

DREXEL UNIVERSITY'S LEBOW COLLEGE OF BUSINESS CORPORATE AND EXECUTIVE EDUCATION



MANAGE GLOBAL INNOVATION AUGMENT LEADERSHIP SKILLS

ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SESSION

**THURSDAY,
MARCH 22ND
6:00 PM**

5:30 PM REGISTRATION

LeBow College's graduate-certificate programs leverage Drexel's core competencies in engineering and technology with synergies of our global partner, Thunderbird University's Garvin School of International Management to complement industry expertise, and augment leadership skills and global management perspectives.

**REGISTER WWW.LEBOW.DREXEL.EDU/CALENDAR/EVENTS
INFORMATION 215.895.1604**

GREAT VALLEY FACILITY
2 WEST LIBERTY BLVD., MALVERN, PA 19355
SECOND FLOOR

LEARN HERE, LEAD ANYWHERE®



COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

LeBow

'Pennsylvania is the leading state in K-12 cyber charter education.'

JAMES HANAK | PENNSYLVANIA LEADERSHIP (CYBER)
CHARTER SCHOOL

INSIDER'S VIEW

Name: James Hanak
Title: CEO, Pennsylvania Leadership (Cyber) Charter School, West Chester
Education: Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, BA in biology (1971); Dallas Theological Seminary, master's in theology (1979); International School of Theology, doctorate of ministries (1983).

Career history: University of North Carolina Chapel Hill and American University, campus minister (1971-1979); Here's Life Philadelphia, Christian Leadership Training Center, director (1979-1985); Church Dynamics, church renewal and church management consultant (1986-1989); American Family Ministries, founder and director (1989-present); Pennsylvania Leadership Charter School, founder and CEO (2004-present).



How are cyber charter schools being held accountable to No Child Left Behind?

We're actually held more accountable than a regular brick-and-mortar school, because we're held accountable by the state and we're held accountable by the parent. If the parent's not happy, they can leave. Secondly, we also have over 150 reports that we send in to the Department of Education every year. We have a lot of accountability — what a regular school would have and more.

Are cyber schools funded disproportionately, given that they lack many of the expenses of brick-and-mortar schools?

It's not real money because it never comes. There's always a lag. So I can't go out and hire a teacher with money that's going to come to me in six months. It's an accounting problem that's created by school districts that refuse to pay.

The Pennsylvania School Board Association [through House Bill 2616 authored by Karen Beyer, R-Lehigh and Northampton] would cut our funding in half, which means that in order for me to run the school, I would have to fire all the teachers. Well, that's not even fair. Their objective is not to provide equal funding. Their objective is to destroy our schools.

How do you think the state could fix this accounting problem?

Very simple. All the state legislature would have to do is fine a school district a small fine for every day they did not send the money to the charter schools.

Is there room for more charter schools?:

Cyber schools are growing at the rate of about, I think, 20 percent per year. All of the cyber schools in Pennsylvania have very different programs and ways of approaching things. Even within our school we have a leadership center, a performing arts center, a gifted center and then we have just the regular cyber. So I would like to see more choices, not less.

Looking ahead, what do you think are the major challenges facing state cyber schools?

The biggest challenge is helping the state legislators understand the value of this and to keep the PSBA from passing draconian legislation that would hamper cyber charter schools. That would be a shame because right now Pennsylvania is the leading state in K-12 cyber charter education and we're more than glad to give back to the public schools and help them to develop their own.

— Cezary Podkul

How do cyber charter schools differ from traditional brick-and-mortar schools?

The biggest way is that students are at home going to school via the Internet or some other electronic means. In place of providing a building, we provide a computer, high-speed Internet line and all of the support services that that entails. We eliminate all the time-zappers: lunch, recess, changing of classes, discipline issues, et cetera, so we believe that we redeem about four hours of the day that is used for direct instruction. [Another] major difference is the technology itself. All of our students own a state-of-the-art computer. They're not only learning academic skills, but they're also learning technology skills all day long.

Can cyber schools still be called an experiment in education or have they reached the mainstream?

Pennsylvania has had cyber education since 1998. We now have 10 schools serving 19,000 students. So it's moved way beyond an experiment.

How do cyber charter schools address problems of underachievement, truancy and high dropout rates in Philadelphia?

It is not unusual for a parent to say to me, "it's just not safe for me to send my child to school." So we are a viable solution for many of those kinds of parents and students. And even if it's safe, there are schools where the discipline issues are so bad that the students are just constantly distracted and they're not learning anything. We provide for them that safe, friendly environment.