’ve also helped build entrepreneurial ecosystems in other parts of the western United States.

Finally, we are trying to solve one element of an age-old “chicken or egg” question that faces economic development everywhere: what do you focus on first – creating new companies or making sure there’s a workforce ready to support those new endeavors? Using technology as a common thread, we plan to do both.

As President and CEO of Moonshot, I am celebrating the past two decades of entrepreneurial growth and looking forward to what we can do for entrepreneurs, businesses and the communities we serve in 2020 and beyond. While our work doesn’t literally put lives on the line, it does change lives for the better.

Sincerely,

Scott Hathcock
President & CEO, Moonshot at NACET
HISTORY OF MOONSHOT AT NACET

The most revolutionary ideas are the ones that can adapt, evolve and build after their first disruptive big splash, and it is in that spirit that Moonshot at NACET has grown over the past two decades.

The initial revolutionary idea was a pretty dramatic one. A little over 20 years ago, leaders in Flagstaff made a seismic shift in how they planned to spark business development and corresponding economic vitality in the region. No longer would their efforts be solely focused on luring businesses from other cities or states to Flagstaff, or working to retain and expand those companies that were already here.

No, Flagstaff wanted a role in the creation of new businesses. To incubate the next big ideas, capitalize on the promise of the internet, and help those with an entrepreneurial spirit bring their ideas successfully to the marketplace so they could, in turn, create well-paying jobs and enhance this mountain town’s reputation for innovation.

Remember, this was the era of Y2K, and when people weren’t panicking about whether coding bugs would prevent computers from understanding that “00” meant the year 2000 and not 1900, they were looking hopefully to the approaching millennium.

A slew of local groups - from the Greater Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce to the Friends of Flagstaff’s Future - created “Vision 2020” statements about what they wanted to see in the early years of the new century. And as different as all these groups were, their lists had one thing in common - everyone wanted to see Flagstaff establish a business incubator.

And Flagstaff seemingly had all of the raw materials needed to foster home-grown talent - Northern Arizona University (NAU) and its forward-thinking, research-oriented leadership; the support of a community hungry for economic diversification; and an idyllic location full of natural beauty and necessary infrastructure.

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2020 Free Entrepreneur & Innovation Opportunities

AZ PIONEER PITCH

A “Shark Tank” inspired entrepreneur business pitch contest with free workshops open to the public. Win your share of cash prizes and scholarships, get feedback from top industry experts, and get exposure for your business or product.

For more information go to: moonshotaz.com/2020-az-pioneer-pitch

INNOVATE WASTE CHALLENGE

The challenge is to develop a business by diverting material from the landfill and converting it into a marketable product or service in Flagstaff. The winner may be awarded upwards of $15,000 to further develop the idea.

For more information go to: chooseflagstaff.com/innovatewaste

Moonshot at NACET
In 2000, the Greater Flagstaff Economic Council (GFEC) won $300,000 in state and city grants to create an incubator, and in May 2003, the doors of the Northern Arizona Technology and Business Incubator (NATBI) opened on Milton Avenue, right next door to GFEC. Soon it had its first clients - Khafoo and Aspen Communications. It was a modest beginning - some basic office space and a place for entrepreneurs to call home. Soon, as demand grew, NATBI began using labs and conference rooms at NAU to supplement the Milton offices. Ultimately, it was decided that the effort needed its own dedicated building.

In 2006, just five years after NATBI started, plans were announced for an incubator on McMillan Mesa. Not only would it have more space and facilities, it would take on a new name. When then-governor Janet Napolitano helped launch it in November 2008, the incubator was called the Northern Arizona Center for Emerging Technologies, or NACET. The name reflected what many believed would be the biggest sectors to dominate the new incubator: computer technology and the biosciences.

The “ET” in the acronym would quickly evolve to “Entrepreneurship and Technology,” to reflect the broader range of business startups that the facility attracted.

By 2015, another building would be added to the campus, an accelerator, which now meant a total of more than 38,000 square feet of office, wet lab space and light manufacturing facilities were available to business owners. It also meant that new companies now had a natural pipeline - incubator to accelerator to graduation and taking their new companies into commercial space in the region.

But being an entrepreneurial hub isn't just about having a brick-and-mortar location; it's the programs, education, mentoring and events that go on inside (and outside) those walls that makes the difference between success and failure in the startup world.

A few years ago, the leadership at NACET began re-evaluating those programs and rebranded its efforts to fit its expanded worldview. Moonshot at NACET was born. While NACET remains the campus of buildings that house new businesses, Moonshot is the intensive education that helps entrepreneurs create businesses. It takes people with bold, even disruptive, ideas and gives them the knowledge and guidance needed to transform these aspirations into ready-for-the-marketplace companies that will not just survive, but thrive.

And not only was Moonshot at NACET doing this for northern Arizona, it was expanding its Moonshot ambitions to colonies and outposts throughout the United States. Moonshot as a program did not have to just live on McMillan Mesa; it could be exported to other communities who would pay for the expertise in growing entrepreneurial eco-systems - and those funds would go right back into programs for local startups. Now in 2020, Moonshot at NACET will build on those services and programs that are bringing successful businesses into being and changing the economic landscape for several communities.

That means providing mentorship and training for new businesses and also working to cultivate new entrepreneurs and the workforce needed to support their startups, particularly for those groups who are often underrepresented.

YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS
- While Moonshot continues to be the premier institution for nurturing entrepreneurs, its focus is shifting to include even younger moonshot minds. Inspired by what team members have seen locally and around the country, Moonshot at NACET is providing in-school programs and summer camps that can be the foundation builders for tomorrow’s entrepreneurs.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS
- Moonshot is expanding the W.E. (Women Entrepreneurs) Mean Business initiative to include a quarterly women’s speaker panel series and frequent coffee meetups for Flagstaff-area entrepreneurs and women business leaders.

RURAL ENTREPRENEURS
- It is crucial to the Moonshot mission to continue to serve rural areas, but not every community has the resources to bring Moonshot personnel to their area. Therefore, it is working to create a cloud-based virtual incubator program that will allow for more scalable pricing models, for individual entrepreneurs as well as cities. This platform allows access to the Moonshot entrepreneurial curriculum and connects rural entrepreneurs to an ever-growing network of Moonshot mentors, coaches, industry sector-specific advisors and fellow entrepreneurs. Being an entrepreneur can be very isolating, so Moonshot is looking to change that reality.

WORKFORCE TRAINING
- Expansion of partnerships with organizations like Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Promineo Tech has resulted in workforce development training modules with an emphasis on targeting those who are not pursuing secondary education paths or are seeking to shift to careers that require a new skill set. This will have multiple benefits: raising the technological talent in a community, increasing access to higher paying jobs and creating a tech-savvy local labor force for companies incubated by Moonshot at NACET.

"No doubt Moonshot at NACET will continue to evolve as time passes. It’s been an eventful 20 years, full of groundbreaking events,” said Scott Hathcock, president & CEO of Moonshot at NACET. “We can only imagine what, together, we can accomplish in the next 20 years."

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**Timeline**

Mid-1990s: Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce begins researching the benefits of a business incubator.

Aug. 1999: Greater Flagstaff Economic Council (GFEC) solicits entrepreneurs, asking if they feel an incubator would help their efforts. A Flagstaff Incubator Task Force is formed.

May 2001: Northern Arizona Technology and Business Incubator (NATBI) opens on Milton Avenue, next to the GFEC offices.

Sept. 2002: Forest Angels, a local angel investor group, forms.


Oct. 2007: Incubator breaks ground under the new name Northern Arizona Center for Emerging Technologies.


Nov. 2010: Plans announced to expand incubator.

April 2012: NACET and four other agencies launch revolving door program for entrepreneurs seeking funding.

July 2013: Accelerator opens; WarAIn becomes first tenant.

Feb. 2018: First Sharks in Space, a weekend pitch event, is held.

Dec. 2018: NACET reports 78.6% combined occupancy at incubator/accelerator.

Sept. 2019: First Moonshot Award Ceremony held.

1997/1998: Numerous local organizations create “2020 Vision” reports, in which they outline changes and innovations they would like to see in Flagstaff at the start of the new century to make the city a better place by the year 2020. Creating a business incubator is a high priority in most reports.

Nov. 2000: GFEC awarded $306,000 in state and city funding to create incubator.

June 2001: NATBI accepts its first two clients: Kahtoola and Aspen Communications.


Jan. 2003: Governor Janet Napolitano highlights NATBI collaborations with Northern Arizona University at address to business community.

March 2006: Plans are announced to build an incubator on MacMillan Mesa using $2.5 million from an Economic Development Administration grant originally slated for NAU, plus $1.1 million in city funds.

June 2008: سنيرسTech announces it will move into NACET incubator after completion.

Sept. 2009: Incubator wins $200,000 federal grant to develop clean energy businesses.

Aug. 2010: Three energy-related NACET clients win $2.4 million in federal grants.

Aug. 2011: NACET and Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce launch YES Week, a summer program aimed at encouraging high school entrepreneurs.

Sept. 2012: City win $4 million federal grant to build accelerator.

Jan. 2018: Moonshot at NACET, a four-track entrepreneurial program, launches.

Oct. 2018: Moonshot collaboration with AWS to assist businesses with cloud technology makes Flagstaff first “CloudStart” city in U.S.

Flagstaff’s Moonshot Icon: CAROLYN SHOEMAKER

Not everyone can be a moonshot pioneer. But Carolyn Shoemaker proves that this type of trailblazer can come from any background and become a Moonshot at any age.

Shoemaker at one time held the record for the most comet discoveries, but had no interest in stargazing or science when she was growing up. It was only in her early 50’s after her children had left home that she began what would become a storied career in astronomy.

Born Carolyn Spellmann in Gallup, New Mexico, she was raised in a family that included father Leonard, a former homesteader who traded in his ranch for the clothing business; mother Hazel, a schoolteacher; and older brother Richard. After earning bachelor’s and master’s degrees in history and political science, Carolyn became a schoolteacher but ultimately found it unsatisfying.

Her story might have ended there, but when her brother went to the California Institute of Technology, his roommate was Gene Shoemaker, who was studying geology and later would become one of the founders of the field of planetary science. When Richard got married in 1950, Gene traveled back from Princeton, where he was earning his PhD, to be Richard’s best man. It was then that he met Carolyn. A pen pal relationship began but soon became something more; the two were married in August of the following year.

Carolyn now concentrated on being a homemaker and raising the couple’s three children. They moved around a bit before settling in Flagstaff, where Gene would establish the Center for Astrogeology at USGS. He had once wanted to be an astronaut, but couldn’t for health reasons. Now he got to do the next best thing - train astronauts who would be part of the Apollo missions.

Once the kids were grown and out of the house, Carolyn began to search for something meaningful to do as she combated “empty nest” syndrome.

Her interest in science had been sparked by her very enthusiastic husband (she reportedly told others that listening to Gene explaining geology made a subject she once considered boring rather exciting). Gene urged her to join his team, which was looking for Earth-approaching asteroids. Carolyn’s patience and fine attention to detail made her a natural for the work.

During her career, she was credited with discovering or co-discovering more than 800 asteroids and 32 comets. Between 1980 and 1994, she found almost 400 “minor planets,” and with her husband and David Levy, she discovered the Comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 in 1993. The Shoemakers were co-recipients of the Rittenhouse Medal in 1988 and the Scientists of the Year Award in 1995.

In 1997, tragedy struck. On a road not far from Alice Spring, Australia, the Shoemakers were involved in a car collision that claimed Gene’s life and seriously wounded Carolyn.

Gene Shoemaker, the man who had always wanted to be an astronaut, received his wish after death. A capsule with some of his ashes was carried to the Moon by the Lunar Prospector space probe, wrapped in a brass foil with an image of Comet Hale-Bopp. It was the last comet that Carolyn and Gene observed together.

Once Carolyn recovered from her injuries, she continued her work, often with David Levy, and continued to inspire astronomers across the globe.

Carolyn Shoemaker received an honorary doctorate from Northern Arizona University and the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration Exceptional Scientific Achievement Medal. The Hildian asteroid 2446 Carolyn, discovered by colleague Edward Bowell at Lowell Observatory, was named in her honor.

And in 2015, Moonshot at NACET launched the annual Shoemaker Award to honor entrepreneurs who show the same kind of moonshot thinking and passion as this extraordinary woman, who once believed that stargazing and geology were boring, only to become a pioneer in the field.
FROM ITS START, Flagstaff has attracted the types of thinkers and risk-takers needed to create Moonshots. In addition to the Shoe-makers, here's a sampling of some of the pioneers who have made their mark in our mountain city.

/// PERCIVAL LOWELL - It was Percival Lowell who brought astronomy to Flagstaff by choosing the small town in the Arizona Territory to become the home of his observatory. While many of his theories were ultimately disproved - such as speculation that there were canals on Mars - his legacy still looms large. His pioneer observatory site selection set the stage for the discovery of Pluto after his death, and he has been credited as the most influential popularizer of planetary science in America before Carl Sagan.

/// A.E. DOUGLASS - An assistant to Percival Lowell, astronomer A. E. Douglass was also a member of the Busy Bees. He is probably best remembered, however, for his contribution to the study of trees. Attempting to find a correlation between sunspots and climate changes on Earth, Douglass launched the scientific discipline of dendrochronology, or tree-ring dating. While people already knew that a tree trunk's rings indicated annual growth, Douglass' work correlated tree rings to determine climate conditions such as historical rainfall, dry spells, diseases, fires and insect activity. He never did prove the correlation between solar flares and climate, but his work in astronomy is well respected and there are craters on the Moon and Mars named in his honor.

/// W.L. GORE - When W.L. Gore and his wife, Genevieve, established the western hub of their manufacturing company in Flagstaff, they forever changed the community. Now the largest private company in Flagstaff, Gore is famous for a variety of innovative products ranging from medical devices to Gore-Tex fabric. Their grandson, Danny Giovale, founded Kahtoola, a designer and manufacturer of hiking crampons and other outdoor products, which was one of the first clients of the business incubator that would ultimately become Moonshot at NACET.

IMAGES COURTESY OF LOWELL OBSERVATORY

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NAU NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

NACET 20 YEARS

NAU congratulates NACET on 20 years of innovation and success.

BRING YOUR ASPIRATIONS
HOW MOONSHOT AT NACET DEVELOPS ENTREPRENEURS

Moonshot at NACET uses a wide variety of programs, educational opportunities, events, competitions and mentorships to nurture entrepreneurs whose ambitious, disruptive innovations have strong commercial promise.

The program does not take on clients unless it is believed that within the first year of working with them, Moonshot will be able to provide them at least one of the “3 Cs” needed to create a viable business around a Moonshot idea: client, capital or contacts that will help a business scale and reach the next level.

Moonshot Pioneer Academy, a multi-track program, is specifically designed for subject matter experts with exciting business ideas, but no clear path to market.

Instructors and mentors guide participants through a proven process to validate their idea and build it into a scalable business. Topics covered include: creating infrastructure, assembling a team and pitching for funding.

Companies are placed in the track that best fits the stage of their business, with professionals meeting them where they are in the startup process. But it can also take new founders as well as serial entrepreneurs through the entire business lifecycle - including ideation, product development and beta testing, moving to market and scaling for growth.

For those in the first stages, typically the ideation phase of their business, Moonshot’s goal is to help entrepreneurs determine if their solution is a viable business idea - that it solves a problem for a large enough market and that enough buyers in that market agree the client’s solution is worth buying.

Clients discover the building blocks of an investment-worthy business and begin assembling them into a compelling story.

Instructors and mentors help clients think through the fundamental questions every investor will ask about the new business - what is the problem it addresses, what is their solution, the potential market size, their business model and value proposition, and even whether the goal is to run the business or build it and exit so they can move on to their next entrepreneurial idea.

Those entrepreneurs who have completed these steps, or come into Moonshot with many of those “building blocks” already mastered, can shift into the next phase of business development as they prepare to launch.

This is the nuts and bolts of how a company goes about its day-to-day business, and is built around developing six core areas for a new company: strategy, sales, marketing, finance, research and development, and operations. The goal of Moonshot is to help solidify the company’s foundations so it delivers on the value proposition the entrepreneur has designed.

After launching, companies move beyond the basics and determine how to scale their startups. Then the whole process comes full circle, with the students becoming the teachers and mentoring other startups so they can get off the ground.

Moonshot’s ability to assist new companies reached an even higher level in 2018, when it began a collaboration with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to help new businesses deploy cloud services that will reduce costs, drive efficiencies, increase innovation and rocket startup growth. The collaboration made Flagstaff the first “CloudStart City” in the United States, but the services are available to any Moonshot client, including those outside of northern Arizona.

This on-demand delivery of information technology via the internet gives new businesses services ranging from storage and database needs to analytics, machine learning and more. Think of it as a virtual library where businesses can check out and use services as necessary without long-term contracts or substantial financial burdens. Originally designed to assist whole countries in accelerating their digital economies, AWS CloudStart is now available to Moonshot clients to assist them with quickly bringing their ideas to the marketplace.

In addition to education and services, this incubation program offers businesses that need affordable office, wet lab and/or light manufacturing space at its beautiful Northern Arizona Center for Entrepreneurship and Technology campus in Flagstaff. With 38,000-square-feet housed in two buildings, this space gives local businesses a pipeline - from an incubator to an accelerator and finally graduating to a commercial space in the region.

Throughout the year, Moonshot at NACET hosts numerous workshops, bootcamps, speaker series and other events to celebrate entrepreneurs or encourage those who might be dreaming of starting their own innovative businesses. These events help building entrepreneurs with the building blocks of developing a business, attracting financing and going to market.

Part of building entrepreneurs is celebrating their achievements. In 2019, the first Moonshot Awards honored graduates, current clients and emerging entrepreneurs. The 2019 Carolyn Shoemaker Award was presented to Dan Kasprzyk of Sympyle Surgical and POBA Medical.
Almost 49% of businesses in the United States are owned by women, and female entrepreneurship is at an all-time high. Yet there are substantial hurdles that women face at a greater rate than their male counterparts.

First of all is lack of funding. Studies show that men are able to raise $100,000 toward a new business at twice the rate of women, and venture capitalists have long skewed their investment dollars toward those companies owned by men.

But lack of a support system and mentorship also rank high as hurdles to be overcome. That's why Moonshot at NACET focuses on female entrepreneurs and women business leaders and ways to nurture them, their businesses and their careers.

In 2019, Moonshot welcomed its first all-female Track 1 cohort of businesses and began hosting events that were designed with women in mind under the umbrella of W.E. (Women Entrepreneurs) Mean Business.

Recent topics at women’s speaker panels included addressing your fears (featuring women who had brought their new products onto the “Shark Tank” television program), women in nonprofit leadership roles, and women who have changed careers to become entrepreneurs.

In 2019, Moonshot also launched W.E. Mean Business get-togethers for women entrepreneurs and business leaders, a series of productive and problem-solving discussions encouraging women to support each other.

The roster at Moonshot is filled with both clients and mentors/staff members who have their own businesses or are serial entrepreneurs:

Holly Jalesky started her brand, Grubcan, when she realized that most bear-resistant food canisters could not actually fit inside a hiker’s pack. Her patented design also includes a special latch that is easy for humans to open, but keeps the bears out. The product won kudos not only from backpackers, but also the executive buying team at REI—a nationally recognized outdoor goods retailer.

Katherine Romero is the co-founder of MAKA Digital, which partners with in-house marketing teams, retail teams, and PR teams to help create and execute digital marketing strategies. As the company’s website states: “Our sweet spot is combining consumer psychology and insights with content and data to create meaningful relationships between brands and consumers that build brands for the long term.”

Debbie K. Thomas’s journey to becoming an alternative health entrepreneur began seven years ago when she was diagnosed with Stage 3 cancer on the side of her head. After ultimately creating and implementing her own nine-month protocol to treat herself, she was cancer-free. Her experience motivated Thomas to go back to school and study naturopathic medicine and further investigate the beneficial properties of cannabidiol (CBD) oil, which had been a big part of her treatment protocol. She began mixing skin creams with CBD in her kitchen and selling them.

Entrepreneur-in-Residence Kiersten Hathcock left a marketing career with A&E and The History Channel in 2003 to build an internationally known furniture brand out of her 400-square-foot garage. After four years of crafting and selling more than 300 kids’ furniture items, Kiersten braved ABC’s “Shark Tank” and won an investment deal. Today, her Mod Mom Furniture line is produced in Colorado and worldwide. In addition to helping entrepreneurs grow their businesses, traveling the country as a keynote speaker and mentor, and designing marketing collateral for Moonshot, Kiersten is developing a Mod Mom co-branded line of children’s furniture with the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, a cultural and educational nonprofit institution established in 1940 by the American design and architecture icon.

When the Forbes Finance Council, an invitation-only community for executives in accounting, financial planning, wealth and asset management, and investment, invited Amanda Kristinat to join their ranks, they noted not only her excellence in accounting and financial planning, but her personal and professional achievement. Amanda is the Vice President for Operations and Finances at Moonshot at NACET, but she is also a serial entrepreneur. Over the years, she has founded (and in some cases continues to run) Silver Lining Business Consulting, The Change Collective, Fry Box Company and PersonalTea Catering.

Diana White, CEO of Chandler Innovations, moved to Arizona to pursue a job opportunity. Her career began at a young age in retail and she quickly became fascinated with the consumer mindset and customer service. Diana started her own consulting firm in 2015 in Flagstaff after discovering a need in the small business community for someone willing to help entrepreneurs learn business acumen and how to develop a successful business. That led to a position leading the local Small Business Development Center and working closely with Moonshot at NACET. In 2019, she was tapped to lead the Chandler entrepreneurial development program, which is powered by Moonshot at NACET.
MOONSHOT COLONIES & OUTPOSTS

How Moonshot at NACET is Expanding Its Expertise

Since it started at the turn of this century, Moonshot at NACET has learned a thing or two about creating and igniting the entrepreneurial spirit within cities, municipalities and rural communities. After its success in Flagstaff, other cities and economic development groups started reaching out to discover how Moonshot did what it did.

This led to the creation of a LAUNCHPAD program to help other cities ignite startups and create a sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystem by:

- Providing a combination of one-on-one and cohort training and educational programs to increase exposure and understanding of good business practices.
- Growing a base of successful entrepreneurs and business owners willing and able to mentor and advise the next group of new and emerging entrepreneurs.
- Establishing self-sufficient and sustainable startup ecosystems rooted in local community through public events, classes and a media campaign to allow these efforts to be voiced throughout the community.

In addition to bringing together experts, investors, entrepreneurs and local leaders, LAUNCHPAD provides customized educational programs and events for the region, including assessment of business market gaps and opportunities; multi-day business training and boot camps; networking opportunities for stakeholders; one-on-one consulting and mentorship; and events for high schools by seasoned startup founders to instill the spirit of entrepreneurship early.

Moonshot has powered more extensive programs in Lewis County, Washington; Henderson, Nevada; and Chandler, Arizona, winning praise from economic development departments and entrepreneurs in all three cities.

Tom Mueller and Megan Collins of Solar LED Safety Products in Henderson said the program helped them advance their company, which creates bright, more visible safety vests. Solar LED won a startup pitch contest put on by Moonshot in 2018. Before the event, Moonshot offered classes on how entrepreneurs should develop their value proposition and how to present their business to investors.

“A year after the event they still supported the participants of the Henderson ‘Start Tank’ by creating alumni meetings to see how we had progressed,” Collins said. “They have assisted with product development, intellectual property lawyer questions, financing options and marketing.”

And in Chandler, dozens of businesses have begun due to the Chandler Innovations program sponsored by the City of Chandler and powered by Moonshot at NACET.

In addition to these more extensive programs, Moonshot at NACET has held Arizona Pioneer Pitch tours sponsored by APS that helped bring entrepreneur pitch events to numerous communities in the state. Innovators from Camp Verde, Clarkdale, Cottonwood, Holbrook, Payson, Pinetop, Prescott, Page, Sedona, Show Low, Tucson, Williams, Winslow, Apache and Navajo Counties have made pitches in these events.

“We have had a number of successes as a result of the continued leadership and program development Moonshot has provided,” said Matt Matayoshi, Executive Director of the Lewis Economic Development Council. He added that the program had inspired “a number of entrepreneurs to follow their dreams to start up or scale up their business.”

Flagstaff was ready for its close-up when Joe Mullings decided to take his passion for medical device technology and the entrepreneurial spirit and turn it into the streaming web-based docuseries TrueFuture.tv.

The entire first season of “mini-sodes” debuted in September 2019 at the Orpheum Theater in Flagstaff.

This groundbreaking docuseries shows cutting-edge medical technology and the creators of companies that are developing life-saving tech. Think Anthony Bourdain’s “No Reservations,” but for the bioscience sector.

In addition to profiling companies and inventors, the show also examines the communities where they live and work, showing a synergy between natural beauty, artistic expression and the sciences. It made Flagstaff a natural to profile.

“Flagstaff seems to be this magnet for serendipity,” Mullings noted in one of the episodes.

In the six-episode arc based in Flagstaff, Mullings looked at W.L. Gore and Machine Solutions, but also spent a lot of screen time on startups like POBA Medical (winner of Moonshot at NACET’s first Shoemaker Award) and Wanderlust Brewing.

In subsequent seasons, the show has featured communities like Wynwood, just north of Miami, and Asburg, Germany - places known both for their high tech medical companies and rich community cultures.
Dream big
We got you

We support your entrepreneurial spirit and want you to know that realizing your biggest dreams doesn’t have to include experiencing your biggest failures along the way.

Aspey Watkins & Diesel PLLC
Business – Intellectual Property
928-774-1478 awdlaw.com
Since opening its doors as the Northern Arizona Business and Technology Incubator 20 years ago, Flagstaff’s entrepreneurial development program has served scores of clients in numerous sectors. Taking advantage of a long lineage of innovation and Northern Arizona University, an institution dedicated to research as well as higher education, the region’s entrepreneurial efforts have impacted numerous sectors.

Below is a sampling of startups who are either current clients or graduates that have been nurtured through the region’s entrepreneurship program.

**Bioscience**

**Symple Surgical (graduate)** - One of Moonshot at NACET’s first business incubator and accelerator clients, Symple Surgical, Inc., graduated from Moonshot last year. The medical device company, which is developing novel therapeutic technologies using controlled microwave ablation to treat Barrett’s esophagus, received business innovation grants from the National Institutes of Health and angel investment. These funds allowed the company to move into a West Shamrock Boulevard location that also quadrupled the company’s space from 1,800 to 7,200 square feet. Daniel J. Kasprzyk, President and CEO, who co-founded the company in 2012 and also founded another bioscience company, POBA Medical, was awarded the inaugural Shoemaker Award at the first Moonshot Awards gala.

**Axolotl Biologix (current)** - Axolotl Biologix is a developer of innovative regenerative human cell and tissue medical technologies for burn, surgical, trauma and chronic wounds. It became part of Moonshot at NACET in 2007 when it acquired Protein Genomics, a Moonshot client. Under the agreement, Axolotl Biologix acquired Protein Genomics’ research laboratory, housed at NACET. This augmented Axolotl’s research and development capabilities, driving the discovery of new regenerative technology that can be brought to market.

**Light Manufacturing**

**Kahtoola (graduate)** - Danny Giovale, grandson to the couple who founded W.L. Gore, was inspired by his own experiences mountain climbing to found Kahtoola, a designer and manufacturer of hiking crampons and other outdoor products. Kahtoola, one of the first two clients of the incubator when it started in 2002, wanted to create a product that would get people directly to where they want to go with a new level of security and performance. The word the company chose to represent it means “directly” in Tibetan.

**Love You Foods (graduate)** - Good fat is hard to find. At least, that’s what Love You Foods founders Ross and Kara Taylor discovered every time they had to travel for work or vacations. The couple, both adherents to low-carb/high-fat diets, could never find easy-to-carry portions of things like nut butters and coconut oil for their trips. The couple knew there must be a market for properly packaged portable fats and they were right. Just two years after Love You Foods began as a 400-square-foot startup at NACET, they moved into a facility 10 times that size on South Plaza Way.

**Mother Road Brewing (graduate)** - While driving on a dark stretch of two-lane road one night, Michael and Alissa Marques thought about how to better live their creed of “finding joy in adventure,” and came up with a plan that would combine their passion for craft beer, travel and living in Arizona. Almost 10 years ago they founded Mother Road Brewery, borrowing the name from John Steinbeck’s nickname for Route 66. Several years and many award later, the company opened a second location allowing them to increase their annual production from about 4,400 barrels of beer to a goal of 20,000 barrels in 2020.

**Canyon Coolers (graduate)** - Jason Costello was first introduced to what was then known as Galaxy Coolers as a river runner living in Flagstaff. He was impressed by the Durango, Colorado-made product. When the company encountered fiscal troubles, Costello purchased it, gave it a new name and brought it to Flagstaff. The coolers made by the company are known as some of the toughest and highest performing coolers in the industry. Growth has been so rapid in recent years that the company has moved four times in the past decade in order to have more space and increase production.

**Technology**

**Warzin (graduate)** - An innovative training program that certifies veterans and others in the lucrative field of non-destructive testing (NDT), Warzin was the first Moonshot client to occupy the accelerator at NACET when it opened in October 2015. Within three years, the company (the name of which stands for Warrior to Inspector) had grown sufficiently in students and space demands that it graduated to a 6,000-square-foot facility in Bellemont in 2019. The company, founded by Kenny Greene, teaches students, primarily veterans transitioning into civilian life, the basics of NDT, which uses numerous techniques to evaluate the properties of materials and components without damaging what is being tested. NDT methods have applications that range from making sure a ski resort chairlift is safe to estimating how much pressure a pipeline can withstand. The most common NDT jobs are in the energy sector, with technicians testing pipeline integrity.
GREEN BUSINESSES

Mosaic (graduate). - Now based in Oakland, California, Mosaic - a company that finances green projects - has been referred to as the "Kickstarter of Solar." When it was originally founded in Flagstaff, its focus was on crowdsourcing for commercial solar projects, but since 2014, it has shifted its focus toward residential projects. Working with leading solar and home improvement companies across the nation, it offers affordable financing for solar energy systems, batteries and efficient home improvements. Since 2012, Mosaic has helped about 300,000 households go solar with its financing products and originated about $3 billion in loans. In late 2019, the company marked a return to Arizona by opening an office in Phoenix.

ProGrowTech (current). ProGrowTech helps commercial horticulture and food production operations increase profitability, yield and energy efficiency with industry-leading LED lighting systems. The company's product replaces outdated industry standbys, like high pressure sodium (HPS) lights. The ProGrow product also outpaces other LED lights on the market today because its fixtures offer a fuller light spectrum ranging from blue/cool white all the way to far red, including substantial midrange. The company was cited at the first ever Moonshot Awards last year as a "rising entrepreneur to watch."

Tepa Burger (graduate). Founded in 2004, the Tepa Burger is a plant protein burger manufactured by Local Alternative Inc. in Flagstaff. Owned and operated by founder Jonathan Netzky, the company creates vegetarian protein products that are sourced locally and handmade in small batches. The company was founded on the belief that knowing where food comes from and maintaining a respectful and accountable relationship with producers and farmers is of utmost importance. In Flagstaff, the burger is featured at restaurants like Diablo Burger, Satchmos, The Modern Grove, Mama Burger and even Flagstaff Medical Center.

TOURISM

Atlas Guides (current). For long-distance hikers, it can be a difficult choice. Do you bring a heavy, bulky trail guidebook with you on your hike, or do you rely on a smartphone navigation tool, which often lacks comprehensive information and is subject to mobile or internet connectivity? Atlas Guides, which won Moonshot at NACET's first "Pioneer Pitch" event in 2018, solved the dilemma with a series of apps that provide extensive information on dozens of the world's most popular trails - and work offline after initial setup. Since that time it has continued to expand the number of hiking trails it features on its app and added long distance biking trails. Last year it was cited as a "rising entrepreneur to watch" at the first ever Moonshot Awards.

Hypo2 (current). For more than a decade Hypo2 Sport has been helping hundreds of competitors gain an edge in the Olympics Games through high-altitude training programs for elite athletes. As part of Moonshot at NACET, the company expanded its services to both those with hopes of Olympic Gold and the general public. One of the largest clients in the accelerator, Hypo2 offers a wide range of services there, including weight training, chiropractic services, sports psychology and blood testing.

Moonshot Clients

Aerolabs
Aneuvus
Aptulum
Armored Outdoor Gear
Atlas Guide
Axolotl Biologix
BioFlow/Amnyon Systems Development
Engineering Services
Drinking Horn Meadery
Grubcan

From an innovator in pet care to an innovator in entrepreneurship –

Congratulations to NACET on 20 years of big ideas and mentorship, from your friends at Purina.

Purina
We have had a number of successes as a result of the continued leadership and program development Moonshot has provided.

MATT MATAYOSHI
Executive Director, Lewis (County)
Economic Development Council

You can be a fantastic engineer but have difficulties with business planning. That’s where business incubation and entrepreneurial development programs like Chandler Innovations come in. It benefits our community economically and furthers our reputation as a city uniquely positioned to grow innovative new companies.

MICAH MIRANDA
Economic Development Director,
City of Chandler
Moonshot at NACET is focused on providing local workforce development opportunities. In addition to working with entrepreneurs, we will enable individuals through education and training initiatives in technology, hospitality and other skills to meet the employment needs of current and future business and industry, helping to maintain a sustainable economic development environment and attracting more startups and companies to hire local talent.

TODD DAVIS
Chairman of Moonshot at NACET Board of Directors

They have assisted with product development, IP (intellectual property) lawyer questions, financing options and marketing. They are a true incubator for small businesses and entrepreneurs.

MEGAN COLLINS AND
TOM MUELLER
Solar LED Safety

Moonshot at NACET in partnership with the City of Flagstaff is retooling our region to diverse economic growth by harnessing the power of innovators and risk takers and turning their ideas into viable and scalable businesses.

Learn more at moonshotaz.com. Pictures courtesy of Lowell Observatory and USGS.
 THAT COMPANY YOU WANT TO LAUNCH—WE HAVE THE SPACE AND RESOURCES YOU NEED.

Moonshot

TO APPLY FOR THE MOONSHOT PROGRAM OR LEASE SPACE, CONTACT INFO@MOONSHOTAZ.COM OR VISIT MOONSHOTAZ.COM.