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UTC Startup Is First Team Selected for GIGTANK 2014

The Company Lab and UTC announce new GIGTANK fellowship for student entrepreneurs

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (March 27, 2014) – The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC) and The Company Lab (CO.LAB) have partnered to launch a new UTC/GIGTANK Fellowship, which will engage qualified student entrepreneurs and at least one UTC professor as participants in GIGTANK 2014.

[GIGTANK](#) is an entrepreneurial accelerator that attracts national talent to Chattanooga each year for 10-12 weeks of intensive startup development. The creation of the UTC/GIGTANK Fellowship guarantees that UTC and the Chattanooga community will have a high-prospect entrepreneurial team working on an innovative startup in the program. As a benefit of participation, all GIGTANK teams receive \$15,000 in initial seed funding and an opportunity to attract additional investment from angel and private equity investors.

This year, the recipients of the UTC/GIGTANK Fellowship are Robin Moldenhauer, Kevin Ringstaff and Rupinder Kaur. They will work with Dr. Ashish Gupta, associate professor of Analytics & IS in the UTC College of Business, on a big data analytics startup for the GIGTANK Healthcare track.

“At UTC, we are proud to partner with The Company Lab on this new GIGTANK Fellowship. We fully embrace the opportunities of being Chattanooga’s GIG UNIVERSITY and the spirit of entrepreneurship that makes our community strong. Our College of Business instills this idea in its students. I have no doubt this year’s students will benefit greatly from this experience as will students from across the campus in the future,” said Jerald Ainsworth, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

Students from across all of UTC’s colleges and academic disciplines will be eligible for future UTC/GIGTANK Fellowships.

Now preparing for its third iteration, GIGTANK 2014 will focus on launching businesses in the 3D printing/additive manufacturing, smart grid and healthcare industries. More than 65 startup teams and 150 specialists applied for this year’s program, marking an uptick in interest from candidates across the country. With the competitive selection process now underway, Dr. Ashish Gupta’s team is the first to be admitted into the program. CO.LAB will announce the full roster of GIGTANK teams in April.

Mike Bradshaw, Executive Director of CO.LAB, pointed to the UTC/GIGTANK Fellowship as another important step in the local effort to engage area students with Chattanooga’s entrepreneurial community.

“We are very excited about this new pilot program,” said Bradshaw. “The UTC/GIGTANK Fellowship represents another avenue connecting UTC with Chattanooga’s startup community, and it also symbolizes the tremendous partnership CO.LAB and GIGTANK enjoy with UTC.”

Over the last two years, UTC and CO.LAB have worked collaboratively to increase support for entrepreneurs at both the student and professional levels. Those efforts have grown to include UTC’s housing sponsorship for GIGTANK and student participation in CO.LAB events, as well as CO.LAB’s contributions to UTC’s Veteran’s Entrepreneurship Program, CEO Club and Entrepreneurship Forum, among other activities. The UTC/GIGTANK Fellowship is an extension of this work, allowing both organizations to blend their resources in ways that more closely unite Chattanooga’s educational and entrepreneurial communities.

About The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga is a comprehensive, metropolitan university, offering bachelor’s, master’s, doctoral, and post-graduate degrees and certificates. Strong partnerships in the Chattanooga region allow for numerous experiential learning and applied research opportunities through the Colleges of Arts and Sciences; Business; Engineering and Computer Science; and Health, Education, and Applied Professional Studies, as well as the UTC Graduate School. Visit <http://www.UTC.edu>.

About The Company Lab

The Company Lab exists to support the startup community in Chattanooga and the surrounding region through programs, events and services. Operating under the belief that entrepreneurial thinking is the foundation of our community’s future, CO.LAB has devised a system to foster the startup spirit, which can be used as a model for entrepreneurial communities across the nation. Visit <http://colab.co> to learn more.

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Cutline: (from left) Robin Moldenhauer, UTC/GIGTANK Fellowship recipient; Dr. Ashish Gupta, associate professor of analytics and information systems in the UTC College of Business; and Mike Bradshaw, executive director of CO.LAB.