One of the goals of a Middlebury education is to encourage students to think independently and creatively. Programs on Creativity and Innovation in the Liberal Arts (PCI) foster creativity and innovation by helping students to pursue challenging independent projects of their own design.

Launched by President Ronald D. Liebowitz in the spring of 2007, PCI aims to make intellectual risk-taking and creative problem-solving second-nature to Middlebury students and part of a portfolio of critical skills that will serve them throughout their lives.

The range of student interests and projects is extraordinary - artistic work like the “Brain in Light” that married science and art; the creation of Brighter Planet, which became the largest “green” credit card program in the country; a micro-hydroelectricity project that brought electricity to a village in Nepal for the first time; and the creation of a garden in the Bronx in partnership with elementary school students.

Over the past five years, more than 800 students have taken advantage of the opportunities available to them through the programs that make up PCI.
**Programs Supported Through PCI**

**Projects and Presentations at Old Stone Mill, the Annex, and 51 Main**

The Old Stone Mill (OSM) sits on the banks of Otter Creek in downtown Middlebury. In 2008, the OSM and the Annex were transformed into laboratories for student creativity. The spaces are available to students - individuals or groups - who want to launch a new organization, do artistic work, develop a business plan, or pursue any other kind of creative initiative. A six-member student advisory board runs the OSM with three objectives: (1) engage the student body as a whole to help identify and encourage tenant applications; (2) coordinate the use and management of the OSM and OSM Annex to serve the creative objectives of the tenants; and (3) foster a student culture that appreciates the challenges of supporting innovation. 51 Main at the Bridge is also used for student presentations and shows.

**Davis Projects for Peace**

In its sixth year, this program honors Kathryn Wasserman Davis, an international philanthropist who was interested in finding new ways to advance world peace. Undergraduate students at more than 90 college campuses across the United States are eligible to design and submit proposals that address the goal of improving the prospects for peace in the 21st century. The top submissions from participating campuses, including at least one from Middlebury, receive funding of $10,000 from Mrs. Davis to initiate summer projects anywhere in the world.

**Middlebury Entrepreneurs**

Middlebury Entrepreneurs was launched as a club in 2005 and became a student-led winter-term course in 2007. Its missions is to provide student entrepreneurs with a vehicle for developing their ideas for a new business or local organization. Through a series of assignments, class discussions, and mentoring from experienced local professionals, the students are introduced to valuable resources that will form a strong platform for launching their businesses.

**Midd Venture Community**

The Midd Venture Community was launched in the fall of 2011 to provide opportunities for students and alumni to connect and discuss entrepreneurship and venture opportunities. The club's activities include a speaker series, demo days, workshops, and networking events.

**The Hunt**

The Hunt is a student-run weeklong competition/scavenger hunt that takes place during Middlebury's winter term. Teams of students have to answer questions, solve problems, and accomplish tasks to score points in the competitions. The challenges call on historical, theoretical, mathematical, and practical knowledge; creative thinking; strong organizational skills; boundless energy and enthusiasm; and an appreciation of the absurd. Particularly imaginative solutions often win extra points.

**MiddChallenge**

MiddChallenge gives students an opportunity to pursue an idea for a business or a project or idea in the area of education, outreach and policy, or the arts. Students compete for funding that will allow them to spend the summer incubating their idea. Applicants submit their ideas to a student-run committee, and proposals are chosen in each area to present to a selection panel made up of College alumni, faculty, and friends.

**TEDxMiddlebury**

TED (Technology, Entertainment, and Design) conducts conferences around the world to disseminate “ideas worth spreading.” TED grants licenses to organizations or institutions like Middlebury to organize their own TEDx events. Middlebury students hosted the first TEDxMiddlebury Conference in October of 2010. On November 9, 2013, TEDxMiddlebury will present “Research, Rethink, Rebuild.”

**MiddSTART**

MiddSTART is a microphilanthropy site, launched in 2011, that helps students to find funding they need to explore their interests through creative, entrepreneurial, and innovative projects. It enables alumni and friends to combine a number of gifts to support a project that particularly appeals to them, to follow the progress of the project through the website. In order to be posted on MiddSTART, a project has to be initiated, designed, and carried out entirely by students. Visit go/middstart to see current projects.

**SAVE THE DATE!**

118 South Main St. Open House
The green house behind the Davis Family Library
Thursday, September 19th
4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
To learn more about PCI, contact director Elizabeth H. Robinson ’84 at (802)-443-5265, robinson@middlebury.edu, or at 118 South Main St., Middlebury, VT 05753.

PCI works alongside the Center for Social Entrepreneurship, MiddCore, and Community Engagement. We strongly encourage you to find out more about these fantastic and related programs in their respective folders!

For more information on PCI's programs, please visit the following websites:

http://www.middlebury.edu/studentlife/innovation/OSM
http://www.davisprojectsforpeace.org
http://www.middventures.com
http://www.middlebury.edu/studentlife/innovation/middleburyentrepreneurs
http://www.middlebury.edu/studentlife/innovation/middchallenge
http://sites.middlebury.edu/tedx/
http://middstart.middlebury.edu