

# Michelle Cote

Instructor, Director of Strategic Partnerships  
Connecticut Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation  
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## EXPERIENCE

### **Connecticut Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation:**

Instructor, Director Strategic Partnerships  
**Hartford, CT**  
**(November '18-Present)**

The Connecticut Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation is part of the University of Connecticut School of Business. We help students and faculty from across the entire university develop the skills needed to become successful entrepreneurs. We focus our resources on high-impact ventures that tackle fundamental human and environmental problems and inspire and support a robust entrepreneurial culture across academic disciplines and throughout our state.

- Leads instruction for Accelerate UConn (NSF I-Corps Site) & CCEI Summer Fellowship Program
- Develops relationships with and scouts opportunities for collaboration with other entrepreneurial organizations
- Develops strategy for and leads efforts to raise funds for the center from public and private sources
- Leads Hartford Innovation Places effort – a public-private partnership amongst 20+ corporations, higher-ed institutions, and community organizations committed to making Hartford a more visible and vibrant hub of innovation and entrepreneurship

### **LAUNC[H]ARTFORD:**

DIRECTOR

**(June '17 – Present)**

Launc[H] is the driving force behind the development of Hartford's innovation ecosystem. We're led by innovators and entrepreneurs from across our community and are united by one common goal: making Hartford the best place on the East Coast to start or grow a business. Launc[H] was created through the Hartford and East Hartford community's participation in CTNext's Innovation Places program.

- Develops and executes strategic planning to grow Hartford's innovation ecosystem, in consultation with the Launc[H] Board of Directors
- Oversees the disbursement of \$2M annually in state funding to programs in the community annually; facilitates co-investment of matching funds in excess of \$3M annually from local corporations, foundations, and program revenue
- Maintains relationships with 30+ institutional partners in order to coordinate activities within the ecosystem, and help create a visible and vibrant community of innovators in Hartford

**Connecticut Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation:**

Managing Director

**Storrs, and East Hartford, CT**

**(October '15 – October '18)**

Developed and implemented programs that support student and faculty entrepreneurs

- Developed and oversaw CCEI's core programs: Accelerate UConn, CCEI Summer Fellowship, Verge Consulting Program, Innovation Accelerator
- Raised funds for the center from public and private sources
- Represented CCEI and the School of Business at entrepreneurial events and through working groups and boards across the state
- Managed staff, budget and resources

**reSET Social Enterprise Trust:**

Program Director

**Hartford, CT**

**(June '12-September '15)**

reSET promotes, preserves and protects the concept of social enterprise and to help entrepreneurs leverage the power of business to create public good.

- Developed and implemented signature programs including reSET Accelerator, Flight Night, and Social Enterprise Awards.
- Developed relationships with strategic partners to form reSET Mentor Network
- Joined the organization as its first full time employee; led the process of organizational growth from a volunteer-led organization to a fully staffed business
- Raised over \$500,000 in public and private financing and scaled organizational operating budget from \$85,000 to \$650,000 in one year
- Developed new financial and administrative systems to support organization during growth

**The Purpose Project:**

Founding Director

**Hartford, CT**

**(Nov. '07-June 2012)**

The Purpose Project was designed to connect different generations of social leaders—those who have spent their lives committed to missions of social change, and those who will be responsible for leading our society forward.

- Interviewed over 20 exemplary leaders of Connecticut-based, national, and international social change movements including 4 Nobel Laureates in service of capturing lessons learned and equipping emerging leaders.

- Published monthly series of features in Hartford Courant and produced accompanying Teacher's Guide that brought leadership lessons 4,000 students in grades 6-12
- Facilitated monthly community discussion forums between 50 experienced and emerging social leaders in the Greater Hartford area.
- Developed and hosted a semester-long community leadership seminar for emerging social leaders in partnership with the University of Connecticut's Nonprofit Leadership Program
- Principal fundraiser; established functional relationships with community partners, and managing relationships with program and community stakeholders.

**Business Council for Peace: Program Management Consultant      Hartford, CT**

**(Oct. '08-June '10)**

The Business Council for Peace is a non-profit organization that helps women entrepreneurs in post-conflict countries expand their businesses, create employment, and build a peaceful future for their communities.

- Developed pricing and costing as well as other financial models and tools for first-time entrepreneurs, assisting them in the development of revenue models to support their businesses.
- Supported the development of a new brand of hand-made, fair-trade soccer balls, Dosti, which were introduced to the US market in the Fall of 2010.
- Supported the implementation of Bpeace Business Apprenticeship Road Trip (BART) for 12 female Afghan entrepreneurs in October, 2008. Coordinated and planned programming with over 10 host organizations; supported and accompanied visiting entrepreneurs during their month-long stay in the US.

**Aid to Artisans: Manager, Programs and New Business**

**Hartford, CT**

**(March '03-Dec. '07)**

Aid to Artisans is a non-profit organization dedicated to creating economic opportunities for crafts people in developing countries around the world. Comprehensive business development programs include technical assistance and capacity building, product design and development, business skills development, and marketing and promotional support

- Traveled to Afghanistan in Nov-Dec. 2006 to assist with setting up new field office, hiring staff, and establishing relationships with partner organizations in the development community and craft sector.
- Managed two 3-year, USAID funded programs in Peru and Bolivia with a combined operating budget of \$4.26M, traveling frequently to field offices for face-to-face working sessions with field staff and meetings with local donor representatives.
- Designed and managed regional craft development initiative in Cajamarca, Peru in partnership with International Finance Corporation.

- Led project teams consisting of both home and field office staff. Functioned as liaison between field-based project leader and key decision-makers in the home office.
- Responsible for achieving results of each project and evaluating effectiveness of program activities, and designing, reallocating for, and implementing changes as needed.
- Responsible for hiring consultants, creating work plans and providing necessary support in preparation and during their trip.
- Primary donor contact for all programs: responsible for achieving project results, developing and reporting on key program metrics, and cultivating positive donor relationships. Also responsible for ensuring grant compliance and drafting and submitting all funder correspondence and reporting.

## **EDUCATION**

**Masters of Business Administration, University of Connecticut, 2014**

**Bachelor of Arts, University of Connecticut, 2002**