



ideaLabs 2024 Celebrates Innovation and Entrepreneurship Among College Students
Collegiate pitch competition brings together 13 NEO colleges and universities

APRIL 12, 2024 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – On April 11, 2024, Eaton Corporation’s prestigious headquarters in Beachwood, Ohio, provided the backdrop for the culmination of ideaLabs 2024, a pitch competition showcasing entrepreneurial talent from Northeast Ohio’s college students. This year’s event marked the fifteenth anniversary of ideaLabs, a testament to its growth and impact within the region.

The atmosphere was electric as enthusiastic applause greeted each entrepreneur who stepped forward to present their meticulously crafted pitches. With each presentation, the passion and dedication of the student entrepreneurs were palpable, reflecting months of preparation and refinement.

Founded fifteen years ago, ideaLabs has evolved into a comprehensive platform offering students the opportunity to compete for prize money, receive feedback from experienced judges, and forge valuable connections within the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Beyond the competition itself, ideaLabs fosters an environment of growth and learning, empowering participants to refine their pitches, validate their ideas, and enhance their business models.

Leading up to ideaLabs 2024, students from participating Member Schools underwent rigorous preparation, honing their pitches in anticipation of the main event. Hosted by Eaton Corporation and presented by Ashland University, this year’s competition featured two distinct tracks: The Big Idea Track, for novel business concepts, and The Money Maker Track, for ventures with a revenue-generating history.

The competition was fierce, with each team delivering compelling presentations that captivated the audience and impressed the panel of expert judges. Following a rigorous evaluation process, the winning teams emerged:

The Big Idea Track:

- **1st** – Additiv; **Founders:** Ashwin Menon, Andrew Shereshevsky, and Amos Langsner, *Case Western Reserve University*
- **2nd** – EquiCounting; **Founder:** Hannah Belich, *Lake Erie College*
- **3rd** – American Milled Putters; **Founders:** Grace Grant and Matthew Scheid, *Ashland University*
- Honorable Mentions –
 - OsteoSonic Stim; **Founder:** Eleanor Ramos, *Lake Erie College*
 - B2M; **Founders:** Ritwik Jha and Elizabeth Jha, *The College of Wooster*

The Money Maker Track:

- **1st** – Dorm Dudes Break; **Founders:** Zach Balo, Joe Beck, and Shane Rue, *Ashland University*
- **2nd** – Cocoa Potash; **Founders:** Ithabeleng Makhetha and Ibrahim Quagraine, *Case Western Reserve University*
- **3rd** – Rolling Refreshments; **Founders:** Audrey Ernst and Vaunden Brunn, *Kent State University*
- Honorable Mentions –
 - Maven N.I.L.; **Founders:** Gabriel Delgado, Santino Jacobozzi, and Spencer Poindexter, *Cleveland State University*
 - Cleveland PretZZel Co; **Founder:** Zachariasz Zoladz, *John Carroll University*

Generous support from Fred A. Lennon Charitable Trust and Burton D. Morgan Foundation made it possible to award cash prizes totaling \$9,000 to the winning teams. Additionally, ideaLabs 2024 was made successful through the sponsorship of industry leaders, including Eaton Corporation as the Changemaker Sponsor and JumpStart Inc. as the Generator Sponsor, alongside Starter Sponsors BudgetEase, Hardesty Imaging, smartBARK!, North Water Productions, and Magnet.

The competition was adjudicated by a panel of esteemed judges, each bringing their expertise and insight to the evaluation process. Students were assessed on various aspects critical to startup success, including problem identification, value proposition, market analysis, and financial projections.

Through its commitment to fostering entrepreneurship and innovation, EEC aims to empower undergraduate students to refine their ideas, hone their pitching skills, and forge invaluable connections within the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The immersive learning experience offered by ideaLabs extends far beyond the competition, equipping students with the tools and confidence needed to navigate the complexities of the startup journey.

EEC extends its gratitude to all participants, sponsors, judges, and supporters for their invaluable contributions to ideaLabs 2024. The success of this year's competition underscores the importance of fostering entrepreneurial talent and innovation within Northeast Ohio's academic community.

As the curtains close on ideaLabs 2024, EEC looks ahead with anticipation to ideaLabs 2025, continuing its mission to empower the next generation of entrepreneurs.

For more information about ideaLabs and the Entrepreneurship Education Consortium, please visit eecohio.org.

About the Entrepreneurship Education Consortium (EEC)

The purpose of the EEC is to provide practical "experiential" and theoretical education to students in Northeast Ohio to prepare them to become entrepreneurs or intrapreneurs; create new ventures and jobs and build wealth for the region. The EEC was founded to promote both the concept and the reality of entrepreneurship among college students of all disciplines.

Visit us at www.eecohio.org

EEC Supporter

About the Burton D. Morgan Foundation

Burton D. Morgan Foundation champions the entrepreneurial spirit, contributes to a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem, and serves as a leader in the field of entrepreneurship education through grantmaking, ecosystem building, and knowledge sharing.

www.bdmorganfdn.org

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About Eaton Corporation

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