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**University of Michigan's Zell Lurie Institute Awards \$129,500 to Student Startups in 32nd Annual Business Plan Competition and Dare to Dream Grant Program**

*Most Promising Business Companion Receives \$20,000 for its Peer-to-Peer Safety App*

**Ann Arbor, Mich. – Feb. 23, 2015** – [The Samuel Zell & Robert H. Lurie Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies](#) at the University of Michigan's Stephen M. Ross School of Business today announced the winners of the 32nd annual [Michigan Business Challenge](#), as well as recipients of the Applebaum [Dare to Dream](#) and Mayleben Family Venture Shaping Grants. The business plan competition and grant programs, which recognize promising student-led startups, provided grants and funding totaling \$129,500 this year.

"The student teams who competed in this year's Michigan Business Challenge demonstrated tremendous entrepreneurial spirit, work ethic and commitment," said Stewart Thornhill, executive director of the Samuel Zell & Robert H. Lurie Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies. "Our hope is that with the resources awarded today, the winning student teams will achieve even greater success and continue to boost the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Michigan."

**Michigan Business Challenge**

The Michigan Business Challenge is a four-month, multi-round competition that began in the fall with students from across the University's 19 schools and colleges. Round one hosted 80 teams in December. Of these, 22 teams advanced to round two where the field was narrowed down to eight semi-finalist teams. On Friday, February 20, the final eight teams were put to the test again, and four finalist teams were chosen to present their businesses to a panel of judges including professional investors. Over \$75,000 was awarded at the competition.

The Pryor-Hale Award for Best Business for \$20,000 went to Companion represented by Danny Freed (BBA '15), Lexie Ernst (BBA '17), Nathan Pilcowitz (BA '15), Kathryn Reiner (BBA '16) and Jake Wayne (BSI '16) for their peer-to-peer safety app that allows family and friends to keep an eye on you as you walk home late at night. Public safety organizations can harness real-time walking data combined with historical walking patterns and a predictive engine to determine the optimal placement of officers. "MBC was an amazing opportunity for us to grow as a team and really think through our business," said Danny Freed. "We couldn't have done it without the help of everyone from Zell Lurie and are excited to see what the future holds." The team also received the Most Successful Undergraduate team award for \$2,500 as well as the Marketing Award sponsored by Marketing Associates for \$2,500.

Other top winners included:

- **The Pryor-Hale Runner-up award for Best Business for \$10,000 and the Williamson Award for the most outstanding business and engineering team for \$5,000** went to **RainDance Recovery** represented by CW Bourgeois (MsE '15), Courtney Dansby (MsE '15), Jonathan Lilley (MsE '15) and Alexander Perlman (MsE '15) for their mobile water distillation rigs (RainMakers) that can filter clean water at oil wells that naturally produce, which can be used in ongoing oil and gas operations or sold for local industry.
- **The Outstanding Presentation awards for \$2,000 each** went to **CubeWorks and Graduate**. Cubeworks, represented by Zhiyong Foo (PhD '13), Gyouho Kim (PhD '14), Pat Pannuto (PhD '16) and Nikhil Prem (MBA '16) is a millimeter-scale wireless sensing platform, which will be used in glucose monitoring application to improve the quality of life of diabetic patients. The fully implantable continuous glucose monitor eliminates the inconvenience and discomfort of existing products. Graduate, represented by Eric Katz (BBA '17) and Camille Merritt (MBA '16) is a mobile application

that allows students and parents to view which graduation requirements the student has completed, is currently working toward, and still needs to complete in order to graduate from high school in four years. Graduate helps students make a plan and stick to it.

- **The Best Written Plan award for \$2,000 went to Stethos**, represented by Courtland Keteyian (MD/MBA '11), Farrukh Mohammed (MBA '07) and Andrew Plaska (MD '17), for their attachment that easily and reversibly converts a mechanical stethoscope into an electronic stethoscope, allowing sounds to be recorded, analyzed and played back within the earpieces.
- **The Marketing Award sponsored by Marketing Associates \$2,500 went to South Asian Flavors**, represented by Harinee Sampath (PTMBA '15) for her exotic food company offering premium healthy, savory yogurt-based snacking dips in a variety of South Asian flavors, made with natural ingredients.
- **\$1,000 to each of the Finalists that didn't receive a larger award**
- **\$500 to each of the Semi-final teams that participated in the competition**
- **\$200 to each of the 16 teams that advanced from Round One and competed in Round Two**

### **The Social Impact Track**

New to this year's competition is the Social Impact Track, presented in partnership with the [Frederick A. and Barbara M. Erb Institute](#) and the [Center for Social Impact](#), which was introduced to stimulate the creation of new businesses, products or services that prioritize social and/or environmental considerations. Three teams competed in the finals on February 20.

The prize for \$15,000 went to Blueprints for Pangaea, represented by Anna Chen (BS '16), Olivia Cholewa (BSN '16), Jungwoo Ha (BS '16), Raj Kadiyala (BS '15), Danny Luan (BS '17), Ben Rathi (BBA/BS '17), and Sanjay Reddy (BS '17). Pangaea will provide accessible healthcare to communities in emergent nations by engaging the abilities of undergraduates nationwide. Ultimately the company hopes to establish a systematic method of collecting unused medical supplies from local hospitals and shipping them to targeted areas in emerging nations. "The Michigan Business Challenge not only improved our ability to concisely present our business plan, but more importantly, it afforded us an opportunity to receive critical feedback on our venture," said Ben Rathi. "The prize money is a blessing that will propel us into the direction of success, and will be directly used for reducing pollution and saving lives."

### **Dare to Dream Student Startup Grant Recipients**

The Dare to Dream Grant program funds students looking to test their business idea, formulate a plan and work toward launching their business while earning their degree. The first phase, a Venture Shaping grant of \$500 sponsored by the Mayleben family, allows teams to determine how to transform identified opportunities into businesses. More advanced teams may apply for a \$1,500 Assessment grant to establish the feasibility of their business or a \$5,000 Integration grant to move their company toward launch. Grants are awarded in the fall and winter terms. Grants totaling \$21,000 were awarded during the Fall 2014 semester and grants totaling \$34,500 will be awarded winter term 2015 among 24 student teams.

The Dare to Dream Fall 2014 program awarded grants to the following teams:

#### **Applebaum Dare to Dream Integration Grant of \$5,000:**

- **South Asian Flavors** - an exotic food company offering premium healthy, savory yogurt-based snacking dips in a variety of South Asian flavors, made with natural ingredients.

#### **Applebaum Dare to Dream Assessment Grants of \$1,500:**

- **AutoScientist.com** - an online website platform that automates data scientist operations by using machine learning to understand what data scientists are looking for in every new dataset.
- **BetterHope** - an online marketplace for products made with dignity.
- **Incearch** - a referral-based recruiting platform.

- **Pet Perch** - solves a fundamental problem faced by pet owners who co-sleep with their furry companions by offering a product that secures to the bed and allows the pets a space of their own.
- **Range Messenger** - offers hyper-local, real time deals and messages using our patented "Digital Sonar" within a user defined distance to drive retail business or for individual use.

#### **Mayleben Family Venture Shaping Grants of \$500:**

- **CookForMe** - an online marketplace that connects cooks in a local community with customers who want the convenience of food cooked in their homes without compromising on nutritional needs and their health.
- **Legacy Peak Capital** - utilizing Medicare, health system, and payor claims data, provides full transparency into the cost and quality of Post-Acute Care providers by disease state and provide relative rankings.
- **Eat Food** - a platform that makes it easy to plan, buy, and track our food consumption.
- **EnergyHarvesting** - a device that harvests the kinetic energy created by eye movements and provides this energy to implanted ophthalmic medical devices.
- **Allergenesis** - application that allows individuals to create a profile with their specific food allergies and/or intolerances, filter fast-food menus by ingredients, and locate fast-food restaurants near them.
- **FindMyHome** - aims to be the "eHarmony for Home Search."
- **Augmented Technologies** - a training suit for emergency scenarios.
- **Graduate** - a platform for students and parents that tracks students' progress towards high school graduation.
- **Incearch** - a referral-based recruiting platform.
- **Local Products Discovery** - a database of Chinese local snacks and commodities.
- **Local Seeds** - links investors, innovators, and retailers through a "Hub", a centralized point for communication and negotiation that would create a new entrepreneurial and investment landscape.
- **New Aegis Corporation** - a non-newtonian fluid and foam composite for football helmets that reduces acceleration forces by 30 percent and substantially reduces the resulting shockwave.
- **SmartPlays** - a technology-based, easy-to-use video recording and gameplay-analyzing tool for football coaches.
- **Stiily** - a patent-pending technology that substitutes real fashion models with their virtual dummies and allows endless possibilities to mix and match different articles of clothes and accessories.
- **VeriMab Diagnostics** - a portable point of care testing device that provides rapid feedback for potential allergies.
- **Woila** - a platform that helps urban Indian youth find a match for the purpose of serious dating, possibly leading to a marriage.
- **Yes Now!** - a location-based search that uses the current location of the buyer to search for items and connect with sellers in the neighborhood.

For pictures and more about the day, follow @ZellLurie on Twitter.

#### **About the Samuel Zell & Robert H. Lurie Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies**

The Institute and its Center for Venture Capital and Private Equity Finance bring together a potent mix of knowledge, experience and opportunities from the front lines of entrepreneurship and alternative investments. The student learning experience is further enhanced through internships, entrepreneurial clubs and events that serve to provide viable networks and engage the business community. The School's three student-led investment funds, with over \$6.5M under management, immerse students in the business assessment and investment process. Founding Board Members include Samuel Zell, Chairman of Equity Group Investments and Eugene Applebaum, Founder of Arbor Drugs, Inc. For more information, visit the Institute at [www.zli.bus.umich.edu](http://www.zli.bus.umich.edu).

#### **About Michigan Ross**

The [Stephen M. Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan](http://www.ross.umich.edu) is a vibrant and distinctive learning community grounded in the principle that business can be an extraordinary vehicle for positive change in today's dynamic global economy. The Ross School of Business mission is to develop leaders who make a positive difference in the world. Through thought and action, members of the Ross community drive change and innovation that improves business and society.

Ross is consistently ranked among the world's leading business schools. Academic degree programs include the BBA, MBA, Part-time MBA (Evening and Weekend formats), Executive MBA, Global MBA, Master of Accounting, Master of Supply Chain Management, Master of Management, and PhD. In addition, the school delivers open-enrollment and custom executive education programs targeting general management, leadership development, and strategic human resource management.

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