

## NYU Stern and Wharton Join Forces to Promote Benefits of Undergraduate Business Education

Each fall marks not only the start of the semester, but also the kick-off to the college tour season, during which eager parents and their teenagers check out campuses and curricula, determining which school will be the perfect fit.

During this past season, NYU Stern School of Business, in partnership with the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, took advantage of this captive audience to educate them about what it means to study business at the undergraduate level and how doing so broadens career opportunities. Through their joint educational initiative, "Discover Business Now," these two leading undergraduate colleges stressed to high school juniors and seniors the value of an undergraduate business program and why it should be a consideration during the college search.

"What's exciting about studying business at the undergraduate level is that it offers the best of both worlds – a solid liberal arts grounding infused with a

broad, global business focus that opens, not closes, career doors," said Sally Blount-Lyon, vice dean and dean, Undergraduate College, NYU Stern School of Business. "Now more than ever, business knows no borders. It impacts every aspect of modern life, from politics and international relations to trade, religion, and culture."



The Schools introduced their initiative through two events, one in New Jersey and one, for women exclusively, in Philadelphia. The more than 200 students and parents who attended had the opportunity to hear from and speak with the deans, alumni, and current students from Stern and Wharton. Visit [www.discoverbusinessnow.org](http://www.discoverbusinessnow.org) for a "virtual" undergraduate business experience.

NYU Stern's Undergraduate College is one of the most prestigious, popular, and competitive programs among college aspirants. Applications are up 11 percent for the coming academic year, and average SAT scores for the current freshmen class reached 1422, the highest in the program's history. In addition to offering a liberal arts-infused business curriculum, Stern's Undergraduate College uniquely leverages New York City as part of its educational experience.



Erik Kimel (far right) and his Peer2Peer Tutors team.

## Student-to-Student Tutoring Means Business

In 2004, while in a calculus class during his senior year of high school, NYU Stern sophomore Erik Kimel (BS '08) took notice of both his bright classmates and his peers who could use their help. And he came upon the idea of creating a tutoring service by and for students. He placed an ad in his local Montgomery County, Maryland, newspaper, offering himself as a tutor. Within six months, Kimel had created a network of 25 tutors and formed his company Peer2Peer Tutors.

Peer2Peer is built on the premise that students learn best from other students who have taken the classes, know the teachers, and can relate to clients. This concept hit home with both parents and students, and by January 2006, the company had served more than 100 clients in elementary, junior, and high school, employed more than 80 student tutors, and provided more than 2,500 tutoring sessions in subjects ranging from algebra to Chinese. Revenues had grown an astounding 90 percent by the company's second year.

Managing the Maryland-based company from his dorm room in New York, 19-year-old Kimel travels to his home state once a month, and works full-time over his holiday breaks. This year he hired Management Operational Mentors (M.O.M.s) to control everyday operations, such as scheduling tutoring sessions and networking with local schools. The first M.O.M, Ann Connelly, joined the

company after her two children were successfully tutored by Peer2Peer.

Eager to expand the company into New York City and beyond, Kimel decided to test his business plan by entering the Stern Berkley Center for Entrepreneurial Studies' Maximum Exposure Business Plan Competition, which annually awards significant funding to the team with an innovative and developing concept. The only Stern undergraduate student to have made it past the first round, Kimel placed third in the finals of the 2004-2005 competition.

Losing the competition inspired Kimel to fine tune his business strategy, which resulted in the introduction of M.O.M.s and a badly needed website. At the 2005 NYU Entrepreneurship Conference, he was introduced to Reflexions Data, an interactive design company, which helped him build a website that allows the company to attract new tutors, sell tutoring sessions, and track appointments.

Kimel said he sees Peer2Peer as "a company that empowers students," and one that is "a network and a part of the community."

"I love my work, and for as long as I can do it, I will," he said, adding that he is grateful to Stern Professor Kenneth Preston for mentoring him and that he credits his Stern education with helping him to grow his business properly.

If Peer2Peer continues to mature as Kimel has, he just may have the lasting business he envisions.