TEDx and other events: Andrej Pivčević – the organizer

What interests him about this event? That’s easy. Andrej Pivčević wants to drive changes forward, support good ideas, motivate people to change their way of thinking and make the world a little bit of a better place. And that is, after all, the spirit of the TEDx event, organized by the 22-year-old, that Jacobs University will be holding on Saturday, March 17.

“Ideas worth spreading”, is the motto of TED, the annual innovation conference that originally started in the United States but is now held throughout the world. The basic idea is to inspire others. The movers and shakers have carefully selected the dandelion as their symbol for the one-day, public conference at Jacobs University. An idea matures in its stem, but the seeds need support, they need the wind, for the seeds to spread and thrive. Pivčević wants to generate this wind.

One of the speakers is Jens Kemper who developed IN-Touch at the University of Bremen, a program for integrating refugee academics at the state universities in Bremen, which has become a model for many institutions. Other presenters include Swedish science communicator Olle Bergmann and Stina Scheer, physics student at the Max Planck Institute for Gravitational Physics (Albert Einstein Institute) in Hanover.

Andrej Pivčević’s organization of TEDx is no coincidence. “Voluntary work is an important part of my life”, he says. He held his first voluntary job at age 14 as group leader at a youth center in Hutrop, a suburb of Essen, where he grew up. He was a member of the student council and on the board of Sportjugend (a sports association for young people) and, when he came to Jacobs University, he continued with his voluntary work – on and off campus.

Pivčević, once an enthusiastic water polo player, is a board member of Bremer Sportjugend. He represented Jacobs University’s students on the academic senate and organized various things such as a talent show and the “Respect Challenge 2017” on campus. “We want to motivate people to actively show respect”, he says of the goal of this campaign, that he developed at the Counseling & Intercultural Services Team at Jacobs University. The foundation was a Facebook page with an empty heart that needed to be filled – by students expressing their thanks and appreciation to others who generally do not receive it. By the end of the campaign, the heart overflowed.

“The university makes it easy – there are many opportunities of becoming involved and challenging yourself personally”, says Pivčević, who came to Jacobs University because it was important for him to study at an intercultural, transdisciplinary, English-medium university. The subjects offered also played a role. He is studying Global Economics and Management with a minor in Psychology – a rare combination, that is possible at Jacobs University.

“The cool thing about Jacobs University is that you’re living and working with people of different nationalities, backgrounds and disciplines”, says Pivčević. “I meet people from China, Tanzania and Indonesia, biochemists and computer scientists, who all look at a topic from completely different viewpoints than myself. I find it fascinating to balance it all and to tap into all this diversity”. 
Andrej, whose parents come from Croatia, will be completing his three-year bachelor’s degree in the summer. He then intends to gain some professional experience, perhaps working for a management consultancy or a venture capitalist. He is not quite sure yet exactly which one he will choose.

For the long term, however, he has a different dream. He would like to establish his own company, a start-up financing social enterprises. “These companies take societies forward, but are often not yet profitable and require financing”, he says. He would like to assist these companies by providing risk capital, at an international level where possible. And he has already had a taste of what is important when establishing your own company – as one of the organizers of the annual Jacobs Startup Competition.

More information:
https://www.ted.com/tedx/events/24406
http://www.jacobs-startup.com/

About Jacobs University:
Jacobs University is a private, independent, English-medium university in Bremen. Young people from all over the world study here in preparatory, Bachelor, Master, and PhD programs. Internationality and transdisciplinarity are special features of Jacobs University: research and teaching don’t just pursue a single approach, they address issues from the perspectives of multiple disciplines. This principle makes Jacobs graduates highly sought-after new talents who successfully strike out on international career paths.

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Andrej Pivčević studies Global Economics and Management with a minor in Psychology.
Photo: Jacobs University
Andrej Pivcevic organizes a TEDx talk at Jacobs University.  
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