

## For Immediate Release

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### 15 Big Ideas Selected for What's the Big Idea?! Business Plan Competition

*Three Local Entrepreneurs Announced as Coaches*

The Knoxville Chamber, The Development Corporation of Knox County, and Tech 20/20 are pleased to announce 15 contestants for this year's *What's the Big Idea?!* business plan competition presented by Rodefer Moss & Company, PLLC. Selected from over 30 applicants, the contestants' *Big Ideas* were chosen based on growth potential, innovation and/or technical feasibility, newness of the concept or plan, and viability of a sustainable, competitive advantage.

Contestants will now attend several Big Idea Launch Seminars in preparation to deliver a five-minute pitch on May 7 during Team Selection Night. Inspired by the hit television show *The Voice*, Team Selection Night adds a new dimension to this year's competition – engaging successful, local entrepreneurs as coaches for these hopefuls.

After hearing all 15 pitches, coaches **Parker Frost**, founder of Gigmark Interactive; **John Tolsma**, owner of Knowledge Launch; and **Jimmy Rodefer**, CEO of Rodefer Moss & Company, PLLC, will each select three contestants to be part of their team. The three coaches, who all have been recipients of the Knoxville Chamber's Pinnacle Young Entrepreneur Award, will then have one month to mentor their team members before contestants face-off in the Knock Out Competitions.

Acknowledging the integral role mentors played in his own success, Tolsma is eager to hear the big ideas of these aspiring entrepreneurs.

"Having the right people coach me has made the critical difference in so many of my decisions in business and in life," he said. "I'm looking forward to returning the favor by working with entrepreneurs who fuel new ideas and innovations in our city. I'm looking for the entrepreneur that has a plan that will lead to results. So, if you've got it, bring it."

On June 3, the nine semifinalists will pitch their idea to an independent panel of judges in three separate Knock Out Competitions. Judges will select a winner from each Knock Out Competition, which will lead to the identification of three finalists who will advance to the *What's the Big Idea?!* Finale on June 20 at Relix Variety Theater.

The 15 contestants for 2013 are:

Back to the Farm Wear, Brian Douglas  
*High-quality, farm inspired apparel and accessories line*

Billy Lush Brand, LLC, Abe Kiggins  
*Lifestyle/fitness brand promoting wellness through non-traditional activities*

CampusLife, Chad Tate  
*College-centered social media site focused on facilitating real world connections*

DwellIn, Casey Peters  
*Web-based platform designed to simplify role of property manager or owner*

Greenlight – Frustration Free E-mail Newsletters, Gavin Baker  
*Strategic e-mail communications company*

Loopyr, Chris Collins  
*Mobile application leveraging fingerprint technology and commercial advertising*

Neural Energy Games, Charles Chin  
*Educational video games company targeting college freshmen level courses*

PipeFighters Square, Steven Pierson  
*Innovative pipe fitting tool*

PTlink, Trevor Grieco  
*Interactive mobile application that improves recovery by connecting clinicians and patients*

Sports Equipment Tracking Company (HELMETRIX), Franklin Hodges  
*Metric based program for inspection and maintenance of football helmets*

Survature Inc., Jian Huang  
*Online survey tool evaluating respondent's answers and behavior*

Tata Coolerz, Kimberly Gillespie  
*Insulated, cooling gel packs for women*

TeVal, Jeff Gotcher  
*Web-based platform designed to streamline teacher evaluation process*

WasteToValueStone LLC, Louwrens Mulder  
*Granit waste recycling*

Woo-Hoo Enterprises, Steve Garner  
*Internal load securement system*

The winning idea will receive a Big Idea Launch Package that includes up to \$10,000 in start-up reimbursement costs, one year of free rent at the Fairview Technology Center, and complimentary business services.