



April 9, 2010

Aspiring Entrepreneurs Face-off in Final "Vol Court" Session

KNOXVILLE – Eight teams of budding entrepreneurs will square-off in the last session of "Vol Court" at 5:15 p.m., Tuesday, April 13 at the Stokely Management Center, seventh floor. The team with the best business ideas will receive \$1,000 to launch their business, space at the University of Tennessee Research Foundation (UTRF) business incubator, mentoring from Technology 2020's Center for Entrepreneurial Growth (CEG) and 10 hours of legal advice from Miller & Martin, PLLC -- a prize package worth more than \$20,000.

Vol Court is a series of nine free how-to seminars led by entrepreneurs and business experts from across the state. The program is joint effort of UTRF, the College of Business Administration's Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (CEI) and the CEG.

The teams vying for the opportunity to grow their business include:

- "Ratemyhostfamily.com, LLC," a web site that uses an online survey platform to allow study abroad students to give quantitative and open-ended feedback about their host family, residence hall, and apartment while studying abroad.
- "Real Mobile," a mobile marketing company that enables real estate companies, agents and private home-sellers to more effectively market their listings.
- "Michael's Home Improvements," a company that provides expert craftsmanship for the installation of tile, hardwood, engineered flooring and construction of decks, screen room and room additions.
- "SpringBox," a company that sells a compact computer server and related support service that acts as a stand-in for an information technology (IT) department in a small business.
- "Brolo," an internet-based video chat service that incorporates the latest in peer-to-peer technology, algorithmic search functions and active digital video management.

- "Boulder Booties," a company which sells a product that protects the specialized climbing shoes worn while rock climbing.
- "Integrated Technologies," a company which specializes in large scale application of piezoelectric material to provide energy to sell back to energy companies.
- "Mobile Micro Medical," a portable blood reintegration technology that allows medical responders to stabilize trauma victims prior to transportation to a medical facility.

Each team will be given eight minutes to pitch their business idea to a panel of judges that includes a local venture capitalist, current and former entrepreneurs and a lawyer. The judges will have five minutes to ask questions of each team, and then they will decide the winner by consensus.

"We've had 80 students, faculty, staff and university friends participate in our first ever Vol Court series, which truly exceeded our expectations" said Joy Fisher, director of marketing and business development for UTRF. "The entrepreneurial culture here at the university is growing, and this competition is helping our aspiring entrepreneurs to acquire the skills and resources they need to successfully start their own businesses."

For more information on Vol Court, visit <http://utrf.tennessee.edu/news/>.

The CEI facilitates entrepreneurial knowledge creation and dissemination through research, teaching and practice in the area of entrepreneurship. It strives to develop entrepreneurial talent who will start businesses or contribute to the success of existing technology-driven businesses. The center provides experiential learning activities that enhance classroom instruction in entrepreneurship and innovation, offers links between the regional entrepreneurial community and the university, and acts as a hub for cross-campus initiatives that foster the growth of entrepreneurial research and commercially viable enterprises. For more information, visit <http://cei.utk.edu/>.

The CEG is an entrepreneurial support organization within Technology 2020, one of the primary drivers of innovation and economic development in the region. The CEG helps entrepreneurs develop an execution strategy that leads to a sustainable company. In addition to its strategic planning process, the CEG develops and delivers entrepreneurial training seminars. For more information, visit http://www.tech2020.org/ceg_about.html.

UTRF helps turn the ideas and discoveries that emerge from the University of Tennessee into products and services that benefit society. In addition to supporting the growth of research at UT and commercialization of the resulting inventions, UTRF champions entrepreneurship and drives state and regional technology-based economic development. UTRF serves all seven of the UT campuses and institutes across the state. For more information, visit <http://utrf.tennessee.edu>.

C O N T A C T:

Whitney Holmes (865-974-5460, wholmes7@utk.edu)

For more UT news, visit <http://www.utk.edu/tntoday/>

Check out our faculty experts guide at <http://www.utk.edu/tntoday/media/experts-guide/>

See UT faculty, staff and students making news at <http://www.utk.edu/tntoday/category/in-the-news/>