

Nov. 21, 2016

## **GeoAir Wins Fall 2016 Vol Court Pitch Competition**

KNOXVILLE—GeoAir, a startup company founded by University of Tennessee, Knoxville, MBA candidate Alex Adams, won top prize at last week's fall 2016 Vol Court Pitch Competition. The company beat 18 competitors to take first place at the competition, which was hosted by UT's [Anderson Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation](#).

GeoAir gives a faster, more precise way to identify mold in fields by using a drone to take airborne samples of the field. That data is used to create a heat map, which identifies mold hot spots. This information allows growers to spot treat the areas instead of the entire crop, saving time, money and crop production.

Adams won \$1,500 along with one year of free office space in the UT Research Foundation Business Incubator, consulting services courtesy of PYA, legal advice from Morehous Legal Group and a yearlong subscription to TurboFunder provided by Funding Sage.

Second place went to Taylor King's ReInvent, an upcycling company that helps people take recyclable materials and transform them into works of art with the help of a local artist. King, a senior in business analytics, won \$1,000, six months of free office space in the UT Research Foundation Business Incubator, consulting services from PYA, legal advice from Morehous Legal Group and a yearlong subscription to TurboFunder provided by Funding Sage.

Third place went to Prometheus Group LLC, a consultancy group that focuses on risk management and travel security, reducing the cost of risk assessments for travelers while improving efficiency. The company was founded by Christopher Ruel, an MBA candidate and U.S. Army Special Forces veteran, and Jared Smith, a senior in honors computer science and project leader at Oak Ridge National Laboratory's Cyber Warfare Research Team. The team was awarded \$500 and a yearlong subscription to TurboFunder provided by Funding Sage.

"I don't think I've ever seen this many pitches at one time," said Shawn Carson, Vol Court director. "It was high energy, and the quality of ideas gets better every year."

The Vol Court Pitch Competition was the final event of the fall 2016 Vol Court Speaker Series. Prior to the competition, teams attended five entrepreneurial lectures covering topics like legal structure for businesses and unconventional funding sources. Prize money was donated by presenting sponsor Cirrus Insight and supporting sponsors Launch Tennessee and the IT Company.

Vol Court is a free event hosted by the Anderson Center each fall and spring semester. It is open to UT students, faculty and staff as well as members of the local community. It's made possible through sponsorship from Cirrus Insight, the UT Research Foundation, Launch Tennessee, PYA, Morehous Legal Group, the IT Company, Hard Knox Pizzeria, Three Roots Capital and Funding Sage.

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CUTLINE:

Christoper Ruel of Prometheus Group LLC, Alex Adams of GeoAir and Taylor King of RelInvent.