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48HOUR LAUNCH HELPS LOCAL ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOP ENERGY PRODUCING INSOLE

The Biz Foundry hosted the Upper Cumberland's first 48Hour Launch over the weekend. A handful of people spent the weekend brainstorming and developing their own ideas and innovations. A dozen ideas were pitched on Friday night and through the process of elimination, the group chose to pursue one project.

Victor Martinez, a local resident and entrepreneur, gave the winning pitch of an energy producing insole for shoes. Two of Victor's passions are running and sustainability, and being a socially conscious individual he has always wanted to develop this idea. "I came in touch with Biz Foundry as a means to connect with an environment that encourages a personal drive for creative thinking and innovation," said Martinez, "Think of ping-pong as the means to winning a medal. Biz Foundry is the table, we are the players and our ideas the beach balls we bounce back and forward till they become ping-pong balls. Hopefully the medal will be the life changing application of a problem solving idea."

After a few days of pizza, coffee and too many puns about running, the group developed a working prototype. The group hit the ground running, pun intended, on Saturday morning; and with the help of Chris Stringer, a freshman Tennessee Tech student, a working prototype had produced a significant amount of power by the end of the night. Chris was overjoyed at the opportunities of the weekend, "This weekend was fantastic. I was allowed and even encouraged to develop my unconventional ideas in an environment of support and community. I definitely enjoyed the work and play during the event and I will return for more of what the Biz Foundry has to offer."

The Biz Foundry is attempting to create a community of makers, innovators and inventors in the Upper Cumberland. Jeff Brown, President of The Biz Foundry, couldn't contain his excitement about the results of the weekend, "This weekend kick-started the momentum we have been searching for. Exciting things are happening in the region and we are glad to provide the spark for such innovation."

Victor Martinez and Chris Stringer will continue to collaborate on this project in order to create a viable business model. Martinez was excited about the work

ahead, “I see a fact and a problem with that fact: The fact is the unfortunate reality of our dependability on external sources of energy. The problem is our vulnerability to energy shortage as well as its unavailability. We like to think of this idea as a sponsor of sustainability, with applications in sports, leisure and entertainment, but above all, applications in one’s well-being; through healthcare even altruism. It’s my dream to create a solution and my goal to make it sustainable.”

For more information on The Biz Foundry and similar programs, contact their staff at 931-372-1039 or through www.thebizfoundry.org.

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