

# Entrepreneurial Studies at Rider

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## Alumni Newsletter

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### *New Graduate Padalino is the 2009 N.J. Student Entrepreneur of the Year*

Like most entrepreneurs, Vincent Padalino was drawn by the lure of earning money. Selling graphics T-shirts out of the trunk of his car, Padalino, then a student at Lawrence High School, was creating shirts one at a time to fill specific orders. Still, it was as much a way to meet people as it was a revenue generator.

“After a while, though, I started making some decent money and it got serious,” said Padalino, who earned his bachelor’s degree in Entrepreneurial Studies at Rider in May 2009. “After I graduated from high school, I thought I should really put some effort into this.”

So, Padalino obtained a license and formed Vestiwear, LLC, to sell his

edgy brand of customized T-shirts. And while the firm has continued to expand in scope, Vestiwear has also allowed Padalino to earn something besides income. The budding businessman captured first place in the NJ Student Entrepreneur of the Year for 2009 awards at the Global Student Entrepreneur Awards at Fairleigh Dickinson University on May 5.

“This competition recognizes entrepreneurs who run their businesses while pursuing an undergraduate degree,” explained Dr. Ron Cook, professor and chair of the Department of Entrepreneurial Studies and Strategy.

“Students are judged on customer service, quality, obstacles overcome, growth potential, and



*Dr. Ron Cook with Rider Undergraduate student winner Vincent Padalino*

community outreach and strategies.”

Padalino enrolled at Mercer County Community College after high school, but with an eye already on a bachelor’s degree in business, he transferred to Rider in 2007.

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## *Small Business Consultants Continue Winning Ways*



*From left to right: Elizabeth Bond, Chris Bleakley, Dr. Ron Cook and Alex Opiela,*

For years, Rider's CBA has encouraged its students to learn, experience and lead. The College's Small Business Institute® (SBI) has taken the concept of "experience" to heart, giving students valuable familiarity with real-life business situations before they even earn their degrees. The results have been fruitful, as two teams from Rider earned national honors for their work at the Small Business Institute® Association's 33rd Annual National Conference from February 12 to 14 in St. Petersburg, Fla.

Elizabeth Bond '08 and Alex Opiela '08, both M.B.A. graduates, and current M.B.A. student Chris Bleakley earned second place for Best Student Consulting Project in the graduate specialized project division for their work with Julius A. Rose, Inc., of Bayonne, N.J.

The Rider group worked to improve marketing and develop new staffing procedures for the insurance agency during the 2007-08 academic year, and their report was produced as part of the Consulting for New and Small Businesses course in which the three students were

enrolled last year.

"This is just another example of the outstanding effort done by Rider SBI students," said Dr. Ron Cook, chair of the Department of Entrepreneurial Studies and Strategy, who taught Bond, Opiela and Bleakley's class.

Cook, who is also the director of the Rider Center for Entrepreneurial Studies and Small Business Institute®, said that Rider students have enjoyed a history of substantial success in the national competition over the years.

"In the last 10 years, we have had 13 top-10 or better finishes," said Cook, who is serving a term as the president of the SBI Association, but was not involved in selecting the winners from Rider. "The competition is intense, as Rider competes against some schools that require an SBI project in certain majors, and have 30-plus projects from which to select their best one to send to the competition."

Rider's total was bolstered by the additional selection of Rider's undergraduate SBI team, which finished fourth nationally in the

Association competition's specialized division.

Claiming the undergraduate honors were Serge Sachko '08 and Marisa Dominguez '08, who earned bachelor's degrees in Entrepreneurial Studies and Marketing, and Management, respectively. Sachko and Dominguez's project centered on a marketing study for the Rider Technology Training department, and the pair worked with John LeMasney, manager of the Office of Informational Technology.

"Rider's SBI reached new heights this year as, until now, we have never had two top-five national finishes in the same year," Cook said. "This is truly a win-win-win: the students know they are among the elite, the clients gained tremendous value from these projects, and the University demonstrates its outreach efforts into the community."

(this article was excerpted from the press release )

**"In the last 10 years, we have had 13 top-10 finishes."**

**-Dr. Cook**

## Cover Story

“I wanted to stay in the central New Jersey area, and I knew Rider was strong in business, so it was a pretty easy decision to come,” said Padalino, who, by that time, was already supplying himself with a steady income through Vestiwear.

Though the venture was already growing, Padalino says that his classroom experience at Rider only helped improve business. “Rider provided me with the textbook

methods of how to do everything,” he explained. “And I applied those operating methods to my own work.”

Those lessons learned have helped Padalino beyond his burgeoning T-shirt business. In 2007, he became a full partner in family of Palermo’s Pizza restaurants owned by his father and cousin. The restaurant, which opened in Bordentown approximately 15 years ago, was

joined more recently by locations in Ewing and Roebling, with Padalino overseeing the Ewing operation.

Full article can be viewed here:

[http://www.rider.edu/2529\\_16883.htm](http://www.rider.edu/2529_16883.htm)

## Growth of Entrepreneurial Studies Major

The Entrepreneurial Studies major here at Rider is growing. In just this last semester, the Entrepreneurial Studies major went from 76 majors/concentrations to 105 majors/concentrations. With this increase, the

Entrepreneurial Studies major is one of the fastest growing majors in the business college.

Not that long ago, there wasn’t even an Entrepreneurial Studies major offered at Rider University,

but now the major is producing national/regional winners in almost every year in various competitions (see other articles). The major also offers very unique classes that distinguishes it from other majors.

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## Congrats to the “30 under 30”

The spring 2009 edition of Rider’s magazine for alumni and friends featured 30 of Rider’s successful graduates under the age of 30. Of those 30 people mentioned in the magazine, 5 of them were Entrepreneurial Studies graduates. Here is a brief description of what they are doing now:

Sean Patrick O’Hare ‘03 is now the founder, chief operating officer, and president of multiple business ventures. Michael Briehler ‘07 was featured on American Gladiators as one of the gladiators. Ari Bluestein ‘07 has his own website, hosts his own show, and writes for a sports website. Daniel DiMassa ‘07 is the

founder of I Made You Look, LLC and is now involved with another business, OneLead, Inc. Lastly, Harold Lauden ‘03 is now a financial adviser with Merrill Lynch & Co. in Princeton, N.J.

## *Entrepreneurial Studies Club*



*ES Club newly designed logo*

In just the second full year as an official club, the Entrepreneurial Studies Club is really starting to grow and make its name heard on campus.

Just this past semester alone the ES Club has created a club newsletter, began developing its own website, and had regional vice president of TD Bank, Patrick Farrell, and successful real estate entrepreneur, Diane Turton,

come speak to the students at Rider.

Although all of these accomplishments are great for a fairly new and small club, the ES Clubs greatest accomplishment has definitely been the launch of the ES Club's Diner Delivery Service venture on campus.

The idea is starting out small, but with hopes that it will expand to a campus wide delivery service to all

dorms. Right now students that are at the pub on campus can put in a Bronc Diner food order and their food will be delivered to them at the pub with no additional charge. The club has been working with Rider and Aramark to make this happen. The ES Club is continuing to make big strides on campus

**Breaking news!! The 2009 graduate student consulting team finished 3rd place nationally in the consulting project of the year competition! (more in the next issue)**



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