

Entrepreneurial bootcamp wins Tom Tom crowdfunding event  
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Ten teams of Charlottesville entrepreneurs competed on Wednesday for funding and opportunities to grow their businesses as part of the seventh annual Crowdfunded Pitch Night at the Tom Tom Founders Festival.

Each contestant had three minutes to present their business idea. The crowd then bought votes for their favorite contestants, and the pool of money from the votes went to the winner.

“How blessed we are to have entrepreneurs get in front of you all for two hours to pitch their ideas. That opportunity does not come often,” said competition MC Sabrina Feggans.

Feggans, founder of Beyond Fitness with Sabrina, was a finalist in the pitch night last year.

This year, the crowd’s favorite was Satellite Bootcamp, a summer program for budding entrepreneurs. The program offers adults seven weeks of online classes and a five-week internship or chance to build their own business.

“Satellite tackles problems that all founders face. In this day and age, no matter what project you’re pursuing, you need to know how to build your own website, how to market yourself effectively,” said Allison Garrett, who founded the program alongside Yash Tekriwal and Andy Page.

Garrett, Tekriwal, and Page won \$906 from attendees. They said the money will be used to provide

financial aid to those who want to participate in Satellite Bootcamp but cannot afford the fee.

The three co-founders also recently won Elliewood Fellowships, which HackCville designed to help University of Virginia graduates start businesses in Charlottesville.

The Community Investment Collaborative and the University of Virginia's iLab also awarded mentorships to two contestants.

CIC staff members chose to mentor Bennett Reck, founder of the avocado-based ice cream company, RIPE Gelato.

"I think that food is the way we can move to a proactive and preventative healthcare culture. But in order to do that, the healthy food has to taste really great," Reck said. "When I want ice cream, I'm not looking for a thick smoothie."

Reck will be able to take weekly evening classes with the CIC for 16 weeks to develop his business plan and networks.

The iLab awarded the team behind Whipped Cream LLC a spot in their summer incubator program. The skin care company began when Christina Brock-Fortune, who had eczema, grew frustrated with her prescribed treatments.

Brock-Fortune researched natural moisturizers, like shea butter and mango butter, and created her own cream. Her husband, Cordell Fortune, began using the cream too and saw an opportunity to build a business with a new product: SheaMango.

"I knew then that everybody needed SheaMango," Fortune said. "The construction worker that works hard with his hands that get greasy or tough - they need SheaMango."

Fortune and Brock-Fortune will receive workspace for up to one year, as well as mentorship, workshops, and a \$5,000 grant.

The seven teams that did not win prizes may find support in other ways, according to Tom Tom Founders Festival director Paul Beyer.

"There are seven years of success stories of people that didn't win - but then they did win, because they met someone here in the audience," Beyer said.

Feggans agreed that even being a finalist brought her opportunities and exposure.

"Although I did not take home the money, I became so much more," Feggans said.