



DISTRICT HALL **PROVIDENCE**

2020 YEAR IN REVIEW

DISTRICTHALLPROVIDENCE.ORG

DEMOCRATIZING INNOVATION BY CULTIVATING RELATIONSHIPS AND PROVIDING RESOURCES FOR ANYONE TO SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCH AND GROW A BUSINESS



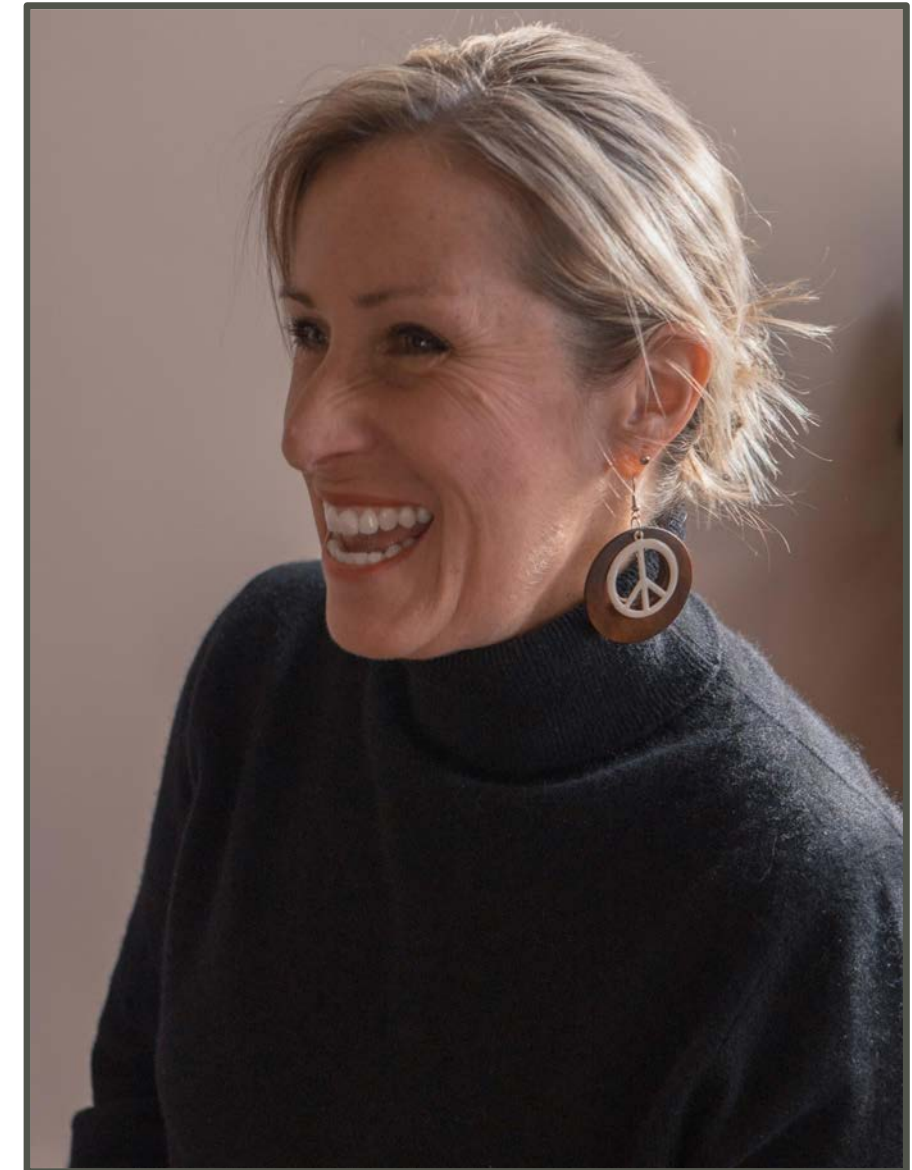
YEAR IN REVIEW

It's no secret that 2020 brought many challenges to our role as an anchor connecting businesses, entrepreneurs, and innovators with resources and stronger networks. COVID-19 forced the closure of District Hall for a majority of the year and led to a 90% drop in projected revenue. Our signature program, Venture Café Thursday Gathering, pivoted to a virtual experience in a week.

This transition, however, was embraced as an opportunity to expand our reach and impact. We leveraged partnerships to increase programming by 250% while ensuring it was increasingly diverse and timely.

In partnership with the RI Commerce Corporation we launched the Small Business Support Program enhancing innovation within the small business community. In the first 8 months, the program has engaged over 800 businesses. In addition, we transformed our LAUNCH! Pre-Accelerator into ReLAUNCH!, a digital transformation accelerator for existing small businesses impacted by COVID-19. With such high interest, the first cohort featured 36 businesses, 40% more than projected.

As we look to 2021, District Hall & Venture Café Providence is excited to integrate its newest programs into its impact model, increasing the reach of Small Business Support and ReLAUNCH!. And although a vaccine appears on the horizon, the virtual nature of our connective programming is here to stay with a growing digital asset library and a vision for hybrid (in-person and virtual) programs.



CONNECTING INNOVATORS

We offer thought leaders, corporate innovators, entrepreneurs, and small business owners unmatched **opportunities to build relationships and catalyze innovation** in and around the Rhode Island ecosystem.

VENTURE CAFE THURSDAY GATHERING

Weekly gathering of networking, office hours, & discussions on innovation and entrepreneurship.

POP UP WORKSHOPS

Throughout the week we host additional programming for small businesses and several event series' targeting sectors pivotal to the RI economy.

SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

Free 1-1 advising with industry experts in a variety of sectors paired with small businesses.

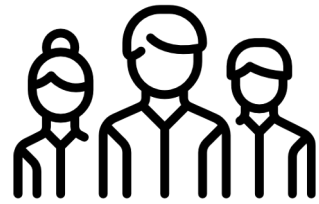
ReLAUNCH!

8-session digital transformation workshop series for small businesses looking to quickly adapt, innovation, and grow.

PUBLIC LOUNGE, PRIVATE MEETING, & EVENT SPACE

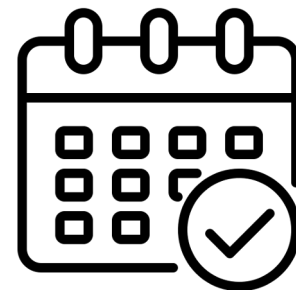
Free public workspace, open weekdays for entrepreneurs & innovators to work and connect. State-of-the-art facilities, A/V, a central location, and virtual capabilities to host a wide variety of meetings and events.

OUR REACH: 2020



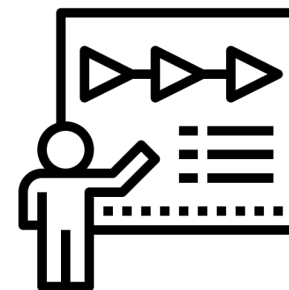
VISITS

6732



EVENTS

142



SESSIONS

270



EMAIL

5090



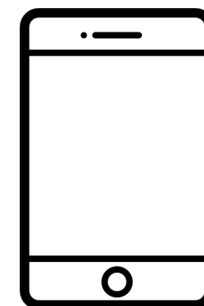
MENTOR SESSIONS

800



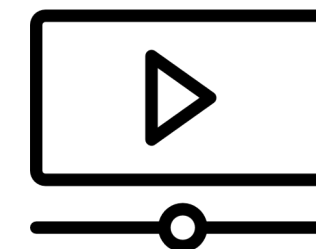
WEB TRAFFIC

5000/mo



FOLLOWERS

5000



VIEWS/LISTENS

7000

HIGHLIGHTS

2.5x capacity/capability with virtual programming

400% attendance growth from 2019

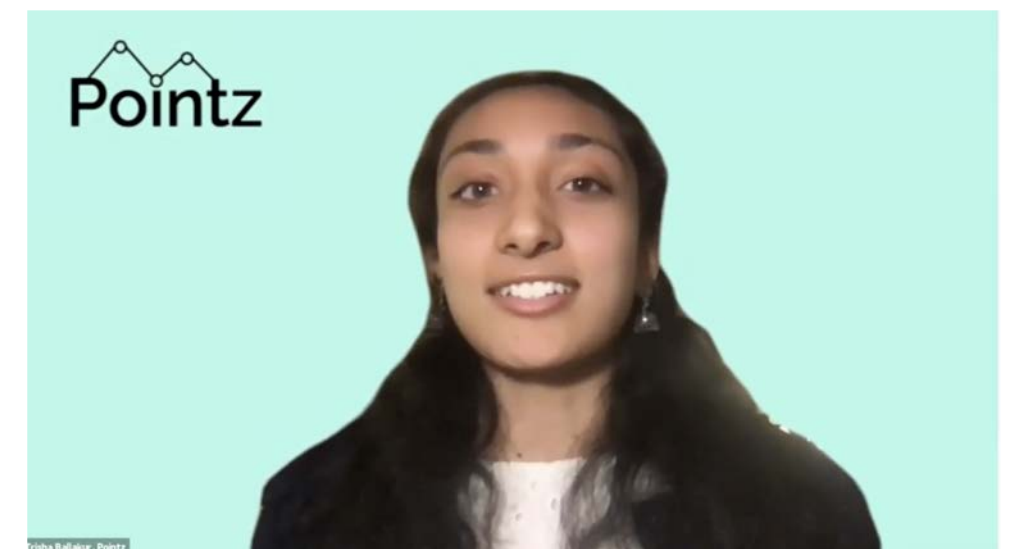
Avg event attendance: 50

Top topics: Life Sciences, Blue Economy, Business Services, Social Impact, & Design

30% MoM web growth

Digital content library with over 200 videos and 40 podcasts

Engaging small business sector through the Small Business Support and ReLAUNCH



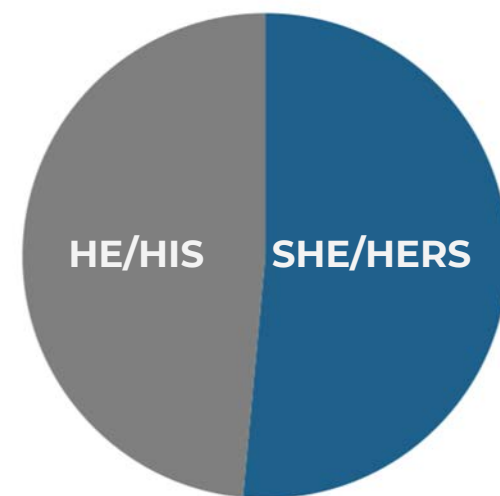
THURSDAY GATHERING & OTHER PROGRAMS

- Due to COVID-19, we leveraged the opportunity to host events in the virtual space by increasing programming by 250%.
- 145 events, 237 sessions, 600 presenters, and over 6,000 attendees.
- Thursday Gathering shift to sector specific conferences with topics including Life Sciences, Blue Economy, Business Services, Social Impact, & Design
- Program partners include: NEMIC, RI-Bio, RIHub, SEG, RIIC, URI Coastal Resources Center, Growthlab, Rhode Island Business Competition and others.
- 34% of presenters identified as people of color
- 51% of presenters identified as women

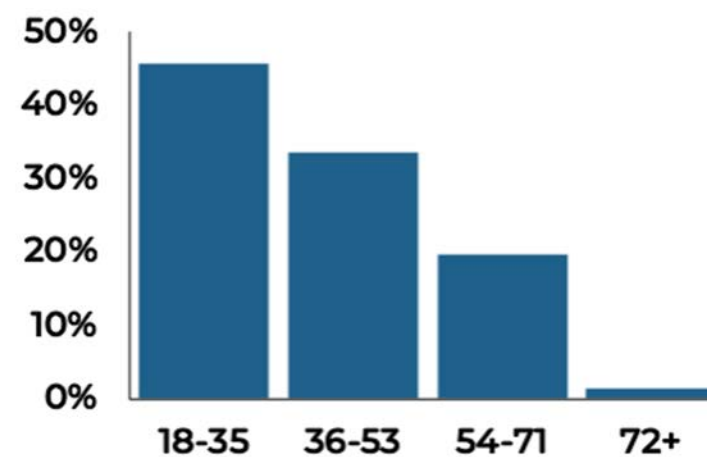


PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

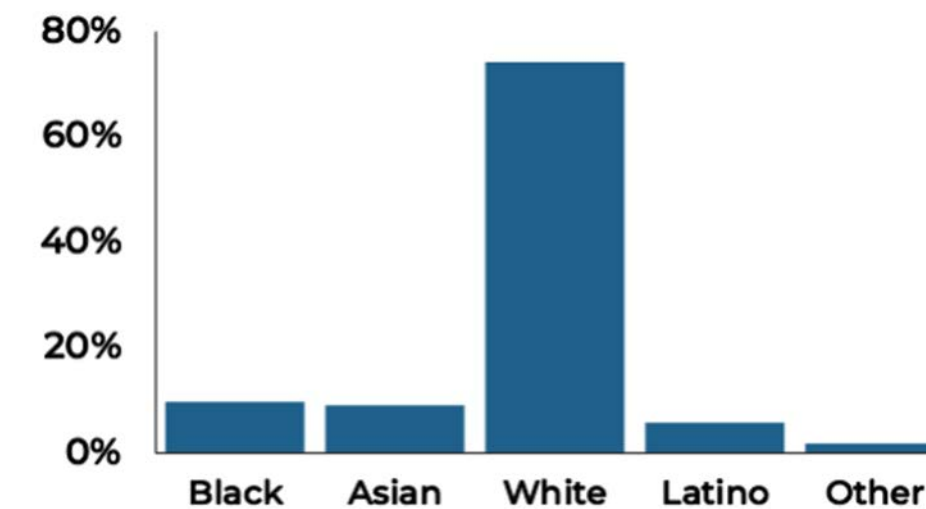
GENDER IDENTIFICATION



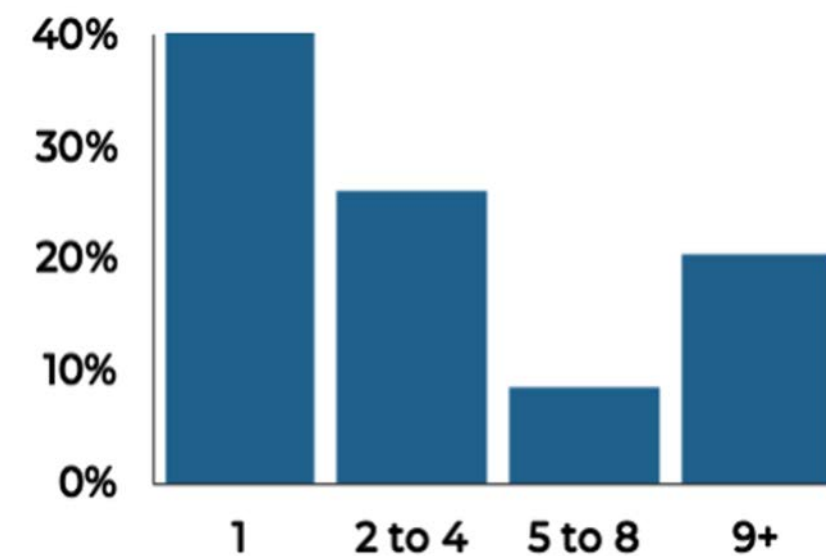
VISITOR AGE



VISITOR BACKGROUND



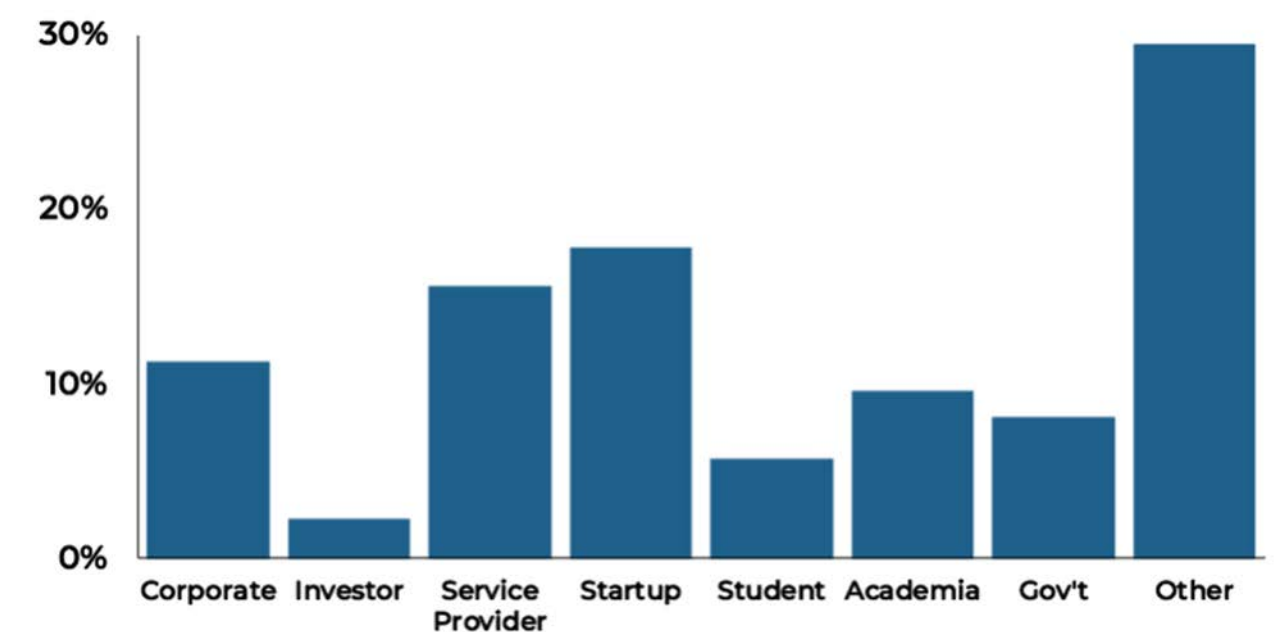
VISITS COUNT



TOP INDUSTRIES VISITING

Environment
Education
Communication
Science
Design
Software
Energy
Wellness
Finance

ROLE IN INNOVATION COMMUNITY



SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

Free 1-1 advising for small businesses aimed at growing one’s business through digital transformation in partnership with RI Commerce Corporation.

BUSINESS PARTICIPATION

BUSINESSES ENGAGED	1000+
CONCIERGE MEETINGS	445
1-1 SESSIONS BOOKED	800
NET PROMOTER SCORE	76

VOLUNTEER

# OF VOLUNTEERS	63
MENTOR HOURS	800
VOLUNTEER HOURS	4000
STAFF HOURS	3000

TOP SUPPORT TOPICS

E-COMMERCE	45%
MARKETING	31%
TECH SUPPORT	13%
BUSINESS CONTINUITY	7%
FOOD & BEV	3%

With their guidance and knowledge I was able to build a website, implement online shopping, promote my business via social media, launch a YouTube channel, develop a business plan for the future, and start selling my coffee in a new way...I’ve made a contact, a resource, and a friend all due to the efforts of the Venture Cafe.

- [Kerri Gaffett, Block Island Coffee](#)

Prior to our meeting, I was totally overwhelmed with the thought of Facebook advertising and now, very manageable as a result of your very helpful suggestions. Now, actually looking forward to Facebook advertising.

Thank you for your time and expertise - extremely valuable for me!

- *Barbara Shea, Preservation Society of Newport County*

We have already seen a huge difference since we went [to Small Business Tech Support] and did SEO [training]. 38 new clients this month!

- *Lauren Coutu, MS Psychotherapy*



ReLAUNCH! DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ACCELERATOR

- 8-part educational workshop series on digital transformation for small businesses.
- Adapted from Innovation Studio's successful LAUNCH! program
- Cohort 1: Nov-Dec, 2020
- 36 Applicants, 40% higher than projected.
- 12 additional free public workshops to supplement ReLaunch program.
- Shift SMBs from sustenance mode to growth mode by adopting digital technology and marketing tools.
- Long term possibility local, industry specific programming, e.g., Blue-Green Economy, Food, Retail, Tourism, etc.

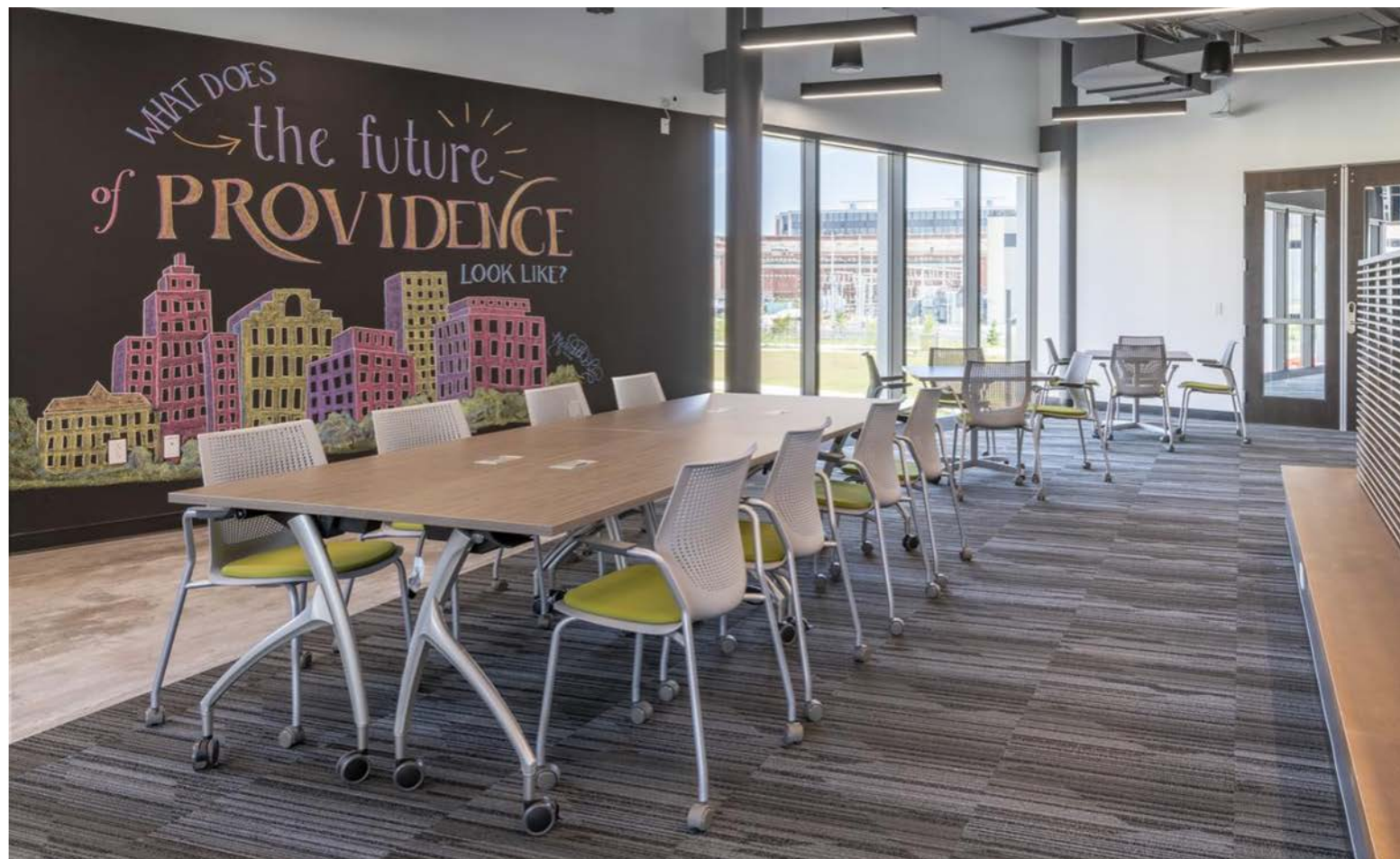


I found the Innovation Studio ReLAUNCH program invaluable. During a period of economic turmoil, confusion and fear I have been able to refocus our small business and prepare for relaunch. A dynamic group of presenters have covered a wide variety of topics and made themselves available for 1:1 where needed. This course has given me a much needed marketing refresher course, highlighted several knowledge gaps and provided some excellent networking opportunities.

- Jonathan Haisman, Tilt Active Corp

DISTRICT HALL

Free, public workspace open to entrepreneurs, startup teams, freelancers, and other innovators. State-of-the-art facilities, A/V, and central location to host a wide variety of meetings and events.



District Hall has been redesigned during COVID-19 to allow 15 public lounge users at a time, accounting for social distancing precautions.

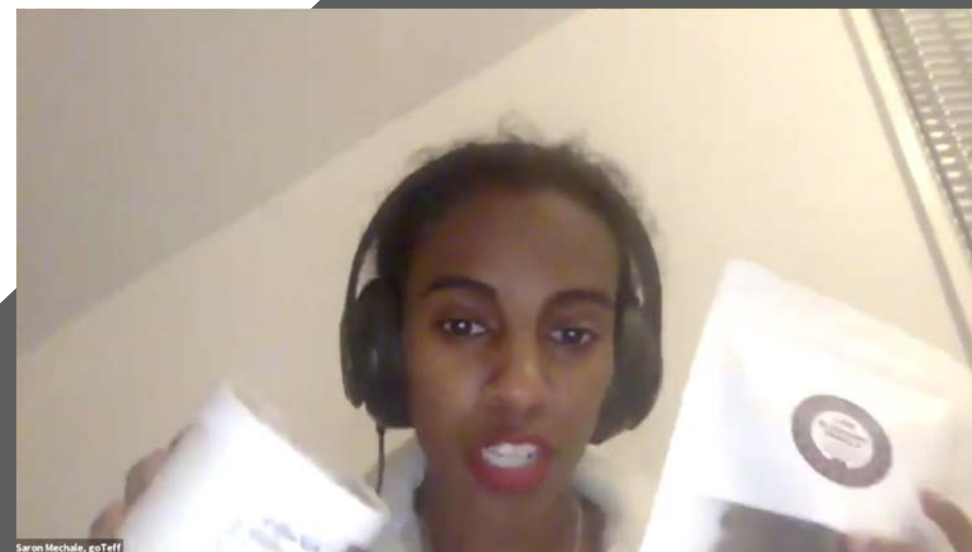
50% month over month public lounge traffic growth during summer/fall reopening.

A/V updates allow for better accommodation for in-person and virtual hybrid meetings and events.

Temporary COVID-19 testing site in partnership with CIC Health.

“We recently had a retreat at District Hall and they truly exceeded our expectations. I didn't have a lot of time to pull this together, but after I spoke to Kajsa Whitney, I felt confident it would all work out. Kajsa was wonderful to work with and always replied quickly and professionally. Jordan was assigned to us as our tech for the day and he assisted with all our technology issues and was always available if we had any questions or concerns.”

- Karen Barros, Lifespan



COMMUNITY VOICES

I will say that this Venture Café was one of the best-run virtual events that we have participated in. Great content, an engaged audience, and breakout rooms that actually provided us with a couple of business opportunities which we're thrilled about.

- *Tom Conti, CEO, Sweetscience*

The 1,000 dollars I won from the Pitch Competition at Venture Café is the first non-dilutive funding I've received for KerlyGirl

- *Kerlyne Jean Baptiste, Founder, KerlyGirl*

I have personally heard from 4 new 'friends'... so this is working and good connectivity. So keep promoting...this virtual mashup...[it] will be a part of the new normal.

- *Roger Race, Director of Innovation, Dartmouth Ocean Technologies*

I very much enjoyed both events on Thursday and I always find that these are valuable occasions to expand my network and get to know/explore resources locally available... I met Thorne [Sparkman] and Carol [Malysz] on a couple of occasions to discuss my venture idea. These people's vision and knowledge and the infrastructure they have built in Providence are for me an incentive to work hard on my idea and push to make it happen.

- *Maria Grazia Ruocco, Business Development Manager, Lab On A Chip*

I have been working in the Boston start-up community for 15 years. With my new company, I was able to get collaborations going far faster in RI than I have ever was in Massachusetts.

- *Paul Pyzowski*

This afternoon's webinar was a home run for NVTs! Had an 'aha' on where to go with a killer product we're looking to develop.

- *Julie Jansen, Night Vision Technology Solutions*

Tuni and her team have been the connective tissue between public and private forces in Rhode Island throughout this crisis. In fact, it was through Venture Café that I was connected to RI Commerce and established a partnership between Loft, RI Commerce, and the RI National Guard to help build COVID-19 testing trailers. It's the spirit of collaboration that's going to help us get through this, and I am thankful to have Venture Café leading the charge.

- *Jeanette Numbers, Co-founder, Loft*

We need more people to see what's going on here to witness the spontaneous collisions occurring every week.

- *Brian Trahan, Center for Phenomenological Leadership*

WE ENVISION A WORLD IN WHICH ANYONE CAN BE AN INNOVATOR



District Hall Providence
ACTIVATED BY **Innovation Studio**

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