MyRain

ACARA CHALLENGE ’10
Since 2010, MyRain has been working to distribute drip irrigation and other innovative agricultural technologies in Tamil Nadu, India. With the mission of improving environmental conditions and enabling sustainable economic development for small-plot farmers, MyRain continues to expand its dealer network, manufacturing partners and product offerings.

Eat for Equity

ACARA CHALLENGE ’11
Eat for Equity is a nonprofit that organizes monthly benefit dinners, engaging communities to eat, drink and raise funding for a greater cause. Building on its success in Minneapolis, Boston, and Portland, E4E will use a mobile kitchen tour to bring their community-driven model to cities across the country.

BlueFood

ACARA CHALLENGE ’12
BlueFood began as a food safety consulting and certification service working with street food vendors in Delhi, India. The venture pivoted and is now working to produce fish and greens for the local food market in the Twin Cities. They will use proven aquaponic technology to grow mercury-free fish indoors right in customers’ backyards.
WHAT IS ACARA?

Acara is an innovative and interdisciplinary environmental entrepreneurship program. We give emerging entrepreneurs a chance to envision and launch social ventures in the U.S. and India. We offer a series of courses and incubation actions to educate students and develop sustainable enterprises focused on societal and environmental change. Acara is managed by the Institute on the Environment in collaboration with the College of Science and Engineering and the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota.

WHAT DO WE DO?

TEACH STUDENTS

Discovery, India (CE 5570)
In this winter-term course students explore infrastructure, environment and development issues in Delhi, India.

Acara Challenge (CE 5571)
Interdisciplinary teams of U.S. and Indian students design social ventures in this semester-long course.

Acara Create (CE 5572/5573)
Teams of students design and refine domestic and international social ventures in these courses.

Social Venture Design Workshops
We offer short venture design courses in the U.S., India and Africa for entrepreneurs to turn ideas into viable ventures.

INCUBATE VENTURES

Acara Challenge
In this competition teams pitch venture plans to an expert panel. Winning teams receive seed funding to pilot their start-ups.

Acara Summer Institute
Top teams from the Acara Challenge attend the Summer Institute, an intense three-week venture design program in Bangalore.

Impact Venture Fellowships
Students work on their own venture in partnership with existing start-ups in the U.S. or India.

Impact Venture Reviews
In monthly evening sessions, entrepreneurs pitch and receive feedback to help launch or expand their ventures.

WHAT DO WE STAND FOR?

Acara has a dual mission of education plus impact. Our vision is to educate and inspire the next generation of leaders to develop innovative business solutions to real-world global challenges. We aim to incubate the best teams and ideas beyond the classroom. To achieve our goals, we work with an ecosystem of venture, university and corporate partners in the United States and internationally.

Acara was founded in November 2008 by a diverse team of experienced professionals with a passion for developing social ventures and nurturing future leaders.