



For Immediate Release

June 8, 2010

ASU student entrepreneurs win funding to pursue innovation

Edson Student Entrepreneur Initiative provides a total of \$200,000 to 22 student teams

Scottsdale, Ariz.— Several student entrepreneurs at Arizona State University received good news – and thousands of dollars – this week as they were named recipients of Edson Student Entrepreneur Initiative funding.

The Edson Initiative offers students an opportunity to accelerate their venture concepts by providing funding, office space, mentorship and training to accelerate the success of their concepts. More than \$200,000 was granted to 22 student teams who will move in to SkySong, the ASU Scottsdale Innovation Center, and begin their work with business experts and entrepreneurs to catapult their ideas into reality.

The Edson Initiative has been awarding students funding to propel their entrepreneurial ideas -- large or small, for-profit or not-for-profit, domestic or global -- for six years. Winning teams are provided grants of \$5,000 to \$20,000 and more than \$1.2 million has now been awarded to students through the initiative. This year's winners were chosen from all areas of study, including biological science, special events management and electrical engineering.

"We plan on using our funding to introduce video 'DJ-ing,' a new entertainment service for our clients that is rapidly growing across the world," said Will Curran, a special events management major and team leader of Arizona Pro DJs, which aims to provide innovative entertainment solutions for teen-focused events. "Unlike traditional 'DJ-ing,' this service uses a combination of music videos, custom content, pop culture clips, live content and our creativity to create a multi-sensory experience for guests at the event."

Laron Turley, a finance major at ASU's W.P. Carey School of Business, is the team leader of Home for Hope, a venture aimed at alleviating third-world country and disaster relief housing shortages by developing a durable and transportable shelter unit.

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“We plan on using the funding to build a prototype unit and fully test it before actively marketing and advertising our products,” Turley said. “We are looking forward to starting development, prototype construction and testing and marketing in the short future. In the long term, we’re looking towards developing manufacturing contracts and providing products all around the world. We want to develop communities in places of most need using Home for Hope products and innovations.”

Winning teams are provided office space at ASU SkySong for one year, along with access to a supportive and collaborative environment for the students’ new business initiatives.

“ASU SkySong focuses on fostering innovation and spurring entrepreneurship at all levels and we are always excited to welcome our Edson Initiative student ventures and the fresh perspective they bring,” said Julia Rosen, the university’s associate vice president of Innovation and Entrepreneurship. “It’s definitely a good situation for them to see professional entrepreneurs at work and for everyone at SkySong to feel their passion and energy as they are just starting their careers. It provides excellent opportunities for collaboration and success for all involved.”

While at SkySong, the Edson Initiative ventures have the opportunity to participate in workshops and special training led by successful entrepreneurs and business professionals. Each team is also provided consistent entrepreneurial mentoring by ASU SkySong and Edson Initiative staff.

“We look forward to connecting with the other businesses inside SkySong and believe the support will not only allow us to be more productive but also more professional,” Curran said. “We’ll host client meetings in the conference rooms and we even hope to host an open house midway through our venture year. We hope to be continually innovative and bring new forms of entertainment to teen events, and with the help of the Edson Initiative and SkySong, we are sure it will be possible.”

The \$200,000 per year scale of the Edson Initiative places ASU in the national forefront of student entrepreneurial support. The Edson Initiative aims to generate interest in building new ventures and entrepreneurship as a career path among ASU students, giving them the opportunity to acquire entrepreneurial skills, knowledge and perspective. The program also works to link student entrepreneurs with successful private sector entrepreneurs and increase the number of new companies and products brought to market by ASU students, generating new ventures that provide economic, social and financial returns.

“ASU SkySong is a leader in entrepreneurship and innovation among universities in the United States and partnering with them will be a great opportunity for Home for Hope,” Turley explained. “I’m excited to work alongside professionals involved with SkySong and to make a difference.”

Winning Teams:

AlgaeTechnic

Joshua Wray, team leader: School of Life Sciences

Emil Puruhito

Martha Kent

Arizona Pro DJs

Will Curran, team leader: School of Letters and Sciences

Mike Begley

Rad Wenzich

Jessica Hurt

Eileen Wells

Boson3D

Christian Stewart, team leader: School of Life Sciences

Matthew Rhodes

Nicholas Kane

Charles Tse

Coachconnects.com

Eric Walker, team leader: W.P. Carey School of Business

Steve Szczepanski

Adrian Cuyugan

Matt Raica

Marc Duchene

DevilWash

Zach Hamilton, team leader: W.P. Carey School of Business

Draft Day Entertainment

Chris Krygier, team leader: W.P. Carey School of Business

Chad Porter

Force Finder

Robert McKay, team leader: W.P. Carey School of Business

Jamie Esquivel

Matt Porter

Daniel McKay

Goletian Design and Evaluation

Adam Tate, team leader: ASU Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts

Charlene Mendez

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GoTiming

Nick Coury, team leader: Ira A. Fulton School of Engineering
Nathan Coury
Jamil Coury

Gram Studios

Kenneth Gram, team leader: College of Technology & Innovation

Home for Hope

Laron Turley, team leader: W.P. Carey School of Business
Jeff Standage
Morgan Tackett
Ty Turley

honestHealth

Emilio Gala, team leader: College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Matthew Yanez

Illumin8 Outdoor Media

Jeff Kunowski, team leader: New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences
Joseph Torres
Rickey Cofield

InnovateLife

Henry Braun, team leader: Ira A. Fulton School of Engineering
Joshua Tong
Christie Chiappetta
Gabe Holland

isave Media Solutions

Marcus Luckeneder, team leader: W.P. Carey School of Business

LearningBee Products LLC

Errolin Maynes, team leader: Ira A. Fulton School of Engineering
Alicia Mendoza
Angela Carmitchel

Majestic Tea Company

Mohammed Abdalla, team leader: School of Life Sciences

New Venture Concept for the Biohydrogenator

Ziming Yang, team leader: College of Liberal Arts and Science
Joseph Miceli
Mark Sholin

OrangeSlyce

Sean Coleman, team leader: Ira A. Fulton School of Engineering
Conrad Wadowski
Ed Kummerer
Chris Farris

Vagabondery

Travis Mart, team leader: W.P. Carey School of Business
Amir Abdollahi
Brandon Mart
Danae Garret

Whoot Technologies, Learning Intervention Management System

Ryan Brotman, team leader: ASU Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts
Erik Erspamer
Debra Web

Wiseman Sustainable Engine

Thomas Conner, team leader: College of Technology and Innovation
Brittney Knudson

About ASU SkySong

SkySong, the ASU Scottsdale Innovation Center, is a portal to the resources and services of Arizona State University for US and global companies. ASU SkySong supports new technology start-ups with office space, access to business services and continuing training geared toward local innovators and global firms seeking to start operations in the United States. www.skysongcenter.com

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Contact: Jim Brewer
jim.brewer@asu.edu
602.617.9996