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Cal Poly Students Awarded \$5,500 at the CIE Elevator Pitch Competition Finals

SAN LUIS OBISPO — Seven Cal Poly students won prize money for their entrepreneurial ideas for apps, ear buds, showerheads and more during the final round of the fifth annual Ray Scherr Elevator Pitch Competition held recently on campus.

The event was part of an Entrepreneurship Forum hosted by the Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship (CIE).\

After the 10 student finalists gave spirited, 90-second pitches to entrepreneurs, fellow students, and a panel of judges, industrial engineering student Chad Kihm was named the contest's overall winner for his pitch that introduced a suite of mobile game education tools called Game of War Real Tips.

Cal Poly's contest also featured awards for best freshman pitch, audience choice, and the top three presentations in the preliminary Idea Cloud category and the more mature Launch Pad division. The award winners are:

Idea Cloud

— First place - \$1,000 for AutoBuds by Namjoon Joo. AutoBuds are headphones that automatically pause the music when the earphones are removed and resume playing when the headphones are replaced.

— Second place - \$500 for TechTalk by Matt Bleifer. TechTalk teaches entrepreneurs the technical information they need to communicate and make decisions for their companies.

— Third place - \$250 for Webfile by Tim Sweeney. Webfile provides tools for managing and monitoring individuals' Internet profiles.

Launch Pad

— First place - \$1,000 for Game of War Real Tips by Kihm

— Second place - \$500 for MonsterCreate by Jacob Johannesen. MonsterCreate is a suite of mobile applications young people can use to express their creativity.

— Third place - \$250 for Dingbot by Katie Boe. Dingbot, developed by IntuiTech, is a smart keychain that links with iPhones to create digital shortcuts to daily activities.

Joo's AutoBuds also won the \$500 Freshmen Award. The \$500 Audience Choice Award went to Katherine White for ClockIn, an app that helps employers track work hours and communicate with employees.

Overall Winner Kihm took home \$1,000 and will go on to compete against hundreds of other college students at the Collegiate Entrepreneur's Organization (CEO)

National Elevator Pitch Competition in Orlando, Fla.

The 2013 winner of the Ray Scherr Elevator Pitch Competition, Quincy Freeman, went on to take first place in the national event by pitching her unique line of Western wear.

This year, Cal Poly's elevator pitch contest drew its largest pool of applicants, with 282 video entries submitted by students from all six colleges. The top 10 finalists, from freshmen to graduate students, received coaching from CIE's staff and mentors before presenting their ideas at the forum.

The Entrepreneurship Forum also featured a panel discussion titled "From Dorm Room to Board Room," exploring how successful entrepreneurs transition from a big idea to a successful venture. The panel, who also judged the pitch competition, included Sander DiAngelis, alumnus and co-founder of Moja Outdoors; Jo Anne Miller, co-founder of SLO Seed Ventures and managing partner of Brown Dog Partners; Alex DeNoble, executive director of the Lavin Entrepreneurship Center at San Diego State University; and Romy Taormina, CEO and co-founder of Psi Bands. Their discussion focused on the importance of passion in a startup, the financial concept of "bootstrapping," and how to take advice from other entrepreneurs.

This was the first CIE forum for the academic year. Information on future events and pitch opportunities can be found online at: www.cie.calpoly.edu.

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