Utah State University Entrepreneurs Among Utah's Best

The past month has been a busy and profitable one for a few Utah State University student entrepreneurs who have competed for money and investment in entrepreneurship competitions.

On Saturday, March 28, five awards were won by two student entrepreneurs who competed against other student entrepreneurs from colleges across the state as part of the Utah Entrepreneur Challenge at the University of Utah. Cody Pickering, who started Align Skate Decks, a company that manufactures aluminum skate decks, won Best Technology Award, Best Bootstrapped Award, Best Social Impact Award and Best Beehive Startup Award. Spencer Finch of Rental On Me, a company that specializes in giving users the ability to rent a number of personal items, won Best Social Impact Award and Best Beehive Startup Award. Each of these awards had cash prizes associated with them totaling nearly $10,000.

The following Wednesday, April 1, Cody Pickering and Spencer Finch also participated in USU's own 'Shark Tank' along with Seth Christensen, founder of Christensen Genetics and Danny Noall, founder of Infuze. These four entrepreneurs presented to four 'Sharks' vying for cash prizes to help with the growth of their fledgling businesses. The Sharks were successful entrepreneurs and business professionals: Amy Rees Anderson, founder of MediConnect Global; Brad Oldroyd, founder and CEO of TeamONE Management Group; Paul Woodland, former CFO of Dryer’s Grand Ice Cream; and Steve Peterson, general partner of Millrock Capital. An additional $6,000 was distributed among the four student entrepreneurs with potential of additional investment from the Sharks.

ABOUT THE STUDENT BUSINESSES

Align Boards founded by Cody Pickering is a skateboard company that manufactures skate decks made of aluminum. By using aluminum, the longevity of the board is prolonged as it can’t be warped from the moisture or humidity that ruins the life span on a traditional wood deck. Cody’s unique board design has specifically piqued the interest of Carver Boards, a skateboarding brand based out of California.

Rental On Me founded by Spencer Finch is a website that allows users to connect and rent their personal belongings. The idea of this website is to allow everyone to participate in experiences they might not otherwise be able to afford if they had to buy the equipment themselves. Finch said that he’s had a variety of posts from hammocks and projectors to things as crazy as a $100 magic show.

Christensen Genetics founded by Seth Christensen works in the cattle industry artificially inseminating cows. Seth can make his profit by charging for the artificial insemination to impregnate the cows, leasing bulls, and by providing clients to buy the calves after they’ve been born. Seth has extensive experience with cattle, having worked with them since he was 11 years old.
Infuze founded by Danny Noall is a flavoring system that attaches to the mouth piece of a water bladder (such as CamelBak) and allows flavored concentrate to flow out of the mouthpiece at the same time as the water from the bladder of the pack. This allows the user to switch from water to flavor as desired, without leaving a flavor stain in the water bladder.