The real journey began in the Fall of 2011 when I registered for the class “Living the Social Entrepreneurial Experience”. According to the course description, I would be expected to learn how to build and lead a social venture by the end of the semester. This was a personal challenge from the professor teaching the course.

What brought Alina and I together as partners in this course was our shared interests in youth development, education and social innovation collaboration. From these interests stemmed our social venture, which is known as Changemakers Connect.

Changemakers Connect was created with the intention of connecting socially responsible individuals by providing a space where collaboration on socially driven projects could take place. In its initial form, Changemakers Connect was an online platform structured to provide a collaborative, social networking service to college and university members. Driven by the mindset that we were partners with both our customers and the greater community at large, Alina and I sought to create a communicative and flexible structure.

The question was how would we be able to carry on with this project with our limited resources even after the course was over? The answer was the Taylor Scholar Program.

That is what our passion project became. It incorporated what we were passionate about—empowering socially responsible individuals to collaborate—and our formula for success—activism plus community building equals real change.

The Taylor Scholar Program provided the opportunity for me to engage with other like-minded students who were committed to service, community engagement, and social responsibility. It was a safe environment to take risk, experiment and develop my passion project. I was able to live and put into practice my entrepreneurial thought and action.

Midway through my final semester at Babson, I was able to connect with MBA student, Mathew Paisner, who had started a similar venture called AltruHelp. After various conversations and meetings, Alina and I decided that the best route for Changemakers Connect, our passion project, was to collaborate with AltruHelp. Matt, Alina and I shared the same values and interests. It was the best possible blend that enabled us to work together towards implementing our original idea into the existing AltruHelp platform.

By the end of the semester, Alina and I successfully turned a passion into an idea, which has turned into a sustainable venture implemented into the AltruHelp platform as well as continue its presence via a campus ambassador through the Taylor Scholar Program. The program has allowed me to realize my full potential as an entrepreneur. Not only did I develop a project as part of the program, I took it a step further by embracing it into what I breath and live. My Taylor Scholar passion project has, to a certain extent, shaped who I am—an aspiring social entrepreneur.