

Cairns Foundation Event Promotes Local Students' Innovative Ideas

Thanks to the **UCF Business Incubator - Daytona Beach International Airport** and the **Cairns Foundation**, area college and university student entrepreneurs had the opportunity to pitch their ideas to local investors.

This year's winning company was AquaSolve Ventures featuring Yung Wong from Embry Riddle University. Second place was awarded to Squirt & Go team from Daytona State College.

This challenge, held on April 16, provided undergraduate and graduate student finalists from Bethune-Cookman University, Daytona State College, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Stetson University and UCF with an opportunity to advance their technology's commercialization through early-stage funding.

Since Dr. Jim Cairns established

the Cairns Foundation in 2003, it has given life-changing boosts to bright, creative students who otherwise might never attain their full potential. The foundation's mission is to provide support to outstanding students through mentoring and funding, helping the young inventors realize the technical and commercial successes of their creations. Cairns says that the Innovation Challenge was

designed to "spotlight commercially viable technologies generated by the finest student minds at colleges and universities in our area."

AquaSolve Ventures received prize money totaling \$10,000 from the Cairns Foundation and a one-year enrollment in the UCFBI - Daytona Beach International Airport. Squirt & Go received one year enrollment in the UCF Pre-Incubation Program



The Innovation Challenge was a huge success. Yung Wong from AquaSolve Ventures won first place. Second place was awarded to a group of students from Daytona State College.

according to Connie Bernal, the incubator's site manager.

"It has been very encouraging to have Dr. Cairns and his team as the creators, advisers and mentors of the Innovation Challenge," Bernal says. "He is an example of how an inventor/entrepreneur - who grew a very successful company in Volusia

County - can give back to our local community. He is sharing not only his time and money, but also his best practices, which took his multimillion-dollar company to the next level."

For more information about the Innovation Challenge, please visit CairnsFoundation.com.