3-29-2017

Flyer Pitch

University of Dayton

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Recommended Citation
University of Dayton alumnus Zach McHale won first place and $25,000 for his stadium seat device in the University of Dayton’s 11th annual Flyer Pitch competition, one of the largest collegiate-level business plan contests in the country.
McHale's patent-pending Neet Seat is a pouch that can be attached to stadium and arena seats to hold coats and other items. McHale, a 2006 graduate who studied chemical engineering, was announced as the winner during a banquet Tuesday night after six rounds of multi-national competition featuring more than 200 teams.

“The quality of the teams has gotten better year after year,” said Vincent Lewis, director of the L. William Crotty Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership at the University of Dayton. “This year’s six finalists are all fundable business opportunities, with three of the finalists already having sold some products and one already having raised some capital. It is exciting through the course of the competition to see the teams develop ideas and transform them into viable opportunities.”

Cash prizes were awarded to all six finalists. Second place with a $15,000 prize went to HitGrip, designed by former professional baseball player Jim Ward and his daughter, alumna Tiffany Pikas. HitGrip is a patented device to help control hitters’ swings in baseball and golf.

Third place and a $10,000 prize went to S.T.A.R. Initially developed through the University's ETHOS Center, it is an environmentally friendly refrigeration method designed for use in areas without reliable power grids. S.T.A.R. was also selected as one of only 42 teams to compete in the Rice Business Plan Competition, the largest collegiate competition in the country.

The following teams tied for fourth place and won $5,000 each:

Parking Spaces Finder, an app developed by the team that advanced from competition rounds in China and Vietnam.

Powersage, a monitoring and control system to reduce power consumption for multi-family residential buildings.

Ortus, a noise cancelling technology developed by the United States Naval Research Center at Crane, Indiana, for use in industrial facilities.

Throughout the competition, $150,000 in cash prizes and $150,000 of in-kind support was awarded to teams.

More information on Flyer Pitch is available online.

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