

Michael W. Farmer

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Blue Valley CAPS: Innovation & Entrepreneurship Class Overland Park, KS 2019 – Present
Center for Advanced Professional Studies Instructor & Entrepreneur-in-residence

- Developed course curriculum for high school juniors and seniors to live out the skills and practices of an innovator and entrepreneur, not only in the classroom, but also the real world.
- Designed teacher & student materials to support a semester-long project involving: a. Personal Exploration, b. Project Ideation, c. Technology Production Development, c. Startup Business Planning, and d. Startup Plan Presentation.
- 2021 Lemelson-MIT Excite Teacher Award, 2023 Henry Ford Teacher Innovator Grand Prize Student Competition Awards include: *Edison Awards*: 1 Gold, 1 Silver & 1 Bronze, *Kansas City Invention Convention*: 3 Grand Champions, *Jacobson Institute*: 1 Silver, 5 Finalists

Leap2: search engine software development startup Kansas City, KS 2011 – 2019
CEO & Founder, Chairman of the Board

- Developed vision and executed on plan to reinvent search based on disruptive innovation approach. Raised over \$3M dollars from renowned venture and angel investors. Hired and directed a core team of eight software engineers and designers for over four years.
- Led multiple equity and convertible debt financing rounds, negotiated commercial agreements, evaluated numerous strategic alliance and acquisition opportunities.
- Served as a thought leader in the entrepreneurship field with articles in *New York Times*, *CNN*, *Anderson Cooper*, *TechCrunch*, *Forbes*, and as White House guest for JOBS Act signing.
- Winning presenter at Steve Case' Rise of the Rest \$100,000 competition, named Brad Feld FiberHouse Startup, and named *AngelList* #1 trending startup out of 800,000 worldwide.

CAP CO2: value-added carbon sequestration venture Overland Park, KS 2007 – 2010
Co-founder, Board Member, VP Strategy & Policy

- Developed company strategy, co-authored the business plan, developed technology landscape for CO2 uses. Created a financial model and co-authored the DOE proposal.
- CAP CO2 awarded a DOE grant for \$2.7 million for a large-scale carbon storage project.

MFarmer Consulting: regional innovation consulting Kansas City, MO 2006 - 2008
Advisor to Midwest Research Institute and Kansas State University

- Developed the plan for a regional center of innovation for academia and industry leaders to collaborate and commercialize five emerging bio-energy technologies.
- The Kansas Bioscience Authority adopted the center of innovation for several bio-sectors.

Kozoru: question and answer search engine startup Overland Park, KS 2004 – 2006
Director, Strategic Partnerships

- Attracted a world-class technology development team to the Kansas City area and secured \$2.3 million in local angel investment. Led product development of mobile voice search engine.
- Interfaced directly with Google executives Larry Page, Sergey Brin and Megan Smith. Attended as invited guest to TED: Technology Entertainment & Design, Oxford, England.

Kansas Technology Enterprise Corporation: economic development Topeka, KS 2003 – 2004
Vice President and Commercialization Consultant

- Architect of the \$540 million Kansas Economic Growth Act that created the Kansas Bioscience Authority and Angel Investor Tax Credit. Led in the strategic assessment of the state's bioscience assets, defined national best practices, developed the emerging industry funding mechanism, and built a 15-year economic model for the bioscience initiative.
- The Kansas Angel Tax Credit in the first 5 years helped 74 Kansas startups raise \$168 million at a 10 to 1 ratio of investment to angel tax credit cost, and remains a popular program today.

HONORS AND AFFILIATIONS

- Rise of the Rest regional winner of *Steve Case*' \$100K startup competition - Oct 2014
- Selected entrepreneur occupant for *Brad Feld Fiber House* - April 2014
- Jobs Act signing at the Whitehouse selected startup to witness bill signing - Feb 2013
- *Kansas City Startup Village* co-founder and member of Kansas City Startup Foundation
- Provided testimony for US Senate on High Growth Entrepreneurship – Feb 2012
- *One Million Cups* inaugural startup presenter at the Kauffman Foundation – April 2012
- Featured Entrepreneur Kansas City Area Development's *Creative Crossroads* – Oct 2011
- Board member Institute for Entrepreneurship & Innovation at UMKC Bloch – 2008/09
- Taskforce member for US Senator Pat Roberts Science & Technology – 2006/09
- Member of Ingram's Magazine *40 Under Forty* leadership class – April 2005
- Awarded State of Kansas Proclamation for KS Economic Growth Act – May 2004

PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Kansas City Startup Village co-founder and member of Kansas City Startup Foundation - 2012/15
Featured entrepreneur in Kansas City Area Development Council's *Creative Crossroads* – 2011
Council member for Institute for Entrepreneurship & Innovation at UMKC Bloch School – 2008/09
Taskforce member for the US Senator Pat Roberts Science, Technology & the Future – 2006/09

EDUCATION

MBA, Lally School of Management & Technology, RPI 2001-2003
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Bozzone Fellow in Management & Technology
W. Franklin Spafford award for highest distinction for academic achievement
SAIC Strategy, Technology & Entrepreneurship Capstone Course Awardee
Invented Float-tech™ Self-inflating Jacket: US Patent, US20040082237A1
Concentrations: entrepreneurship, new product development, and disruptive innovation strategy

BS Marketing, Kansas State University, College of Business Administration 1988-1992
Kansas State University Student Senator and KSU Student Ambassador Finalist

PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS

US State Department Keynote Presentation, “*AI-Driven Innovation: Forging a Path to a Transformed 21st Century*,” Community Connection Belarus, Tbilisi Georgia, September 2023

Center for Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS) Network Seminar, “*Building a Curiosity-Based Curriculum*,” CAPS Summer Huddle, Saint Louis University, St. Louis, June 2022

ASU GSV Leading Educator Innovator Finalist Presentation, “*The Startup of You: A Revolutionary Framework for Student Engagement*,” ASU – GSV Online Summit, March 2020

Steve Case’ Regional Rise of the Rest Pitch Competition in KC, “*Leap2 \$100,000 Startup Investment Opportunity*,” Kansas City, MO, October 9, 2014

Dundee Venture Capital Founders Summit, “*Turning Disruptive Thinking into EveryDay Practice*,” Omaha, NE, September 10, 2014

IEEE Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Innovation Showcase, “*Disruptive Innovation as a Practice with Leap.it as the Model*,” Kansas City Chapter, August 14, 2014

Fort Hays State University Entrepreneur Direct Series, “*Disruptive Innovation as a Practice with Leap.it as the Model*,” Hays, KS, Nov 21, 2013

Office of Science and Technology Policy, Executive Office of the President, “*Market-based Strategy to Reinvest in Emerging Industries based on Regional Demonstrated Differentiated Advantages*,” Rick Siger EOP, OSTP, Washington, DC March 21, 2012

White House Business Leaders Briefing, “*Kansas City-area Business Leaders Discussion*,” Ari Matusiak, White House Business Council, Washington, DC, March 20, 2012

US Senate Small Business Committee Roundtable, “*Developing and Strengthening High Growth Entrepreneurship*,” US Senator Mary Landrieu, Washington, DC, February 1, 2012

KC Advanced Energy Taskforce, “*Advanced Energy Engineering: KC Energy Engineering for the World*,” Analysis of KC’s Engineering Services Cluster, Kansas City, MO June 2009

National Renewable Energy Lab (John Ashworth & Stan Bull), “*Proposal for a Center for Commercialization of Bio-energy*,” Midwest Research Institute, Golden, CO September 2007

Kansas Bioscience Authority, “*Kansas Bioscience Authority Action Plan Poster*” 5 Year Action Plan and Initial Budget, KBA President, Topeka, KS July 2008

US Senator Pat Roberts Science & Technology Committee, “*Pre-proposal Bioscience Authority Center of Innovation: National Center for Commercialization of Bioenergy Technology*,” Lawrence, KS, Consultant to Midwest Research Institute, April 2007

Representative Kenny Wilk, Kansas Economic Development Bill Co-Sponsor, “*Kansas Angel Investor Tax Credit*,” Plan for a 10 year 50% Angel Investor Tax Credit, September 2003

Senator Jordan and Representative Wilk, Kansas Economic Growth Act bill co-sponsors, “*Kansas Economic Growth Roadmap: Economic Growth through Discovery, Innovation & Entrepreneurship*,” Plan for a 15 Year \$580 Million Bioscience Initiative, September 2003

Select Press Coverage:

JOHNSONCOUNTYPOST.COM

[BLUE VALLEY TEACHER WINS 'INNOVATION NATION' TEACHER AWARD](#)

"A BLUE VALLEY INSTRUCTOR HAS EARNED NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR INSPIRING HIS STUDENTS. BLUE VALLEY CAPS INSTRUCTOR MIKE FARMER EARNED A GRAND PRIZE RECOGNITION..."

FORBES.COM Oct 10, 2014

[Search Engine Leap.It Wins Steve Case's \\$100K Startup Competition - Forbes](#)

Leap.it users can also provide curated searches called "perspectives" – a visually organized group of articles like "Best Actors of the Past 50 Years".

KC BUSINESS JOURNAL September 5, 2014

[Entrepreneur: They might be giants – so what?](#)

Mike Farmer, CEO of startup Leap.it, knows it's a tall order. But taking on the hulking tech behemoth that is Google Inc. is something he wholeheartedly embraces as a creative, enlivening challenge.

TECHCRUNCH.COM Aug 25, 2014

[Leap.it Wants To Open A New Front In The Battle For Search | TechCrunch](#)

Akin to both Google Now and Facebook's graph search, Leap.it's management hopes that its latest embed feature will both spur adoption

FOX4KC.COM Aug 16, 2013

[Bright and ambitious entrepreneurs come to KCK for Google Fiber](#)

KANSAS CITY, Kan. — Young entrepreneurs from across the country are flocking to Kansas City, Kan. dreaming of success, trying to commercialize their new ideas. Google Fiber brought them here, but community is keeping them here. They have taken to...

VENTUREBEAT.COM Jul 8, 2013

[Can Leap2 really take on Google in search? 'Probably not,' but it's still going to try](#)

Can Leap2 really take on Google in search? 'Probably not,' but it's still going to try | VentureBeat | Cloud | by Sean Ludwig

CNN.COM ANDERSON COOPER 360 December 4, 2012

[Internet startups thrive in Kansas City](#)

Google's super high-speed Internet connection changes the rate at which companies develop in Kansas City.

NYTIMES.COM Oct 5, 2012

[When Job-Creation Engines Stop at Just One](#)

KANSAS CITY, Kan. — When Mike Farmer started a digital search company in 2004, he had a staff of 10. Today, in his third start-up, he has one employee: himself, aided by seven contractors working more or less part time.

RPI LALLY SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT March 23, 2012

[Rensselaer Lally School Alumnus Makes Waves in Washington](#)

Entrepreneur Michael Farmer, Rensselaer Lally School MBA '03 was called on to tell the story of 'Startup Life' before the [US Senate committee on High Growth Entrepreneurship](#) (find Mike's comments at 37:15 and 130:14)

BIZJOURNALS.COM Apr 13, 2012

[Leap2 CEO Farmer attends JOBS Act signing in Rose Garden](#)

Mike Farmer was living the life of a small startup CEO on April 2, working late into the night with a team of advisers when he received an email that sported the White House's logo at the top. The unexpected ping to his inbox informed Farmer of President...