Polly Black

John C. Whitaker Jr. Executive Director Center for Innovation, Creativity and Entrepreneurship and Professor of Practice at Wake Forest University
Winston-Salem, NC, US

Black has 20-plus years of experience as a corporate executive, consultant and entrepreneur.

Description
Can we learn to develop a more flexible imagination as we move into what might be the 21st century renaissance? Polly Black, executive director of the Center for Innovation, Creativity and Entrepreneurship, says the answer is an unqualified "yes." The key is in seeing the larger connections between seemingly dissimilar ideas.

Fueling startup businesses and the fresh ideas and bold confidence required to launch them are part of her expertise. For established businesses, Black can discuss how to build an organizational environment that encourages experimentation and flexibility and how a liberal arts education is more relevant than ever to innovation and growth.

With over 20 years of experience, Black has a strong marketing track record in start-ups, turnarounds and growth situations in small businesses as well as Fortune 500 companies. As an entrepreneur with her own consulting firm, BrandCurrents, she can offer insight into the wide range of risks and rewards that entrepreneurs and businesses face everyday.

Black has been quoted in several publications, most recently the Christian Science Monitor, and has experience with live on-set interviews.

Topics
Advertising, Business Strategy, Brand Strategy & Positioning, Entrepreneurship, Marketing Communications, New Product Development, Social Media, Social Media as an Entrepreneurial Tool

Affiliations
BrandCurrents : Principal

Education
University of Surrey, UK
A.B.D. Candidate for Ph.D. 2017 Management

University of Virginia - Darden School of Business Administration
1985
M.B.A. Business Administration
Columbia University GSAS  
1978  
M.A. Art History

Vassar College 
1976  
B.A. Medieval Civilization

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**Accomplishments**

Undergraduate Adjunct Teaching Faculty Award  
Wake Forest University  
May 2015

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**Media Appearances**

Fostering innovation: Why 6 Triad colleges came together to offer funding for startups  
Triad Business Journal  
2017-05-05  
By the universities coming together, they send a stronger message that supports the vision of Winston-Salem as a city of innovation and ideas, said Polly Black, the John C. Whitaker Jr. executive director of Wake Forest's Center for Innovation, Creativity and Entrepreneurship. Wake Forest is pledging $100,000 fund to be used over a period of three years.

"Winston-Salem is using its existing resources and expertise to develop niche industries--examples include medical technology, micro-brewing, and film-making," she said in an email. "These niches attract investors and funding that will build the community and infrastructure to support it--creating a hub for focused entrepreneurial activity."

Winston-Salem colleges and universities participate in collaborative program to support entrepreneurship  
Winston-Salem Journal  
2017-05-04  
All six colleges and universities in Winston-Salem have agreed to participate in an entrepreneurial grant program aimed at supporting entrepreneurship among their students and alumni.

Wake Forest plans to create an award fund for its students and alumni who win an annual startup competition and base their startup in Winston-Salem. The $100,000 fund will support award grants over the next three years, Black said.
Is a college degree always the key to success?

WGHP
2015-06-12

How often have we heard that a college degree is the key to success?

Perhaps for most, but that doesn't explain Steve Jobs or Bill Gates. And it almost didn't explain John Marbach. He worked very hard to get into Wake Forest University but, after a single semester, he dropped out. What? Got into Wake and dropped out?

Well, he was lured away by an offer. In this edition of the Buckley Report, see what that was and why John came back to Wake Forest, despite it.

Wake Forest University student creates website to buy back iPhones
Winston-Salem Journal
2012-09-25

Polly Black, the director of the Center for Innovation, Creativity and Entrepreneurship, said what Lowden has done with his company is exactly the kind of initiative the program tries to encourage in all of its students.

"One of the reasons that we housed our program in the liberal arts at Wake is because it's those critical problem-solving skills that a liberal arts education teaches that allows our students to go through stuff like this," Black said. "We're thrilled that he has found a problem, found a solution and is making it work."...

Articles

Towards Understanding how the Mechanisms of the Social Internet Influence Trust of Companies
Conference Proceedings of the United States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship

This paper proposes research towards understanding the influences that the mechanisms of the social internet (social net) have on shaping public trust of companies. The three dimensions of the social net that are of particular interest in this regard are the ...