

[STORIES](#) / [PROFILES](#)

Yep, These Two Entrepreneurs ARE Building an Empire for Upstarts Just Like Them

[✉ Email](#)[f Facebook](#)[in LinkedIn](#)[t Twitter](#)

Photo Courtesy YEP!

By Courtney Gabrielson

October 23, 2018, 03:36pm EDT

The [Young Entrepreneur's Project](#), or YEP!, started for a simple purpose: "to scratch an itch."

Metaphorically, of course. That's what founders Madeline Martini and James Nuveen tell me, when explaining their August 2018-born organization.

The itch in question? Both Martini and Nuveen were entrepreneurs with big ideas with a desire to create. They had met during their shared working experience at a startup in Cincinnati and felt that there wasn't enough opportunity for entrepreneurs their age to connect, grow and share ideas — or at least work through doubts, dreams and potential plans for the future. It was at this crossroads of interest and need that they got the idea for YEP.

"The whole goal was just to help one person."

It became an after-work project (for Martini) and around classes or during summer break (for Nuveen, who's still in college). They ultimately created an entity that boasts several different offerings: a weekly newsletter, a podcast called "YEP! Cast" and online content that they develop for their site and on Medium.

Living together this summer really helped us get our jumpstart," Martini said, adding that the two were so engrossed in their work that they'd often say up until 1:00 a.m. polishing an podcast episode or brainstorming their ideas.

The project was for themselves, of course; they craved a network like this, one that they couldn't quite find on campus or on Meetup. But the more they crafted podcasts episodes and wrote posts, they realized there was more to their work than scratching their own itches.

"The whole goal was just to help one person," Nuveen said. "If [YEP!] can find one person and [have them] grow as an individual, we've definitely reached our goal."

A guiding value for both Martini and Nuveen was authenticity and vulnerability, which they practiced by sharing a mission-statement fueled personal story on their respective LinkedIn profiles. They chronicled elements of their entrepreneurial journey, highlighting what got them on their current path.

It was this move that helped them unofficially kick off their journey with YEP!.

"The stories [illustrated] our struggles," Martini said. "James changed majors six times; I struggled with being a dreamer [not a doer]. There was reach with that. In response, people I was friends with at school shared their support [online]; I had no idea that they were interested in entrepreneurship ... they came out of the woodwork."

Finding one's calling, going from dreamer to doer; those are the themes, culled from their own lives, that fueled YEP!'s content and got readers and listeners interested. And the overwhelmingly positive response from the YEP!-lite stories on LinkedIn wasn't a one off, either; YEP! itself has received an incredibly positive response.

"We have a lot more reach than we ever thought we would," Martini said. "It kind of set off ... we get personal emails from people saying, 'Wow, that episode really resonated with me,'" and for the YEP! duo, that matters the most. Regardless, despite being "not about the numbers" people, YEP! has demonstrated success there, too; Martini said the podcast has shown consistent 200 percent week-over-week listenership.

And while YEP! is geared towards young entrepreneurs — namely, those in high school, college and in that amorphous early 20's/post-grad space — and Martini and Nuveen don't mind that their work has "older" fans.

"Our content is really available for people older than us and people younger than us," Nuveen said. "We just want to provide as much value as possible."

These "older" listeners find that not only are the topics YEP! deals with are universally applicable, it also allows more experienced entrepreneurs to directly hear ways they can support younger thought leaders.

Martini and Nuveen added that they themselves have benefited from the insight and encouragement of #StartupCincy's more established entrepreneurs.

"We couldn't do what we've done without the #StartupCincy ecosystem," Martini said. "People have been so incredible kind and share what they're doing ... [we're] really lucky to be a part of #StartupCincy."

As for the future of YEP, the duo said there's lots of plans, especially since the organization is still so young. In 2019, for example, they'll debut the next season of the podcast, and it will focus on helping listeners build a "toolkit" for starting their own businesses.

"We're bringing in founders from all different areas ... from across the nation," Martini said. While the names of the subjects are under wraps, the two said that they will have actionable insights from their tried-and-true leadership experience.

Nuveen also added that they're hoping to provide content that's catered to young entrepreneurs and their needs, such as instructional PDFs or maybe even courses.

Keep Digging



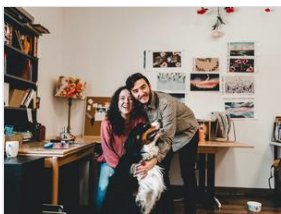
Meet the Cincinnati team from Nielsen, P&G building a better Calendly

Profiles



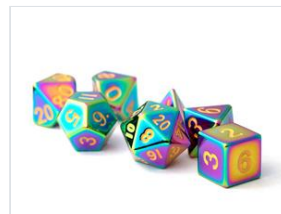
Cincinnati newest fintech combines AirDrop, Pokemon Go

Profiles



Meet the local company that's bootstrapped to 251% growth

Profiles



Cincinnati 'Shark Tank' alum rolls the dice with new business venture

Profiles



Cincinnati boomerang launches Don Draper-inspired pickleball brand

Profiles

SPONSORED CONTENT
by Principal Financial Group

[Resources to tackle workplace burnout before](#)

SPONSORED CONTENT
by The Business Journals Content Studio

[How marketers find game-changing opportu](#)

Spotlight

[More](#)





Five under 25: These innovators could be region's next big successes

[See More >](#)



The Fire Awards: These startups are setting Cincinnati ablaze

[See More >](#)

Upcoming Events

[More](#)

Nov 16: SustainableCincy Demo Day

Want to stay ahead of who & what is next? Sent twice-a-week, the Beat is your definitive look at Cincinnati's innovation economy, offering news, analysis & more on the people, companies & ideas driving your city forward.

[Share the Beat](#)

[Sign Up](#)

[Back to Top](#) ▲

CINCYINNO

[User Agreement](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)
[Your California Privacy Rights](#) | [Ad Choices](#)

© 2022 American City Business Journals. All rights reserved. Use of and/or registration on any portion of this site constitutes acceptance of our User Agreement (updated as of 1/1/21) and Privacy Policy and Cookie Statement (updated as of 1/1/21). The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of American City Business Journals.