

## **PENSOLE LEWIS COLLEGE OF BUSINESS & DESIGN FAQ**

Pensole Lewis College of Business and Design is the name chosen to be used by the Lewis College of Business once it begins operating as an accredited educational corporation as authorized by the State of Michigan

### **1. When does PLC open for enrollment?**

PLC will open for enrollment in January 2022. For updates, please sign-up for the school's newsletter [here](#).

### **2. When is the first day of classes?**

PLC's first classes will take place in May 2022 and will be located in CCS's A. Alfred Taubman Center for Design Education until its permanent home in Detroit is selected and developed.

### **3. What courses will be taught at PLC?**

PLC is the nation's first HBCU to focus on design. Specific courses and additional specializations will be announced later this fall.

### **4. How much does tuition cost to attend Pensole Lewis College?**

Pensole Lewis College will provide substantial tuition assistance for all students enrolled. More details on this coming soon.

### **8. How will Pensole Lewis College partner with the College for Creative Studies?**

The College for Creative Studies is an ideal partner for Pensole Lewis College, given CCS's long history of providing talent to the footwear industry. The launch of Pensole Lewis College would not be possible without the operational support from the College for Creative Studies. Through this joint venture, CCS and Pensole Lewis College will help meet the demand from industry partners in the design community for an increasingly diverse workforce.

The partnership will allow CCS to develop richer outcomes for its student body, including more experiential learning opportunities, better career pathways for its students, and greater access to relevant industry mentors. For Pensole Lewis College, CCS's history in Detroit as an established, reputable academic and operational infrastructure is one that can support the re-opening of the school. Beginning in 2022, CCS will provide Pensole Lewis College space in its state of the art A. Alfred Taubman Center for Design Education for classes.

### **9. Who is Pensole Lewis College Founder, Dr. D'Wayne Edwards?**

Dr. D'Wayne Edwards is the most prominent Black designer in the footwear industry. With a 32+ year career, including over three decades from L.A. Gear, Nike and Jordan, Dr. Edwards is credited with paving the way for young Black design talent to have a career in the sneaker industry. Dr. Edwards is the founder of PENSOLE Design Academy in Portland, OR, but he started in the industry after graduating from Inglewood High School, working in accounts payable at LA Gear. Through sheer will and perseverance (and 180, pencil-drawn sneaker sketches), he landed a role as a full-time designer with the popular lifestyle brand. His career ballooned from there, and he went on to work as Nike's footwear design director from 2001 to 2011 where he designed sneakers for the Jordan brand. Collectively he has 50+

design patents and designed over 500+ styles with his designs having sold over \$2 billion worldwide.

In 2010, Edwards founded PENSOLE, the first academy in the U.S. dedicated to footwear design, to provide talented young design students, regardless of socioeconomic background, an opportunity to learn from the industry's best.

PENSOLE has quickly become the preeminent footwear design school in the world specializing in footwear, functional apparel and accessories, color & materials, prototyping, and concept making. PENSOLE provides a hybrid model - part vocational school, part apprenticeship. It operates as a popular feeder school for some of the industry's top footwear brands and retailers, and has placed more than 500+ former PENSOLE alums in positions working professionally for some of today's top brands: Nike, Under Armour, Adidas, New Balance, Brooks, Vans, Puma, Timberland, JORDAN, and others globally.

Dr. Edwards founded PENSOLE in part because of how difficult it was for him to come through the industry and get started. Today, roughly 95% of PENSOLE's student body comes from diverse or multicultural backgrounds. As an educator Dr. Edwards has taught and lectured at some of the premiere schools in the world, including ArtCenter, Parsons, MIT, and Harvard, and has spoken at the Clinton Global Conference.

President Barack Obama awarded him the President's Volunteer of Service Award in 2016. In 2019, ArtCenter College of Design recognized Dr. Edwards' career as a designer and educator by awarding him an honorary doctorate, making him the fourth person in the college's 90-year history to receive this honor.

### **3. Who is Lewis College of Business Founder, Violet T. Lewis?**

Dr. Violet Temple Lewis was a pioneer in the development of Black secretaries in the Midwest. She was born in 1897 in Lima, Ohio and attended an HBCU, Wilberforce University in Ohio. After graduating in 1917, she worked at Selma University for a year before becoming a bookkeeper at the Madame CJ Walker Company. She worked for the Indianapolis Recorder from 1920 to 1927. Throughout her career, she observed the lack of Black women secretaries and after securing a \$50 loan from a local bank opened up the Lewis Business College in 1928 in Indianapolis. The school's mission was to provide Black women with the same secretarial skills she had acquired in college. In 1938, Lewis opened a branch of the school in Detroit, MI which would go on to outgrow the original school in Indiana.

In 1987, Lewis College of Business (LCB) in Detroit was designated as an HBCU - only the 3rd Black woman to found an HBCU and only the fourth HBCU in the Midwest, and the only in the state of Michigan. GM, Ford, and Michigan Bell all hired their first Black office employees from the school. LCB enrollment grew 600% in one year showing the demand the college created for Black office employees. Her impact on the city of Detroit was recognized with a memorial highway sign on M-10 in 2021.