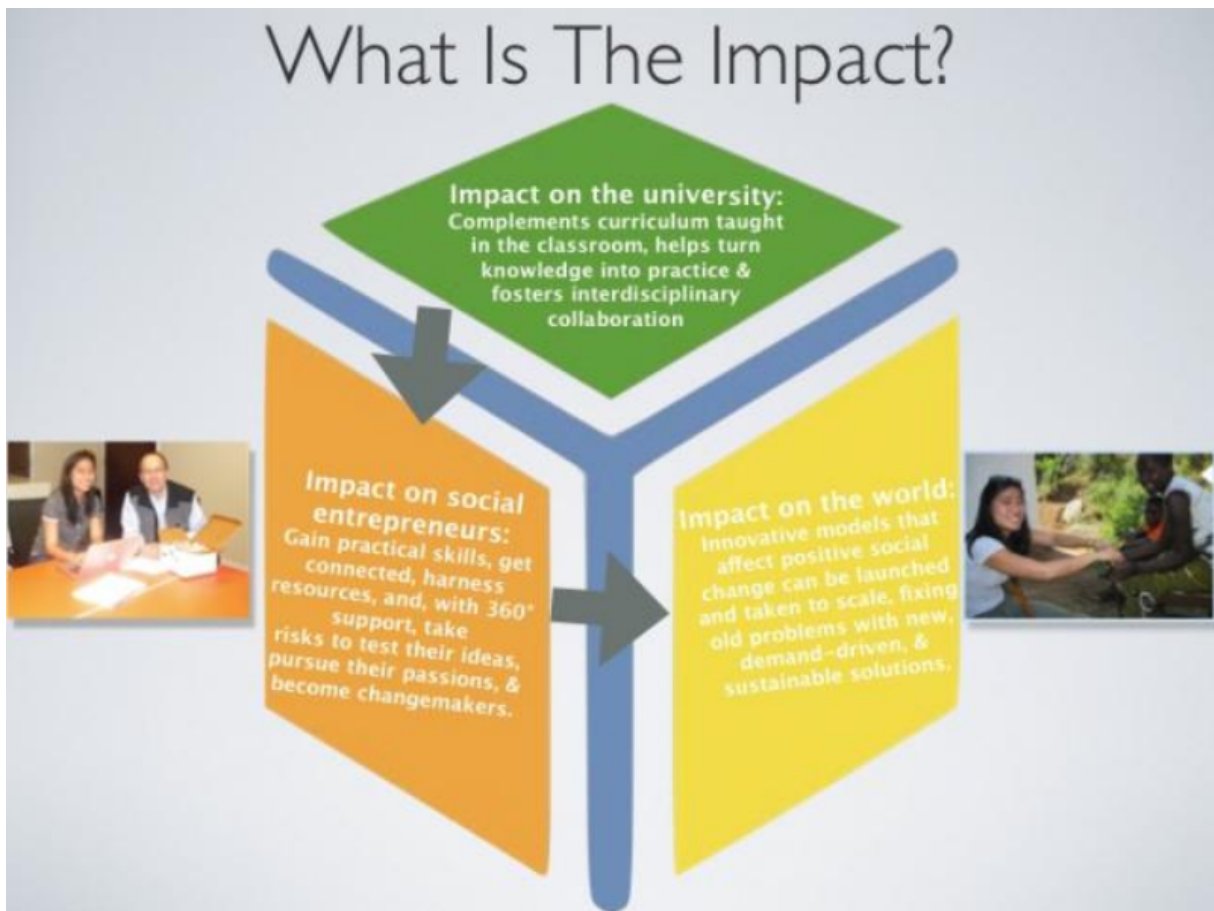


Why College Students Shouldn't Wait Until they Graduate to Make an Impact

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Let's face it. To a broke college student, changing the world seems like larger-than-life task. Even the idea that us students can each individually make a positive impact in our society seems farfetched to some. But if you're a college student passionate about social change, its time to stop that kind of diminutive thinking.

Don't wait until after you graduate to begin your journey as a changemaker when you can start right now. For all you know, you may already be on your way.

Throughout history, social movements led by students have had tremendous success in transforming society. But why? I'm no expert on the topic, but I can tell you what it's like being a very involved college student with a passion for social justice and a knack for using my status as a student to get things accomplished. Students are successful in raising awareness on issues because they have clout; and they have this influence because they are the future, and therefore warrant our society's attention.

Students should not wait until after graduation to start making a difference because right now, they have connections and resources at their disposal that the rest of society does not have. As youth being educated in highly competitive scholastic environments, we are ripe for leadership and are surrounded by others who are ready to take on more risks and responsibilities. We have professors, advisors, mentors, and other university affiliates to not only guide us, but also be our allies in making an even stronger impact. Furthermore, students have such a unique and fresh perspective on the issues facing their communities, and that perspective is not permanent – so it must be utilized early on!

In this day and age, young changemakers also have the upper hand when it comes to the technology available to us in comparison to our predecessors. The connectivity that we live and experience every day is one of our most powerful tools to make an impact. With the explosive popularity of social media, it is easier than ever to disseminate your message and mission, and to unite others who share it.

College is the time when most young adults are finding their identity. While it may be tempting to put off trying to making an impact until later in life, your late-teens and early twenties are an amazing time to start because becoming engaged in social change will help you define yourself, your career, and what you want out of life. Being a freethinking and educated young person with independence can really help take your mission to places others would never even think to go. If you wait until you are established to start making an impact in your world, you may never get around to doing it. College is one of the few opportunities in our fast-paced, money-driven society that you are allowed to just focus on your growth, your needs, and your passions. Once you graduate and begin having other commitments and agendas thrust upon you, that small fire you may have once had inside of you to do

something meaningful and different can very easily be extinguished.

So if you are in college, and you feel like you have the potential to make an impact, whether it be big or small, then start looking for ways to harness it and turn it into action.