The Entrepreneurs in Residence Program engages successful business school alumni and other accomplished practitioners who can provide entrepreneurial advice and guidance to students, faculty and staff of Columbia University. Visit gsb.columbia.edu/entrepreneurship to request an appointment.

Please contact Chris Bustamante, Program Coordinator at cb3163@columbia.edu or call 212-854-9894 with any questions regarding the program.

Professor Clifford Schorer
Director, Entrepreneur in Residence Program

Following a successful business career as an entrepreneur in 2001 Cliff joined the Columbia Business School faculty as the Entrepreneur in Residence. In addition to teaching “Launching New Ventures,” he serves as faculty advisor to the Eugene M. Lang Investment Fund and in 1999 initiated the Greenhouse Business Incubator Program. In the spring of 2005, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Award for his contribution to the study of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Columbia Business School. He is sincerely committed to the development and nurturing the spirit of innovation and the fre+e enterprise process. In 2007 he was awarded the Dean's award for teaching excellence. In 2012 the Business School named a fund in his honor for his support the Greenhouse program for launching new ventures from.

Throughout his business career, Cliff specialized in launching high tech companies. His focus is on businesses with unique ideas or technologies that require energy and guidance during their initial growth phases. His companies include a variety of enterprises ranging from medical electronics to video production. The companies include the first Sharp Electronics distributorship in the US, Micromedia Applied Technologies, and Real Estate Development Corporation.

In the early 1990’s he was awarded the National Office Products Association’s award for the Industry’s Most Innovative Product: a touch tone order entry system designed in conjunction
with AT&T. At the present time he serves as the Co-CEO and Co-Founder of Greenwich Energy Solutions, a company specializing in creating energy efficient environments in commercial buildings.

During the early 1990’s he worked in Russia on behalf of the United Nations to assist in the privatization process by helping to identify entrepreneurial opportunities that would assist in the development of the “new economy.” This included multiple trips to Siberia where he assisted in the implementation of Western management and entrepreneurial practices in the oil industry.

He holds a number of board seats including Landauer Metropolitan, a large privately owned supplier of medical equipment. In addition he served as Chairman of RecycleBank, currently serving over 3 million homes with rewards for recycling. Cliff also serves on the board of Out2Play, a nonprofit which has built over 30 playgrounds for New York City elementary schools.

Cliff serves in a consultative and Executive Education capacity to senior management in global corporations including Alcatel Lucent’s Bell Labs, Glaxo SKB, Pfizer, Forbes, Novartis, Telefonica, Bovis Lend Lease, and Sony. In addition, he serves as an Emcee and public speaker for national and international corporate programs. He is also the author of Grow, a financial management software package for emerging companies.

Laurence Blumberg, MD '94

Laurence (Laur) has extensive experience in the business of medicine, as an entrepreneur, operating executive and as an investor. He is currently the CEO & President of Syntimmune Inc, which he co-founded with his brother Richard Blumberg, MD in late 2013. Syntimmune is developing breakthrough first in class biologics for autoimmune disease, and is full capitalized following a $28m Series A from Apple Tree Partners, Baxalta Ventures and Partners Innovation Fund. Immediately prior to this, Laur was Senior Vice President, Project Management at Kadmon Corporation, responsible for leading cross-functional and cross-regional activities with respect to integration and coordination of new product development activities. He also led business development at the time of the company’s founding in 2009. Prior to Kadmon, Laur co-founded in 1998, also with his brother Richard, and served on the board of directors of Syntonix Pharmaceuticals through its sale to Biogen-Idec in 2007. Syntonix has formed the basis of the Hemophilia program at Biogen-Idec which received regulatory approvals in 2014. From
1999-2007, Laur was Managing Member of Blumberg Capital Management, a life science and healthcare investment partnership and prior to that Laur was the senior global biotechnology and medical device analyst for Alliance Capital from 1994-1999. In his earlier career he served in associate level roles in venture capital and public equity all in life sciences at The Castle Group, Ltd, and S Squared Technology Corp respectively. Laur also serves, since the first half of 2013, as an Entrepreneur in Residence at Columbia Business School and has a passion for innovation and is committed to entrepreneurship. Laur received a BA from Brandeis University in 1983, magna cum laude, with highest honors in physics, an M.D. from Temple University School of Medicine in 1987, and an Executive MBA from Columbia University School of Business in 1994. He completed an Internship in Surgery at Abington Memorial Hospital and subsequently received Otolaryngology training at Geisinger Medical Center.

Derek Lee is the co-founding partner of LG Fairmont Group, a technology-enabled real estate brokerage founded in 2010. The company has since become one of the fastest growing real estate firms in New York. Mr. Lee is an obsessive entrepreneur and previously founded companies that range from quantitative finance to non-profit fundraising. His first venture, Riverbend Capital Group, was the management company of a quantitative global-macro hedge fund and investment advisory company. Mr. Lee's areas of expertise include process invention, digital customer acquisition, behavioral economics, and quantitative finance. His Theory of Market Dynamics played an integral role in quantitative trading for Riverbend Capital Partners.

Mr. Lee has lectured at several top business schools in the United States and China and has been featured in the Wall Street Journal and NPR. Derek holds a B.S. in Finance from the University of Virginia and an MBA from Columbia Business School.
With a background as an operator, investor, Wall Street analyst, and advisor to software companies, Jim brings unrivaled insight to every phase of the business life cycle, from start-up to established public company. Over the course of his career, he has raised more than $4 billion for various software ventures in the U.S., Europe, Israel and Asia.

From his work as an analyst and investor, Jim has gained a deep understanding of fundamental technology trends, including big data/analytics, cloud and mobile computing, social enterprise, cyber security and healthcare IT. He also has unmatched transactional expertise by virtue of his extensive involvement with hundreds of M&A transactions, IPOs, follow-on offerings, and private placements.

Jim keeps up his “hands on” knowledge of the operational side of companies through his investment and close mentoring of tech startups, from advisement on business plans and financial structuring to development of teams and products. He is currently working with companies in cloud computing, mobile gaming, cyber, and new media.

Prior to establishing J. Moore in 2008, Jim was managing director of North Point Advisors, an M&A firm which he helped grow to the $9 billion transaction level. Before that, he was a partner at Alex. Brown, and then, following its acquisition by Deutsche Bank, served as managing director of technology research. Jim established himself on Wall Street and in Silicon Valley as an expert in the enterprise software world, and had the privilege to play a role in the growth of such firms as WebEx, Mercury Interactive, Business Objects, BEA Systems, and Tibco. He also published research for many years on industry giants such as Microsoft, Oracle and SAP.

Jim arrived on Wall Street in the early 1990s after ten years of experience in technical and operational positions with various software companies. He has been quoted in the Wall Street Journal, New York Times, Financial Times, The Economist and Forbes. He has also been a frequent guest on CNBC, CNN and Bloomberg News.

Jim holds a BA in Economics from the University of Colorado and an MBA from Columbia Business School. When not working, he can be found on his ranch just North of San Francisco or
running, skiing, or swimming. He was recognized as Man of the Year by the San Francisco YMCA for his dedication to helping underserved youth in the community.

Austin Okere

Mr. Austin Okere is the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Computer Warehouse Group, one of the fastest growing Information and Communication Technology companies in Africa today.

Computer Warehouse Group was founded by Mr. Okere in September 1992. It has grown over the years from just a computer hardware supply company to a Pan-African Multinational Systems Integration Corporation with direct operations in Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda and Cameroon, and serving customers in 17 other African countries. From an initial annual turnover of under a million dollars, CWG now has a turnover of about US$130 million, and staff strength of about 650 professionals.

He holds a BSc (Hons.) degree in Computer Sciences from the University of Lagos, and an Executive MBA degree from the International Graduate School of Management (IESE), Spain, after a preparatory period at the Prestigious Lagos Business School. He has had 25 years industry experience covering roles in systems analysis, sales and marketing, and corporate management, with 20 years as Chief Executive Officer of the Computer Warehouse Group. In 2012 Austin was named ICT Man of the Decade by ICT Watch Africa Digital Network, and CWG was named Conglomerate of the Year. In 2011 he was also named the ICT Personality of the year by Technology Africa, and the most outstanding ICT Personality of the Decade in 2010 by ICT Watch Africa. The Computer Warehouse Group was recently ranked among the top 50 Technology Companies in West Africa.

The journey to these achievements has been documented in a Case Study by the Columbia Business School, and has been used in various Entrepreneurship Development Centres and Business Schools in the United States, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Kenya.
Okere’s ardent interest in inspiring young entrepreneurs has been globally recognized through his invitations by the Eugene Lang Entrepreneurial Center to guest lecture at the Columbia Business School over the past five years, and also at MIT’s Legatum Center for Development and Entrepreneurship in Boston. He has facilitated the Lean Launch Pad Block Week at Columbia Business School with serial entrepreneurs Steve Blank and Bob Dorf, co-authors of the ‘Start-up Owner’s Manual.’

Austin is a member of the Board of the National Competitiveness Council of Nigeria (NCCN), and serves in many other professional bodies including Frontier 100 (Initiative for Global Development IGD), Nigeria-South Africa Chamber of Commerce, Nigeria Economic Summit Group (NESG) and Nigerian Computer Society (NCS). He has been recognized in many publications across the continent as one of the pillars of African entrepreneurship. He is happily married to Sola, his wife of 18 years, and they are blessed with two lovely sons, Omimi and Chimezuo.

David Olk

David is the co-founder of ShopKeep, a technology company that provides cloud-based operating software to over 15,000 small and medium businesses. As one of the Company’s founders, COO and CFO, David helped build ShopKeep from a kernel of an idea to one of New York’s largest software as a service companies. Prior to ShopKeep, David was Director of Mergers and Acquisitions of IAC, Barry Diller's publicly traded holding company of numerous consumer facing technology brands including Tinder, Match, Vimeo, College Humor, Citysearch, Ticketmaster, and Ask. David spent the first part of his career with PricewaterhouseCoopers' Mergers and Acquisitions team. An early board member and advisor for Kickstarter, David currently is a board member or advisor for Tattle, Vengo, SmartHost, and a number of early stage NYC based businesses. He’s a certified SCUBA dive instructor, decent skier, and has run a few Triathlons as a member of the Michael J Fox Foundation's Team Fox. A Certified Public Accountant, David has an undergraduate degree in Accounting from Tulane University and an MBA from Columbia University. He currently resides in Manhattan with his wife and son.
Lauren Perkins is a Brand Marketer, Community Builder, and Author of The Community Manager’s Playbook: How to Build Brand Awareness and Customer Engagement (Apress, 2015). As the founder & CEO of Perks Consulting, Lauren has spent a decade teaching growth stage companies to “Think like a Brand. Act like a Startup.” through her expertise in leading brand marketing and digital innovation. With a genuine love for helping and teaching people, she is a founding instructor at General Assembly teaching digital insights, brand strategy, community management and agile marketing. Find her on Twitter @laurenperkins.

Kevin Quinn ’91

Kevin is currently the founder of Genki Advisory, an advisory and investment firm. For over 20 years, Kevin was employed at Goldman, Sachs & Co. where he worked with high tech companies in the firm’s investment banking division. Kevin served in a number of senior roles in Goldman Sachs’ New York, San Francisco and Tokyo offices. He retired as a partner from Goldman Sachs in 2012. Today, Kevin is an active angel investor. He is a graduate of Columbia College and Columbia Business School. Kevin resides in Short Hills, NJ with his wife, Jane and their three children.
Recognized as an expert in all stages of entrepreneurship, since 2008 Barbara has worked with the Columbia Business School in a variety of roles. She is an Adjunct Professor, teaching the Lean Launchpad methodology with Steve Blank, has worked with over 50 Harlem-based existing businesses as the director for Columbia Community Business Program, and has helped to launch over 100 companies through her programs and incubators for Columbia startups. Barbara also co-wrote the CBS whitepaper entitled “Life after an Exit.”

Trained as an economist, Barbara began her career on Wall Street and rose to become the first woman on Dean Witter's Board of Directors. When denied a seat on the executive committee, she left Wall Street and was included in the Wall Street Journal article that coined the term “The Glass Ceiling.”

She then transitioned to become President/ CEO of FPG International and then Acoustiguide. As President of FPG, Barbara developed one of the first cd and on-line delivery systems for photographs and was recognized as an early champion of the portrayal of non-white models in commercial photography. For this, President Clinton presented her with the Business Enterprise Award for "acts of courage, integrity and social vision.” The story of how she led FPG is a Harvard socially responsible business case study. The company is now part of Getty Images. As President of Acoustiguide, she restructured a 40 year old company to be an award-winning audio content and technology developer for museums worldwide and chaired a joint venture with the Chinese government to run audio and visitor services at their historical sites, including the Forbidden City. Acoustiguide was merged with Espro.

Barbara has served as Chair of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York’s Small Business and Agricultural Advisory Committee and helped to develop Silicon Alley as a member of the board of the Union Square Partnership. Barbara currently is a member of the Suffolk County Planning Commission and serves as co-chair of the county’s Farm Committee. She is a past president of the Financial Womens Association and helped found the New York Women’s Agenda and New York Women’s Foundation. She won the Mayor’s Volunteer Award and was featured as NY1’s "New Yorker of the Week" for her work with inner-city schools.
In addition to her work at Columbia, Barbara currently is a group chair for Tiger21, the peer learning group for entrepreneurs who have sold businesses for $10 million or more. She is an angel investor and serves on the boards of a number of privately held companies. She is certified as a master coach by the Hudson Institute of Santa Barbara and trained in facilitation and mediation. Barbara has an Economics and Philosophy degree from Goucher College.

Asha Saxena

Asha Saxena is the President and CEO of Future Technologies, Inc. (FTI), an international Data Management Solutions firm with global headquarters in Plainfield, NJ. The firm specializes in providing Management and Technology Consulting around Business Intelligence and Data Warehousing.

Ms. Saxena graduated as a Computer Science Engineer from Bangalore University, India and attended Management Programs at MIT and London Business School. In the area of Operational Excellence, Ms. Saxena is certified as a Six Sigma Black Belt professional. She started her professional career in a New York based IT firm and enjoyed challenging and diverse assignments in the Financial Services Industry.

In 1996, she founded FTI and grew the company 100% within the first five years. FTI has serviced over 100 companies and completed over 500 projects with such companies as Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan Chase, Federal Reserve Bank, Deutsche Bank, NY Times, Forbes, Movado, and many more. FTI growth was a result of focused vision with defined goals; creating strategies, plans and budgets to meet the company’s growth. Ms. Saxena was invited to be a part of World Economic Forum where Future Technologies Inc. was named as “Global Growth Company 2007” at the World Economic Forum.

Ms. Saxena’s entrepreneurial spirit has also enabled her to gain notable success as a New York City restaraunteur, real estate developer, and major movie studio producer. Ms. Saxena has been a leader in the community by developing long-lasting relationships with numerous organizations (both profit and not-for-profit), through memberships, affiliations, and mentorships, and has received awards for her personal and professional contributions.
Wim is a proven technology, innovation, and business leader. He is currently an Executive-in-Residence at Columbia University and an adjunct faculty in NYU's entrepreneurship program. He also is a consultant advising several start-ups in the mobile data space. Until the end of 2012, he was the President of Alcatel-Lucent's Wireless Division where he lead the global development and deployment of LTE 4G technology and oversaw the introduction of the award winning lightRadio small cell portfolio.

Earlier in his role as VP of Network Technology, Wim took the company’s Applications Enablement strategy from paper to practice. This strategy allows service providers to open and leverage their networks for the development of new services and applications. As founder and leader of Alcatel-Lucent Ventures, a strategic new business incubator and investment division inside of Bell Labs, Wim managed the lifecycle, from concept to commercialization, for eight ventures, ranging from enterprise & consumer applications to groundbreaking mobile innovations for operators.

An innovator at heart, Wim developed several compression algorithms including the one used in the JPEG2000 standard. He authored and co-authored several top cited technical papers and was a member of MIT Technology Review’s inaugural class of top young innovators, the 1999 TR100. Global Telecoms Business selected Wim for its “Power 100 of 2009” list for his customer focus, attention to excellence, and accelerating ideas to market. He is a fellow of the IEEE and member of the Royal Belgian Academy of Sciences.

Wim received his PhD in Computer Science from the University of Leuven, Belgium. He lives with his family in New Jersey.