

# Q&A with Geno Miller '17

**B.S. Business Administration, Entrepreneurial Studies | Co-founder & CEO, Shtudy**

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**GENO MILLER '17**

**When you came to UNH had you planned on weaving in a focus on social innovation or sustainability into your major?**

Yes, I did. I started my first business when I was 15 years old. It was a clothing line, and I had just earned my learner's permit. I drove around all day and night delivering shirts out of the trunk of my car. I made \$30,000 in one summer and instantly fell in love with business. I learned I had an innate skill. It was empowering to know that I could directly gain more wealth for my family while also doing good in the world. But it wasn't all about the money... the feeling of providing value to someone else is what I love most.

**What social innovation or sustainability classes, programs or experiences where you involved in and how did they challenge you to think differently about what a career in business or economics might be?**

My most notable introduction to social impact being tied to business was during the Social Venture Innovation Competition at UNH. Prior to entering the competition, I hadn't often fathomed how a socially driven company could also be high-growth and scalable.

**What are you doing now in your professional career and how did the experiences at UNH and Paul College set you up for success?**

Now I am running my company full-time as a cofounder and CEO. My company is called [Shtudy](#). Shtudy is a career advancement platform that pre-vets, trains, and connects top Black, Latinx and Native American tech talent of color with companies that are trying to improve diversity and revenue within their workforces. It's important for our candidates to work at places where they're not only appreciated, but where their career growth is cultivated. Our goal is to bridge the racial wealth gap in America, and we feel that increasing diversity in tech is the most effective and efficient way of doing that. Shtudy started as just an idea in college. Having success from entering the SVIC really helped spring the business to life. Now that we're three years in, we've raised over \$150k in funding and are able to dedicate every single day to helping job seekers expand their career opportunities.

**Do business leaders have the power to change their communities and the world through socially responsible and sustainable actions, and how do they do that while still running competitive and profitable businesses?**

Yes, very much so. In fact, the primary motive for me to start Shtudy was because of the substantial social impact we'd have by bringing it to the masses. It is important to understand that a company is only a vehicle to create the change you want to see brought into the world at scale. Commonly entrepreneurs ask me, "how did you manage to add such a captivating social mission to such a profitable business model?" I tell them that they are thinking about it backwards. Your passion – your purpose - for starting the business should always come first. Whether it's a socially impactful business or not, it's vitally important to fall in love with whatever you start if you want it to grow and thrive. Why? Because things get tough, and sometimes when you're the

only one who still believes, love is all you have to keep you going. The money will come and go. But falling in love with your ability to improve peoples' lives helps you find your purpose here on earth. And nobody can take that away from you. Holding on to your purpose is what makes building a business worth it.

**No matter what your career brings, do you think it is important for all business students to have some exposure to programming and education in social innovation and sustainability?**

I think it's vital for all students to be exposed to some sort of social innovation and sustainability-focused education, but especially business students! Exposure to social innovation helps you find your passion. After all, how are you going to start a business if you don't know what change you want to bring to the world?

Business is only for the bravehearted, it's not all about the glory, money, fame, or success. In fact, it's the opposite. What keeps you going when everything else is telling you that you should quit? It's your passion and desire. Social innovation and sustainability help students find that within themselves – heck, it did for me!

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