

Pilot Venture Challenge 2023 Results



May 1, 2022

UP students pitch and win!

The Franz Center for Leadership, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation hosted its annual venture pitch competition, Pilot Venture Challenge, on Saturday, April 29th, in Dundon-Berchtold Hall. This year 26 students participated, pitching 12 entries.

Students competed in three different tracks - Invention, which highlights creativity, invention and innovation; Social, which encourages students to use entrepreneurial and business principles to organize, create and manage a sustainable enterprise that has a positive social impact; and For-Profit.

Students, judges and guests joined together to hear and see the 10-minute presentations followed by 5 minutes of Q&A by the track judges. All entries were judged by expert panels of alumni and community business leaders. The winners are:

Invention

1st Place: MIO Backpacks, modular organizing units for backpacks to meet the user's particular needs by Julian Hong '24

2nd Place: AsSITance, a device to ease the action of getting up from sitting and reduce falls by Jessica Yoshioka '23 and Thelma Mendoza '23.

3rd Place: Bubbles to Mars, a device to uses water and solar power to generate hydrogen for energy by Chris Parks '23

The 1st and 2nd place winners move on to participate in the statewide Invent Oregon Bootcamp and Semi-Finals May 4th – 7th and hopefully in the Finals on June 23rd -24th at The Red in Portland.

Social Venture

1st Place: Backus Food Foundation, growing and providing fresh produce to aid those living in food deserts by DJ Backus '24.

2nd Place: Steady Sip, a portable and affordable drink koozie for people with disabilities by Matt Ching '24, Thomas Parkhurst '23, Nikita Tewari '23 and Kevin Wong '23.

3rd Place: EveryWear, environmentally sustainable backpacks made from upcycled food waste and versatile components by Payton Antonio '23, Emma Fuller '23, Alex Pegis '23 and Michael Quinn '23.

For-Profit Venture

1st Place: Dynamika Pellets, high quality, sustainably produced wood pellets from recycled wood for heating homes, by Nathan Kocsis '24 and Robert Yeo '24.

2nd Place: Coco's Café, a unique coffee shop dedicated to providing an exceptional coffee experience that is infused with Mexican-inspired flavors, alongside traditional Mexican baked goods by Adrian Frayre Uribe '24.

3rd Place: Blocksy, a new line of convenient SPF-infused makeup products to protect users from harmful UV rays by Katelyn Hales '24.

For more information contact the Franz Center for Leadership, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation at franzcenter@up.edu.

About the Franz Center for Leadership, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation

The Franz Center for Leadership, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation supports all University of Portland students in the development of leadership, entrepreneurship and innovation skills, knowledge, and mindsets. The Franz Center helps students learn how to make ideas happen, create new business models and plans, develop innovative projects, and think outside the box. It has been ranked consistently among the top entrepreneurship programs nationally and is recognized for its outreach to and partnerships with Portland's business community.