

News Release



For Immediate Release

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2016 FastPitch Competition Winner, Michelle Gast with recoup BEAUTISCOOP

Rockford, Ill. —The 10th annual *FastPitch Competition* was a colossal success with thirty-four eager presenters sharing their ideas, products, services and apps vying for over \$7,000 dollars in prizes and presenting, possibly, the *Next Big Thing!*

First place winner, Michelle Gast with her beauty-related product, recoup BEAUTISCOOP, took home the \$5,000 first prize. Michelle's product is a patented dual-ended beauty tool designed to scoop every last drop from tight-necked containers. It will be featured in the December issue of *REAL SIMPLE* magazine. Michelle, during the creation of her unique product, was a client of NIU EIGERlab's Center for Product Development (C4PD). Visit www.LiveBeautility.com for more information.

Second place winner, Charlie Hare, with his patented new tool, the Aerator™, offers an effective, new method to aerate walls that have been adversely affected by a flood. Charlie has also taken advantage of the resources of the C4PD including assistance with engineering, 3D printing, computer-aided design, and commercialization.

Nicole Jakob, third place winner, presented Renegade Made™, a new line of toys that “help teach kids to do the right thing, even when no one is watching.” Her toys have been manufactured and safety tested for children eight years and up, and was introduced into the toy market at the International Fair in NYC in February 2016. Visit www.Renegade-made.com for more information.

Author and coach, Vinni Cavallaro Torrisi, took home the coveted Dale Falconer *Spirit of Entrepreneurship* award including a six-month complimentary coworking and counseling at NIU EIGERlab's **Launch**Pad! space in Rockford with her product, NowSizing™. “NowSizing™ is an educational process designed to help older adults navigate a stress-free, later life move.” *NowSizing...Making Room for Life!* is Vinni's 44-page workbook that guides senior citizens and family members. Visit www.NowSizing.com for more information.

The Freedom Field's CleanTech award winner was Branden DeWitt with his Aquarius Fire Protection System™. Branden's proven technology is a unique way to protect high-end homes in fire-prone areas far better than any system currently available. The system is patent pending and he's in the process of seeking UL approval. Branden is also being assisted through the C4PD.

Last but not least, the winner of the Student award, Omar Saulters with his company, Salted Art Inc. Omar was a published author at the age of twelve and is excited to share his, first ever, teen publishing company. He truly believes in his “mission to redefine, reinvent, and reimagine what we believe teens are capable of.”

Finalists included:

- Alejandra Chapel-Herrera Index | Note Taking App www.ChaseMountains.com
- Jim Hall RoP-RoW-Pro
- Ana Elizarraga Make-up Brush Cleaning Machine
- SiDi Huang ZipSeam www.ZipSeam.com
- Jeremy Perrotta Pub Brewery Unique Beer Keg
- Barbara Rhodes High Caliber Creations www.HighCaliberCreations.com
- Chris Wicklund Wick’s TravelCool Cake Carrier

Previous FastPitch presenters, Kerry Frank, CEO and Co-Founder of Comply365 and Kristan McNames, owner of Grace Funeral & Cremation Services delivered thought-provoking keynote speeches injected with humor and “the good, the bad and the ugly” of becoming successful entrepreneurs.

For more information on the **FastPitch Competition**, visit the NIU EIGERlab website at <http://www.eigerlab.org/>. For additional information, call Sherry Pritz at (815) 753-2192.

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