

CORNELL PROFESSOR WINS IDEA COMPETITION ; GENERIC DRUG RESEARCH WINS \$10,000 FROM STUDENT-RUN VENTURE CAPITAL COMPANY.

A Cornell professor's plan to cut the cost of generic drugs topped more than 100 other business ideas to win \$10,000 Thursday in the fifth annual BR Ventures Business Idea Competition.

The event, held at Cornell University's Johnson School of Management, attracted nationwide submissions. It was sponsored by BR Ventures, the only student-run venture capital company in the country, which scours the campus and the nation looking for million-dollar ideas.

"Sustainable Pharmaceuticals," a proposal put forward by a team led by assistant professor of chemistry and chemical biology Tyler McQuade, attempts to cut the cost of generic drugs by reducing the waste generated during production.

"Our company will try to provide pharmaceuticals inexpensively to consumers, and a safer environment for our future," McQuade said after he learned he had won.

McQuade said the competition was a great experience.

"How often do you get this opportunity?" he asked, speaking of the chance to talk to five venture capitalists.

Illuminaria LLC took second place and won \$2,500 for its idea: a pocket-sized biological threat detector.

The teams that tied for third will split their \$1,000 prize and bragging rights: OTS Diagnostics has a device to diagnosis many different diseases quickly, and Sensus Analytics wants to track consumer behavior by installing a chip into mobile phones that can be traced when a person enters a mall.

"We're very pleased with the breadth of the plans, and we think we found four very high-quality companies to come out of this competition," said Sam Tingleff, a Johnson School MBA student and a fund manager of BRV.

In Thursday's final round, the seven remaining teams gave one-hour presentations to a panel of venture capital judges. During the presentations, the judges grilled the teams.

"I love the feedback," said Tom Tylutki in the middle of being interrupted by one of those questions. Even though his team did not win, Tylutki said he was appreciated the help with the marketing and business aspects of his idea.

Sensus Analytics made its presentation by teleconference from the United Kingdom, where the Massachusetts Institute of Technology researchers behind the project are studying for the semester.

While it's a learning experience for the participants, it's an opportunity for the judges, including Mark Brandt.

"It's been fun," he said. But, he added, "I'm here looking to invest."

Brandt, a Cornell alumnus and a manager of The Maple Fund, a Cleveland venture capital firm that invests in emerging technologies, drove five hours to be here for the third time. It was his second year as a judge.

"If I find one good idea it's worth a trip here and back," he said, pointing out that he invested in the winning team two years ago, and that that business - Johnny Applesticks, apples on a stick that you dip in sauce - is now up and running in Cleveland.

"One of our goals is to foster entrepreneurship within the Cornell community because there is a lot of world-class technology here," said Shiau Sin Yen, a MBA student who is also one of nine fund managers for BRV. "We help them to market that technology to the outside world."

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