RADD Tees company founders are BHS students (from left) Lillian Murphy, Mark Di Iorio, Rebecca Cheeseman, Max Raynor, and Rebekah Peter.

Hagop Soulakian teaches the Business Incubator course.

A RADD T-shirt

PHOTO: JIM PRISCHING

Entrepreneurial Education

EVERY MAY FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS, Barrington 220 students in the Business Incubator course at Barrington High School participate in "Pitch Night". The evening is the culmination of their hard work throughout the school year, when students compete for thousands of dollars in funding for the start-up companies they created. We talked with Dr. Brian Harris about the success of the course.

QB: *How has the Business Incubator course grown since it first launched at Barrington High School in 2013?*

BH: When we started the Business Incubator course at BHS it was the first of its kind in the nation and featured a unique partnership which included the school district, the Barrington 220 Educational Foundation, and local businessmen Michael Miles and Karl Fruecht. Shortly after, the not-for-profit company Uncharted Learning, which is based out of Barrington, developed the INCubatoredu program. It provides curriculum and resources for entrepreneurial education at the elementary, middle, and high school level. The Business Incubator course is now in more than 125 high schools nationwide. At BHS more than 400 students have enrolled in the course, 75 business professionals have volunteered their time as mentors in the classroom, and 13 student companies have been funded. Eight of those companies are still in operation.

QB: *Why is entrepreneurial education so important in preparing students for life beyond high school?*

BH: The Barrington 220 School District values innovation, collaboration, and creativity. Entrepreneurial education forces students to think outside the box, while gaining insight into real world business experiences. The curriculum gives students a chance to learn how to effectively collaborate with one another, anad they also form relationships with the business professionals in the community who serve as their mentors. It is always amazing to see the creative ideas students come up with and how they're able to turn those ideas into a viable product or company.

QB: *How do you envision entrepreneurial education expanding in Barrington 220 in the future?*

BH: In addition to the Business Incubator course at BHS, all Barrington 220 5th grade students participate in the freshINCedu program. The eight-week curriculum teaches students about what it means to be an entrepreneur. Similar to BHS, the students work with business mentors from the Barrington Area Chamber of Commerce and the community, to create and build a product or service for the marketplace. As a pre-K through 12 unit district, our educators have the benefit of collaborating across all levels and creating a curriculum that allows students to take what they learn in at one grade level and apply it at the next level. In the future, we would like to expand entrepreneurial education to our middle schools, so students can continuously build on the business skills they learn from 5th grade, all the way through high school. ⌣

RADD-Tees was created by five BHS students during the 2016-17 school year. The business sells T-shirts that feature artwork by high school students from eight area high schools, including BHS. A portion of proceeds goes back to the artist and one dollar from each sale goes to the school's art department. The founders hope to expand to more high schools in Illinois. (www.radd-tees.com)

Charitable Change was created by four BHS students during the 2017-18 school year. The business uses the round-up method to collect donations for the smaller charities in our community. The round-up method is the virtual spare change captured from a transaction that is rounded up to the nearest dollar. The company has worked with Let It Be Us, to hel and will work with other small charities in the Barrington. All donations go directly to the charity. (www.charitablechange.org)

CleatGuard was created by five BHS students during the 2014-2015 school year. The company makes a low-profile guard product that protects the bottom of athletes' cleats when they're off the field. Three of the five founders are still involved in the company. It is currently in the research and development phase, as they look to finalize and perfect their product.

Community Butler was created by five BHS students during the 2015-16 school year. Customers can instantly book home services online and have someone at their house within an hour ready to complete a task. Services include babysitting, general chores, heavy lifting, handyman, lawn care, moving help, and cleaning. Four of the founders (now in college) remain in the business and two BHS students are running operations from Barrington. (www.thecommunitybutler.com)

FuntasTech was created by three BHS students during the 2013-2014 school year, making it the first company funded by the Incubator program. The company provides technology tutoring for the elderly in and around the Barrington area. Three founders went off to college out of state, and employed current BHS students to run operations from Barrington. In 2018, the founders sold majority ownership to Turner Time Management, based out of Rockford. (www.funtastech.com)

Barrington 220 Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Brian Harris, is among the 21 superintendents nationwide elected to serve on the executive committee of AASA, The School Superintendents Association. In July, Dr. Harris will be sworn in as an AASA executive committee member in Washington, D.C. He will serve a three-year term. The 21-member committee, elected by AASA's governing board, represents each region of the country. Dr. Harris has been a member of AASA, as well as the Illinois Association of School Administrators, since 2010. He has also been a member of the AASA governing board since 2014. Founded in 1865 and headquartered in Alexandria, Va., AASA serves as the premier organization for our nation's school superintendents serving thousands of education leaders across the United States.

PHOTO: TAO ZHANG