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|  | Warmilu Traction & Media |
| 2/26/2014 | This is a collection of available press releases, presentations, and events Warmilu competed in or may have been a featured story. – Grace Hsia, CEO |



**Warmilu, LLC**

**Local & Growing to Spread the Warmth to Save Lives**

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# Dividend Magazine: The State of Entrepreneurship (Print)

Terry Kosdrosky, Reporter. Online access available as well. Published January 30, 2014. <http://michigantoday.umich.edu/state-of-entrepreneurship/>

# CBS DetroitCBS62logoNEW2013_blue_final_header_Whitewwj950-sm2011b971-ticket-35smb35h_CBSSportsRad_DetroitACE ’14 Draws 1,000 For Tech Entrepreneurship; Pitch Contest Names Winners[[1]](#footnote-1)

January 30, 2014 3:21 PM

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Some of the 72 exhibitors and the crowd of 1,000 at the Annual Collaboration for Entrepreneurship event Thursday in Livonia. WWJ photo / Matt Roush

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**Matt Roush**

Matt Roush joined WWJ Newsradio 950 in September 2001 to spearhead the...

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**LIVONIA (WWJ) –** Tech-based entrepreneurship has become big business in Michigan.

Just ask the 1,000 people who attended Thursday’s Annual Collaboration for Entrepreneurship, or ACE ’14, at Livonia’s Burton Manor.

The event featured 10 panel discussions on everything from customer acquisition to getting funding to building prototype products to breakthrough technologies.

A panel discussion called “The Secret Life of Detroit’s Tech Scene: Who Knew There Was So Much Going On?” covered the Detroit Creative Center, the TechTown business incubator, the startup accelerator Bizdom, the Detroit coworking space Bamboo Detroit, and COVERd, a mobile loyalty rewards program for independent grocery stores that is part of TechTown’s program.

Panelists said they were surprised at the depth of support resources in Detroit to take a tech-based business idea from idea to opening the doors (or the website). And Phil Coleman, co-founder of COVERd, said he was surprised because “I thought Detroit’s startup scene would be more competitive, but in fact it’s very collaborative.”

Maria LaLonde, recruiting and development leader at Bizdom, said “what’s really surprising to me is how quickly we’ve been able to grow one of the fastest growing tech startup communities in the world. If you start with a few key components, you can make more progress than you imagined possible.”

A session called “Get Out of the Building! Meet You Customers” included plenty of useful information on getting more business from entrepreneurs Carl Lewis, co-founder of Lift3D, an exercise technology provider, John Dyer, president of Ugly Dog Distillery, and Grace Hsia, CEO of Warmilu, a provider of a heat pack for neonatal care.

The event also included 72 exhibitors, which included both startups showing off their wares and entrepreneurial support companies and organizations, including electronics manufacturers, social media marketing consultants, software developers, law firms, tech incubators, universities and accounting firms.

The event also included an elevator pitch competition and an evening keynote from Peter Bloom, board chairman of DonorsChoose.org, named the most innovative charity in America by the Stanford Business School.

The newly christened MiQuest, a merger of the Great Lakes Entrepreneurs Quest and the Small Business Foundation of Michigan, presented awards to the mid-year winners in the fourteenth year of the statewide GLEQ Business Plan Competition at ACE ’14.

Six entrepreneurs pitched their ventures in the hopes of winning the coveted ACE Elevator Pitch Competition trophy.  James Friedrich, Native Traits LLC of Kalamazoo, is the premier developer of native genetic traits that make corn resistant to drought. Native Traits was selected as the winner by judges Lauren Bigelow, CEO, Growth Capital Network;  Terry Cross, founder, Windward Associates, LLC;  Dale Grogan, managing director, Michigan Accelerator Fund; and  Mark E. Hooper, CPA, founding member, Andrews Hooper Pavlik and board member, Capital Community Angels, Inc.

Other candidates vying for the trophy were Jeff Johnson, Supported Intelligence, LLC of East Lansing; Michael Kurley, Soletics of Grand Rapids; Ansgar Strother, A2B Bikeshare of Ann Arbor, Naren Balasubramaniam, Hospital Connect of Farmington Hills; Jason Beale, RegainGo of Detroit; and James Friedrich, Native Traits, LLC of Kalamazoo.

More than 200 Michigan-based entrepreneurial ventures were registered for the GLEQ Business Plan competition, which attracts a wide range of innovation-bases businesses in alternative energy, IT and software, advanced manufacturing, food safety, green chemistry, medical devices and life sciences. The competition’s twice-annual program accommodates both idea-stage ventures and companies with up to $3 million in cumulative sales.

Award winners in the **Emerging Company** category are:

**First Place Award – $5,000. Inventev.** Represented by Dave Stenson, founder and CEO, Detroit-based Inventev brings mobile power generation to commercial fleets utilizing medium-duty trucks.  Through a patent-pending drive system, the company uses the same devices that electrically propel the vehicle to generate power for electrically-driven accessories on a job site. Electric utilities and telecommunication providers, for example, need a source of electric power at job sites without the fuel use, emissions, and noise of extensive idling or the expense of trailer-mounted generators. Additionally, Michigan Growth Capital Symposium awarded a presentation slot for Inventev at the MGCS event in June.

**Second Place Award – $3,000.**Phasiq Inc. Represented by Arlyne Simon, co-founder and vice president of technology development, Plymouth-based Phasiq provides an ultra-specific diagnostic platform for detecting protein biomarkers in biological samples. Phasiq’s technology addresses the shortcomings of protein microarray technologies, namely accuracy and cost of test development, which are necessary to advance the use of protein microarrays in life science research and clinical diagnostics.

**Third Place Award – $2,500. Campus Commandos**. Represented by Adam Grant, CEO, Detroit-based Campus Commandos is a campus marketing firm that helps major brands like HP, eBay and Nike sell products to college students through student ambassador programs. These programs often experience difficulty in recruiting, high turnover, and poor student performance. To address those issues, the company is launching a mobile application that organizes a large pool of available candidates and motivates them to accept and complete marketing tasks by using challenging game-based incentives.

Award winners in the **New Business Ideas** category are:

**First Place Award – $2,000. Micro-LAM Technologies LLC.** Represented by Deepak Ravindra, co-founder and CTO, Kalamazoo-based Micro-LAM offers leading edge technology that increases productivity, provides a better surface and reduces tooling and finishing costs for companies that would benefit from the softening of hard materials and reduced brittleness during machining. The company provides an easily adaptable tool that delivers precision machining capabilities for ceramics, semiconductors, glass and metals, leading to greater efficiency and improved profitability.

**Second Place Award – $1,500. Sentinl LLC.** Represented by Omer Kiyani, founder/CEO, Detroit-based Sentinl offers  Identilock,  a new and safe way to secure hand guns. Using fingerprint technology, it allows for split-second access to a loaded gun by the gun owner, while simultaneously keeping it safely locked and unusable when in the hands of others. Sentinl was coached by Stew Nelson.

**Third Place Award – $1,000.** **Wave Aircraft Inc.** Represented by Perry DiClemente, founder, West Bloomfield Township-based Wave Aircraft shortens total travel time with a specially designed aircraft. Amphibian planes do not fly high and fast. High and fast business class aircraft cannot land on water.  By combining the best features of both, Wave Aircraft is the first to offer the business-class market a single aircraft that will go virtually anywhere, land anywhere, and get there fast. Wave Aircraft was coached by Scott Hotz.

**Additional GLEQ Business Plan Competition Awards**

**Vision to Action Challenge Award.**  YouKnowWatt founders Steven Sherman and Jack Dean were awarded the Vision to Action Challenge Award, for having achieved significant milestones in advancing their venture. The founders clearly articulated a vision for their company and identified strategic challenges they are facing and put a plan in place to address those challenges. The Ann Arbor-based company is a startup in the residential energy efficiency market. The company’s go-to-market product is a software service called Energ.io for home performance professionals (energy auditors and general contractors) to optimize their relationship with homeowners and strengthen their close rate. The YouKnowWatt team was coached by Richard Miga.

**GLEQ Coach Recognition Award. Nancy Mathias**, a professional, credentialed business coach, was awarded the GLEQ Coach Recognition Award for her volunteer work with early stage ventures in the GLEQ Business Plan Competition.  Her firm, Birmingham-based Focus Leadership Development LLC, provides individual, team and organizational development, strategic visioning, training programs, and meeting facilitation. Her clients include for-profit corporations, non-profit organizations and professional associations. She coached University Pharmacy in this round of the competition.

**GLEQ Spirit of Entrepreneurship Award.**  Rich Daniels, founder/CEO of Dowagiac-based RNS Packaging received The Spirit of Entrepreneurship Award. He was nominated by his business coach, Fred Pieplow, of St. Joseph, who applauded Daniels’ openness to coaching and his non-stop enthusiasm for the FunPak Premium Packaging product he created. His loose-fill packaging is 100% biodegradable, 100% compostable, and uniquely marketable. It does away with toxic, static Stryrofoam packing peanuts and non-sustainable plastic air pouches. Daniels is a Desert Storm veteran and is committed to hiring veterans and producing a product that is safe for our families, pets and planet.

Winning ventures were selected by 85 volunteer judges, including venture capitalists; angel investors; university-based tech transfer, engineering and business staff; and economic and business development professionals.

MiQuest president Diane Durance announced the spring 2014 GLEQ Business Plan Competition will open for registrations on Monday, Feb. 10.



# University of Michigan Alumni Association: Student Project Leads to Company that Prevents Hypothermia in Infants[[2]](#footnote-2)

Remember ever feeling like you were wasting great ideas on a class project? Not so for the three recent alumni, who launched a company called Warmilu that originated as a team project in an engineering class.

[Detroit News](http://www.detroitnews.com/article/20140105/LIFESTYLE03/301050012#ixzz2qQdtMLoQ): When Grace Hsia was born, she came a month earlier than expected, spending the first two weeks of her life in an intensive care unit at the hospital.

That’s why, when she was assigned to come up with a heat-related technology for her senior project while working on a materials science and engineering degree at the University of Michigan, she decided to focus on saving pre-term babies

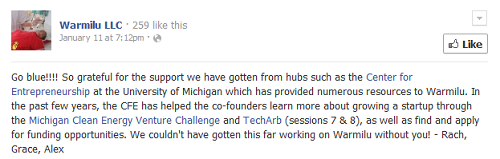
“It gives me a sense of purpose,” said Hsia. “It was like my life had come full circle.”

During that project a teacher partnered Hsia randomly with fellow engineering students Alex Chen and Rachel Rademacher.

The company creates a heat pack that is affordable, instant, and nonelectric and is used to prevent hypothermia in infants. According to the Warmilu website, it is getting a lot of great press coverage, including from Crain's Business Detroit and the Atlantic. As the Atlantic article put it, "These are kids who probably first heard Start Me Up on a Microsoft commercial."



The students are very grateful for all the support they're getting, as a recent Facebook post shows.

[](https://www.facebook.com/Warmilu/posts/10151811564901386)

# Grace Hsia, a University of Michigan graduate, is part of a team that created Warmilu, a blanket with insertable, reusable heat pouches that reach a certain temperature and provide steady heat without overheating or burning an infant.http://www.parkwestgallery.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/detnews-com_logo.jpg

## [The Detroit News](http://www.detroitnews.com/" \o "Detroit News)

### [Health + Fitness](http://www.detroitnews.com/section/LIFESTYLE)

%]

January 5, 2014 at 1:00 am

# The Detroit News: U-M grad born premature creates reusable heat pouch to prevent hypothermia in infants[[3]](#footnote-3)

* [Lauren Abdel-Razzaq](mailto:lrazzaq@detroitnews.com)
* The Detroit News
* [12 Comments](http://www.detroitnews.com/article/20140105/LIFESTYLE03/301050012#comments)

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###### **Grace Hsia, a University of Michigan graduate, is part of a team that created Warmilu, a blanket with insertable, reusable heat pouches that reach a certain temperature and provide steady heat without overheating or burning an infant. (Daniel Mears / The Detroit News)**

*Ann Arbor*— When Grace Hsia was born, she came a month earlier than expected, spending the first two weeks of her life in an intensive care unit at the hospital.

That’s why, when she was assigned to come up with a heat-related technology for her senior project while working on a materials science and engineering degree at the University of Michigan, she decided to focus on saving pre-term babies

“It gives me a sense of purpose,” said Hsia. “It was like my life had come full circle.”

During that project a teacher partnered Hsia randomly with fellow engineering students Alex Chen and Rachel Rademacher. It didn’t take long for them to agree on an idea, Rademacher says.

“We all three live in Michigan now and we have such cold temperatures here, so we were thinking of the idea of warmth and what our skills could do,” said Rademacher. “We came across data that showed that premature infants were the ones who struggled most with keeping heat and the numbers were just staggering.”

Being able to prevent hypothermia in infants that don’t receive post-natal care, could prevent as many as 42 percent of all newborn deaths, according to the World Health Organization. Since pre-term infants are at an even greater risk of hypothermia then full-term infants, the risk of death is even greater.

Once they got their grade and graduated, instead of ending the project the students formed a company called Warmilu, with the goal of saving lives and providing medical care to a host of individuals, not just infants.

### Warmilu faced challenges

The students, now all 24, have created a blanket with insertable, reusable heat pouches that reach a certain temperature and provide steady heat for 3½ to 5 hours without overheating or burning an infant. Because the devices don’t require electricity and the heat pouches can be boiled and reused, they are more reliable than other heating methods like electric blankets or relying on the body heat of the infant’s mother.

“The main focus on the company is that we are really trying to help people with this product,” said Chen, who came to the University of Michigan four years ago as a transfer student from China. “The idea of it is to contribute to humans.”

They went through several iterations of the heat pack until they settled on a design that has two stages of heat, the first gets the pack up to temperature and second sustains the pack at that constant temperature.The process has taken more than three years, but now Hsia says they’ve completed clinical trials in a hospital setting in Bangalore, India and the packs were able to regulate body temperature for infants born between 31 and 38 weeks. Average human gestation is around 40 weeks.

They’ve already received orders for 30 devices and have fulfilled five of those orders, Hsia said. But the cost of production and the input of their advisors has led Warmilu’s team to re-evaluate their business plan.

Terry Cross spent 13 years working in Silicon Valley and invested in 63 different enterprises since 1962. He said when he met Hsia and learned of her product, he knew she could go places.

Cross was the one who suggested that Warmilu should focus on producing for the U.S. market first to increase business and then create a philanthropic arm to provide blankets to infants in developing countries.

“It was a major turnaround coming to this conclusion and it might have been the biggest pivot point she went through,” said Cross. “I think Grace has uncovered a huge market to serve worldwide and there is a big opportunity for someone to step in.”

Though Warmilu has faced challenges, Gerry Roston, a startup exective manager who has consulted with Hsia, says he has confidence in her ability to run a successful company.

“She’s an engaging person, she is enthusiastic and she has a great deal of passion for this,” said Roston. “I can see where somebody like that with a little nudging and guidance is going to have a positive impact on the world.”

### 'An embodiment of that love.'

Up to this point, Warmilu’s $45,000 in funding has come from the founders and through different entrepreneurial competitions with prize money. The next step, says Hsia, will be to open up to investors and explore as many markets as possible, including the home therapy market.

“Nursing homes, physical therapists and hospitals use these kind of devices a lot,” said Fred Brown, who was the head of new ventures at Ascension Heath Care of Michigan and consulted on the project. “If you get a cold pack as well, which is part of Grace’s patent, then this technology has ways to expand into new markets”

Hsia and her cohorts have no plans to leave the state for what might be traditionally considered the best places for startups.

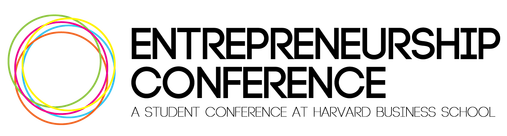
“You see more and more business people and investors coming back to the region,” said Hsia. “It’s still not quite as big as maybe Silicon Valley or the East Coast, but there’s a warmth here and a Midwest practicality. A willingness to help each other out that you don’t see anywhere else.”

Hsia will be relying on that warmth to continue their goal of saving lives. The name of their company comes from the word “warmth” and the abbreviation for “I love you,” a name suggested by her University of Michigan engineering professor Jason Daida, shortly before he died last January from cancer.

“He thought ‘warm,’ because we are providing warmth and ‘a parents love,’ because some of these parents will walk for days to a hospital to get care for their child,” said Hsia. “But sadly love won’t always save an infant. You need medical care. The warming device becomes an embodiment of that love.”

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From The Detroit News:<http://www.detroitnews.com/article/20140105/LIFESTYLE03/301050012#ixzz2uQ6BkS64>

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# ﻿​Harvard Business School: Entrepreneurship Conference Presentation[[4]](#footnote-4)

## Panel Lineup

**How to validate your idea and win customers - Traction.**

Topic: This panel will explore testing product market fit, validating value added to your customers and iterating designs. In addition the panelist will explore getting your first users and aligning your value proposal with channels and promotion.

*Speakers: Andrew Parker (Sparkcapital), Brendan Lattrell (Co-Founder, Beautymotive), Pablo Rodriguez Varela (Founding Partner, C7), Alex Douzet (CEO & Co-Founder, The Ladders)*

*Moderator: Jim Sharpe (Harvard Business School, Entrepreneur in Residence)*

**Learn how to go from an idea to a product**

**Topic:** This panel focuses on all stages from idea generation to product launch and on the challenges faced by entrepreneurs during that time. Speakers will share how they conceived their best idea, and how they were able to decide that the time was ripe for implementation. The panel will also explore the teaming aspect of launching a company, more specifically the selection process for business partners and the allocation of responsibilities and equity. Finally the speakers will share their thoughts on the key hurdles separating idea phase and product launch, and how to overcome those.

*Speakers: James Hirschfeld (Co-Founder, Paperless Post), Lisa Sun (Founder & CEO, Project Gravitas), Dan Barry (Singularity University), Steve Vassallo (General Partner, Foundation Capital)*

*Moderator: Coming soon*

**Learn how to start @ school**

**Topic:** Learn about the advantages and disadvantages of starting a company while still in school. We will get firsthand experience from founders who started companies while they were students. They will tackle issues such as: finding cofounders and technical talent, utilizing school resources, deciding whether to start now or wait till after graduation, and balancing school and starting a company

*Speakers: Dulcie Madden (Co-Founder, Rest Devices), Qasar Younis (Y Combinator),  Tuan Ho (Co-Founder, Philo), Christian Seale (Co-Founder, Equitable Origin)*

*Moderator: Nikhil Basu Trivedi (Shasta Ventures)*

**Learn how to build a successful international startup**

**Topic:** General discussion on differences between launching companies in the US and abroad. Sharing of insights and stories from entrepreneurs about their startups from outside the USA.

*Speakers: Roberta Oliveira (Founder, HotelUrbano.com), Sean Kane (Founder, F6S), Paul Kenny (Founder, Cobone.com), Tiago Compagnoni (Founder, Qranio), Samir Iásbeck (Founder, Qranio)*

*Moderator: Coming soon*

**Learn how successful founders overcome challenges & failures**

**Topic:** Hear from top startup CEOs about the mistakes & failures that were integral on their path to success.

*Speakers: Arun Agarwal (CEO, Infinio), Jordan Goldman (CEO, Unigo), Matt Salzberg (CEO, Blue Apron), Dhruv Singh (CEO, Savory), Steve Sydness (CEO, Endurance International)*

*Moderator: Chris Thorpe (CEO, Philo (formerly Tivli)*

**Learn how to raise capital for early stage or seed stage companies**

**Topic:** A perenial issue for founders and startups is how to raise capital to launch and sustain their companies prior to generating enough profits for self-funded growth. Join our panelists as they discuss what opportunities and pitfalls founders should consider when navigating the process of fund-raising.

*Speakers: Ken Itrato (Principal, FaberLawGroup), Don Charlton (Founder & CEO, Resumator), Jordan Fliegel (Founder & CEO, CoachUp), James Psota (Co-Founder & CTO, Panjiva)*

*Moderator: Gerry Stegmaier (Of Counsel, WSGR)*

**Entrepreneurship is just building another app**

**Topic:** This panel explores the true meaning of entrepreneurship and the motivations that go into the decision of becoming an entrepreneur or founding a new venture. Today, it seems many entrepreneurs are building companies that add incremental value with the purpose of reaching a quick exit. This panel is meant to delve into the merits of the various forms of entrepreneurship and motivations of founders.

*Speakers: John Kawola (CEO, Harvest Automation), Andrew Paradise (Founder, Skillz), Frederick Shilmover (Founder & CEO, InsightSquared), Seth Rosen (Co-founder & President,CustomMade)*

*Moderator: Jeff Fagnan (General Partner, Atlas Venture)*

**Entrepreneurship is all about the exit**

**Topic:** This panel explores the opportunities and challenges of building a company that lasts. We will explore the role that an exit strategy plays in the founding/funding of companies, the thought process that goes into the decision of selling a start up and what it means for the company and the founders.

*Speakers: Adam Dinow (Partner, WSGR), Grace Hsia (Co-Founder & CEO, Warmilu), Gabriel Hemmond (Self-Entrepreneurial), Tegan Monique Gaan (Co-Founder & CEO, Gigit)*

*Moderator: Sunil Nagaraj (Bessemer Venture Partners)*

**Entrepreneurship is focus on incremental ideas**

**Topic:** The purpose of this panel is to explore the degrees of innovation. What qualifies a new idea as a disruptive force as opposed to merely an incremental change? Our panelists will discuss the various approaches they took to ensure the successful differentiation of their ideas from the status quo.

*Speakers: Max Faingezicht (Co-Founder & CEO, ThriveHive), Doug Hurd (Co-Founder, Clypd), Bill Adler (CEO, Truefit), Elli Kaplan (CEO, Founder Neurotrak), Matt Nichols (Co-Founder & CFO, Gemvera)*

*Moderator: Christian Bailey (IncTank, Curated Innovation, Lincoln Group)*

**Entrepreneurship is not possible within large organizations! - Intrapreneurship**

**Topic:** Entrepreneurship is not only two guys in a garage somewhere. It is also alive and disruptive within large organizations, and is called "Intrapreneurship". We will discuss the challenges and skillset required to create an innovative change within large organizations.

*Speakers: Jennifer Soren (Google, Google Fiber), Yvonne Chen (Facebook), Prem Ramaswami (Google Crysis Team), Troy Leach (Paypal Here), Eric Brown (IBM, Watson)*

*Moderator: Prof. Steven Kaufman (Senior Professor, HBS)*

**Entrepreneurship is only possible in Silicon Valley**

**Topic:** In this panel, we would debate issues around the impact of ecosystems such as Silicon Valley (and lack thereof) on fostering entrepreneurship and building successful companies. We would also host perspectives on building a company outside US/for the global markets and the opportunities and challenges of such an endeavor.

*Speakers: Maxwell Wessel (VP, Business Innovation, SAP), Felipe Salvini (Sieve), X Fund), Jason Meinzer (Co-Founder, Zagster), David Klein (Common Bond)*

*Moderator: Hugo van Vuuren (Co-Founder and Partner, X Fund)*

# CBS DetroitCBS62logoNEW2013_blue_final_header_Whitewwj950-sm2011b971-ticket-35smb35h_CBSSportsRad_DetroitAccelerate Michigan Competition Looks To State’s Tech Future[[5]](#footnote-5)

November 14, 2013 1:33 PM

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**Matt Roush**

Matt Roush joined WWJ Newsradio 950 in September 2001 to spearhead the...

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**DETROIT (WWJ) –** To say Grace Hsia has just a tiny little bit of enthusiasm about her startup, Warmilu, is like saying Ndomukong Suh is just a tiny little bit intimidating to an opposing quarterback.

But then, it’s a great idea. All she wants to do is save the lives of thousands of infants around the world who die each year of hypothermia with a low-cost warming kit.

A self-described materials science nerd, Hsia was visiting this week’s Accelerate Michigan Innovation Competition. She presented at the event last year, and this year was checking out other presenters, potential partners and at least one potential competitor. She was also there in her capacity as project manager of the First Customer Program of the UM’s Institute for Research On Labor, Employment and the Economy, which assesses startup company ideas and identifies key steps they can take to get into markets.

Warmilu uses a phase change material that starts as a liquid and then changes to a solid. The solidification starts with a metal disk in the phase change material that when bent causes the liquid to solidify — releasing heat in the process.

The great part about the technology is that the product can release heat without electricity — which is often absent or unreliable in developing countries. And by putting the pack into boiling water, the heat pack is reusable time and time again.

Hsia said the company can be profitable even at low volumes, because the pack costs $10.50 at low volumes — but can be driven at high volume to under $1. She said that with assembly and shipping, it should cost about $10 to non-government organizations.

She’s looking to India and South America for distribution. Check out the technology at[http://www.warmilu.com](http://www.warmilu.com/).

Listen to an interview with Hsia at the link below.

An interview with Grace Hsia

Then there’s Jim Eliason, who wants to send thousands of stem cell development kits to researchers all over the world. His MitoStem, located at Detroit’s TechTown, has already won awards at other pitch competitions, including the Great Lakes Entrepreneurs Quest.

Eliason has developed an advanced, easier, less expensive way to turn skin and blood cells into induced pluripotent stem cells — cells that can be induced to grow into practically any type of human tissue. Possible uses of the stem cells include dread diseases like diabetes, Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s.

Listen to an interview with Eliason at the link below.

An intrview with Jim Eliason

A total of 82 presentations took place at Accelerate Michigan Wednesday and Thursday at Detroit’s Book Cadillac Hotel and Orchestra Hall.

Accelerate Michigan executive director Lauren Bigelow said Michigan has come a long way in just the four years of the competition, not to mention the past decade or so. There’s now a full entrepreneurial ecosystem of angel investors, venture capitalists, and state funds to fill in the gaps — along with the network of consultants, lawyers, accountants and other service providers who are willing to work with entrepreneurs and maybe be a little flexible on how and when they get paid in order to help a startup get launched.

Geoff Horst, chief science officer of last year’s $500,000 winner, Algal Scientific, described how his company has grown in the past year. The company is developing algae-based production for a chemical called beta glucan that is used as an animal food supplement. Horst said the beta glucan is far cheaper to make using algae than current yeast-based production methods, and can be used as an antibiotic for livestock — ending problems with antibiotic-resistant diseases. Horst said a study showed Algal’s product saved 11 cents a chicken in a test on a commercial poultry farm, which multiplied over millions of chicken is hardly, well, chicken feed.  Algal is moving into a larger headquarters in Northville, and will be able to boost production to 500 tons a year from the current 50.

In the student competition, the University of Michigan’s three year grip on first place was broken. First place and a $25,000 prize went to Soletics of Grand Valley State University, a developer of gloves and jackets heated by solar energy for outdoor sports wear. Second place and a $15,000 prize went to SIB Medical Technologies LLC of Wayne State University, developers of a sample collection device for home stool samples. Taking third place and a $10,000 prize was AirFuel of Michigan State University, which builds miniature lightweight wind turbines to provide off-grid electricity.

The other finalists in the student competition were Action Glow – 45th Parallel Lighting LLC of Northwestern Michigan College, a developer of LED lighting for sporting equipment; All Things Weaved of Grand Valley State University, which an information hub of hair and skin care for African-Americans; Bar2Bar Transportation of the University of Michigan, a provider of safe transportation for those imbibing at nightspots; Herd Products, no description provided; NanoGolf of Michigan State University, a golf accessories manufacturer; Show Town of Wayne State University, a website through which bar and restaurant managers can book musicians and musicians can promote themselves; SnapScript of Michigan State University, a patient medication organizer for the mobile phone; and Soup Spoon of the University of Detroit Mercy, an assistive eating utensil for the disabled and elderly. (There were 11 student finalists instead of the planned 10 due to a tie for 10th place.)

In the adult competition, the $500,000 top prize went to Varsity News Network, a Web site for high school sports communications based in Grand Rapids. Second prize of $100,000 went to Covaron Advanced Materials, an Ann Arbor developer of advanced ceramics that can be cured at low temperatures. Third prize, and $50,000, went to REL Inc., an Upper Peninsula developer of patented metal matrix composite brake rotors.

Other sponsored prizes of $25,000 each went to: DTE Energy award, Inmatech Inc., a University of Michigan spinout making advanced capacitors for energy storage; NextEnergy award, Wave Aircraft, a West Bloomfield Township developer of unmanned aircraft; Masco Corp. advanced materials award, LiteBrake Tech LLC, an Upper Peninsula company commercializing a steel clad aluminum brake rotor; IT industry award, PlanReaction, an Ann Arbor company developing technology to create floor plans for architects quickly; products and services award, Pindrop Inc., which develops indoor mapping and location technology to assist consumers and enterprises in finding products and assets; next-generation manufacturing award, AutoBike, a developer of an electronic automatic shifter for bicycles; medical device award, ENT Biotech Solutions LLC, a Detroit company making a surgical tool for adenoid removal; and life sciences award, Cure Launcher, a healthcare IT company with patent-pending technology to match patients to clinical trials based on their unique condition.

Turtle Cell LLC, a developer of a cell phone case with retractable earbuds, won the $10,000 People’s Choice award in voting of attendees at the event.

Other finalists making presentations Thursday night were Blaze Medical Devices, developer of blood transfusion medical devices; First Sense Medical LLC, which has developed advance breast cancer detection technology; and Upland Nanotech LLC,which is developing diagnostic sensing systems for food safety.

Thursday night’s event also saw the presentation of Accelerate Michigan Spirit of Michigan award to Fred Keller, founder and CEO of Grand Rapids-based Cascade Engineering, a plastics molder that has branched out into renewable energy and other fields. Keller told the crowd that “building a business is inextricably linked to building a community,” because business can do things for a community that government and nonprofits can’t — like, in his case, putting people on welfare and ex-convicts to productive work.

VMware CIO Tony Scott delivered a keynote address that started with a whimsical video about how a CIO is expected to know just about everything. Before taking the job last summer, Scott  served for five years as Microsoft’s CIO, leading its 4,000-member IT department. Before that, he had served as CIO of Disney,  and had led technology and operations departments at General Motors and Bristol-Meyers Squibb. Scott spoke about how the phrase “going to work” has become meaningless — because work is no longer a location. He said social media, the cloud and big data are shaping both work and the economy, and that the major challenges facing business today are ever-increasing speed and the fragmentation of media. And he said virtualization is breaking the bond between hardware and operating system.

More about Accelerate Michigan at [http://www.acceleratemichigan.com](http://www.acceleratemichigan.com/).



## [MIT StartLabs](http://bostinno.streetwise.co/channel/mit-startlabs/)

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# BostInno: Dorm Room CEOs: Making Entrepreneurship Accessible To College Students[[6]](#footnote-6),[[7]](#footnote-7)

Published:  October 14th 2013, 3:16am   
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It’s not every day that a seventeen-year-old can meet ten people who are all embracing the opportunity to change the world.  But on September 14, MIT StartLabs provided hundreds of MIT students and members of the greater Boston entrepreneurial community with precisely this chance at Startup Bootcamp, MIT’s largest annual undergraduate-run entrepreneurship event.  Attendees heard stories and advice from speakers including seasoned entrepreneurs like iRobot and CyPhy Works founder Helen Greiner, up-and-coming superstars such as Snapchat’s Evan Spiegel, and early-stage creators like Grace Hsia, founder of the bootstrapped non-profit Warmilu.  Following the talks, the audience had the chance to chat with the speakers.  Snapchat inception even occurred - people snapchatted people snapchatting the Snapchat founder.

Events like these aren’t unusual for frequenters of StartLabs’ space.  Two weeks ago, the founder of Broadway Technology, one of the largest providers of financial trading software, spent two hours discussing software development with an undergraduate at SLACK (Stay Late and Hack).  Last April, a few dozen Boston-area students were invited to a discussion with Sal Khan, founder of Khan Academy.  In September of 2012, StartLabs hosted a roundtable talk with Twitter and Square founder Jack Dorsey, 10 entrepreneurial freshman, and a handful of undergraduates who had worked at Square or Twitter in the past.

This is not a laundry list of incredible people who have worked with StartLabs.  Rather, we at StartLabs want everyone to know that entrepreneurship is not a hobby limited to bored child prodigies or tired hedge fund analysts.  Starting a company is something that you do when you’re passionate enough about a problem that you try to find and build a solution until you can’t keep going.  It is not something that requires an abnormally high IQ or fancy degree.  Entrepreneurship is accessible to anyone with the willingness to take a risk and the drive to work.

StartLabs has played host to doe-eyed freshmen - inspired by Startup Bootcamp speakers - who have decided to intern at startups after realizing that entrepreneurship isn’t just some sexy trend, but rather the most efficient way to make a difference.  SLACK mentors have provided legal advice to upperclassmen who have chosen to launch a company after realizing that their class project seamlessly translates to a minimum viable product.  And at Startup Bootcamp, we all had the amazing experience of sitting down with founders who emphasized that two, ten, or fifteen years ago, they had no idea what they were getting into when they launched.  They had the passion.  They had the drive.  They may have even had a handful of technical skills.  The only things differentiating them from today’s students though are some updated processors and a new set of problems to be solved.

# Sampan: The only bilingual Chinese-English Newspaper in New England | 全紐英倫區唯一的中英雙語雙週報http://www.test.sampan.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/sampanlogo5.pngEntrepreneurs gather at Startup Bootcamp[[8]](#footnote-8)

 By [Web](http://sampan.org/author/web/)[2013/10/04](http://sampan.org/2013/10/entrepreneurs-gather-at-startup-bootcamp/)[Features](http://sampan.org/category/features/), [Sampan Newspaper](http://sampan.org/category/sampan-newspaper/)

By Kenny Sui-Fung Yim

Ten presenters from the world of startup entrepreneurship presented their stories of success and failure at the Startup Bootcamp on Sept. 14 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Two of the speakers were Asian women: Julia Hu of Lark and Grace Hsia of Warmilu.

Hu, an MIT dropout, developed her product after being annoyed by her boyfriend’s alarm clock. As a “technical” person, she worked with a team to devise a “silent alarm clock” you could wear on your wrist. After getting her big idea, she set up offices in China for production. She knew she made it big when Apple decided to distribute her solution. The partnership with Apple has been valuable to the fledgling Lark Company, which continues to expand in areas of health, diet and wellness. Hu looked for mentors, making a beeline for high-profile women like Arianna Huffington at parties. Another mentor is a sleep expert who worked with National Basketball Association players. She was willing to approach strangers and ask seemingly silly questions like, “How does this material feel on your wrist?”

While most presenters shuffled to the stage, Hsia emerged with a million-watt smile and waved enthusiastically. Based in Michigan, having studied materials science, she developed her products — a non-electric heating device for blankets and heat packs — manufactured and distributed through her company, Warmilu. Aimed at babies and the elderly, the heating device works by cracking a medallion and releasing heat. The heating device is thermally regulated to prevent overheating. Hsia will expand to developing countries, which are better connected to global channels than one might imagine, she said.

[](http://sampan.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/LinkedIn_Grace-Hsia.png)

Grace Hsia, CEO of Warmilu. (Image courtesy of LinkedIn.)

Hsia opened up about discrimination she experienced. She was approached after an event by an individual who pointed out she was young, a woman and an ethnic minority. Taken aback, Hsia said, “Thank you.” She encouraged audience members not to react to naysayers, because they are everywhere. Hsia may not look like the typical entrepreneur, but is breaking down assumptions.

Other speakers included Michael Grinich who founded Bootcamp and is now working on a new project revolutionizing e-mail, called Inbox; Ryan Bubinski, cofounder and CTO of Codecademy; Dulcie Madden cofounder and CEO at Rest Devices, in Cambridge; Rebecca Hough, cofounder of Plugless; Iqram Magdon-Ismail of Venmo; Greg Ginsburg of Actual Food; and Evan Spiegal of SnapChat.

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# Concentrate Media: Warmilu begins sales as it broadens heating blanket’s customer base[[9]](#footnote-9)

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Warmilu got its start by creating a warming blanket for infants but now the Ann Arbor-based startup is registering its first sales by broadening its customer base.  
  
[Warmilu](http://www.warmilu.com/) has started selling some of its heating blankets to elderly people who use it for things like helping alleviate pain caused by arthritis, diabetes and to help with improve the overall comfort level while aging. The company is also looking to open up its customer base to people who want to use the blankets for kittens and puppies. The start-up is aiming to put its price at $29.99.  
  
"We're looking to get 1,000 units sold by the end of the year," says [Grace Hsia](http://www.semichiganstartup.com/founders/gracehsiamwrap.aspx), co-founder of [Warmilu](http://www.semichiganstartup.com/companies/mwrap.aspx).  
  
The three co-founders are University of Michigan students. Hsia recently graduated from the University of Michigan with a Masters in Entrepreneurship. Warmilu has also landed a $10,000 grant from the [University's Center for Entrepreneurship](http://www.cfe.umich.edu/?). So far the start-up has raised $45,000 in seed capital to fund its commercialization efforts. Hsia says it's still going to FDA approval of its blankets so it can sell them for their original purpose, warming infants.  
  
"It's going to take us another year to get FDA approval," Hsia says.  
  
*Source: Grace Hsia, co-founder of Warmilu*  
Writer: Jon Zemke  
  
*Read more about Metro Detroit's growing entrepreneurial ecosystem at*[*SEMichiganStartup.com*](http://semichiganstartup.com/)*.*

# CBS DetroitCBS62logoNEW2013_blue_final_header_Whitewwj950-sm2011b971-ticket-35smb35h_CBSSportsRad_DetroitGLEQ Business Plan Competition Awards $216k To Michigan Technology Entrepreneurs[[10]](#footnote-10)

June 18, 2013 5:15 PM

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**Matt Roush**

Matt Roush joined WWJ Newsradio 950 in September 2001 to spearhead the...

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**LANSING (WWJ) –** The Great Lakes Entrepreneur’s Quest hosted its 13th annual statewide business plan competition awards event for technology ventures at Entrepreneur Connect 2013 on Tuesday, June 18, at the James B. Henry Center on the Michigan State University campus.

The Pure Michigan Social Entrepreneurship Challenge also awarded entrepreneurs with mission-based ventures and businesses creating employment opportunities in distressed urban areas.

**SmartZone Award**

An event highlight was the presentation of the $100,000 SmartZone Award, sponsored by the Michigan SmartZones and funded through the Michigan Pre-Seed Capital Fund, administered by Ann Arbor Spark. The award was presented to Plymouth-based **BioSavita** by Joseph Licavoli, manager of capital programs at Ann Arbor Spark. The award was received by Nalini Motwani, president and chief science officer for BioSavita.

BioSavita is a privately held, revenue-stage biotechnology company with a proprietary and patented yeast platform to accelerate development and production of biologics in partnership with biopharma companies.

Pharmaceutical development is moving from small molecule drugs such as Lipitor to blockbuster monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) such as Herceptin, Avastin and Humira, which are highly effective and targeted therapies for cancer and arthritis. In the last decade, monoclonal antibodies have improved the survival rate of cancer patients by three fold and they have fewer side effects than chemotherapy.

**Emerging Company Awards**

The GLEQ Grand Prize Award of $25,000 in the Emerging Company category was presented to Detroit-based **ENT Biotech Solutions LLC**. The award was received by Olivier Lecerf, chief operating officer. ENT Biotech Solutions is a medical device company developing the Adeno-Electro-Forceps, a single use disposable tool for adenoid soft tissue removal that reduces device cost, surgical time, complications, and patient discomfort.

The Second Place Award of $15,000 was presented to **Inmatech** of Ann Arbor. The award was received by Ryan Wiltshire, business development officer. Inmatech is developing a 12-volt hybrid energy storage device that significantly increases the life span of a start battery under the aggressive loads imposed by start-stop operation of passenger vehicles. (The technique integrates supercapacitors, devices that store large quantities of energy quickly and then discharge that energy quickly, in parallel with a commercial lead-acid battery.)

The Third Place Award of $10,000 was presented to **Ornicept Inc.** of Ann Arbor. The award was received by Justin Otani, CEO. Ornicept is a management solution provider eliminating costly natural resource data collection bottlenecks by providing an integrated platform for acquiring field data and uploading it to cloud-based servers. Providing analytics capabilities and improving how data is collected, managed, and analyzed.

The top seven teams competing for awards in the Emerging Company category pitched their plans to a panel of investment judges. On the panel were Brian Abraham, executive director, Spartan Innovations; Jack Ahrens, general partner, TGap Ventures and chairman, GLEQ Board of Directors; Kim Pasquino, portfolio relations, Start Garden; and Terry Cross, founder, Windward Associates, LLC. Presentation scores were added to scores on the companies’ written business plans to determine the overall winners.

Finalists in addition to the winning companies included **Exo Dynamics** of Ann Arbor, a medical device company creating new spinal treatments; **ITB Packaging** of Holland, which is developing novel packaging dividers for manufacturing parts suppliers; **Lightmob LLC** of Grosse Pointe Park, which is developing a user-friendly transition device for moving data off aging computers and wiping drives clean; and **Sovilok Manufacturing** of Flushing, which is developing new reinforcement systems for entry doors for greater security against break-ins.

The Emerging Company awards were presented by Jack Ahrens.

**New Business Idea Awards**

In the New Business Idea category, Troy-based **DataSpeaks Health Solutions** received the First Place Award of $5,000, with Curtis Bagne, founder and chief science officer receiving the award. DataSpeaks has a patented software technology to revolutionize how measurable biological data is analyzed to increase the safety and efficacy of pre-market drugs and therapeutics.

**OcuSano Inc.** of Ann Arbor received the Second Place Award of $2,500, and was represented by Stanley Samuel, CEO. OcuSano is developing a drug release mechanism for wet Age-Related Macular Degeneration eye medications.

**QTek LLC** of Chassell was awarded the Third Place Award of $1,000, with Dr. Bowen Li, president, receiving the award. QTek is developing an antimicrobial additive for plastics, paint and wood products.

The New Business Idea awards were presented by Amanda Chocko, partner relations, Start Garden.

**Innovation Awards**

The eighth annual Automation Alley Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Award in the amount of $12,500 was presented to **Covaron Advanced Materials** of Ann Arbor and was received by Cameron Smith, CFO, and Dave Hatfield, CEO. Covaron’s Petraforge product processes like an advanced ceramic or polymer, yet performs like steel and aluminum and outperforms other polymers in a wealth of industrial applications for a fraction of the cost. The award was presented by Natalia Stasiw, entrepreneurial services manager at Automation Alley.

The Lean Startup Information Technology Innovation Award in the amount of $10,000 was presented to **Lightmob LLC** of Grosse Pointe Park and was received by Hans Erickson, founder. The award was presented by Mike Klein, co-CEO, Online Tech.

The Michigan Medical Device Accelerator Innovation Award in the amount of $10,000 was presented to **Arthroptics** of Ann Arbor and the award was received by Jordan MacDonald, co-founder. Arthroptics is developing Visula, a modified cannula, a tube used in minimally invasive surgery, designed with two tubular pathways inside, called lumen, to allow for the simultaneous passage of a camera and arthroscopic instruments. That provides for a more inclusive view of the surgical space and a better assessment of joints during surgery. The award was presented by Kelly Burris, partner, Brinks, Hofer, Gilson & Lione.

The MSU Bioeconomy Institute Green Chemistry Innovation Award in the amount of $5,000 was presented to **Gantec Inc.**, of Midland and was received by Richard Olson, president. Gantec has developed advanced, plant-based growing aids, allowing agriculture professionals to reduce costs, cut back on synthetic chemicals, and improve yields. The award was presented by William Freckman, director of operations, MSU Bioeconomy Institute, and Randy Thelen, president, Lakeshore Advantage.

NextEnergy added a second innovation award and presented the two $10,000 NextEnergy Alternative Energy Innovation Awards to Ann Arbor-based **Inmatech** and **Arborlight**. The Inmatech award was received by Ryan Wiltshire, business development officer. TThe Arborlight award was received by Michael Forbis, president. Arborlight’s LED-based Solis window emulator delivers daylight that looks, acts and feels just like a real skylight, with a spectrum of varying color and intensity throughout the day for spaces that cannot access daylight. Both awards were presented with by Dan Radomski, vice president, industry & venture development, NextEnergy.

Inforum Center for Leadership announced the availability of a competitive ACTiVATE Scholarship Award for a woman entrepreneur in the GLEQ Business Plan Competition interested in developing her entrepreneurial acumen through the ACTiVATE education program. Kristen Linegar, director of strategic initiatives, Inforum Center for Leadership, announced the scholarship award.

John Gillis of First Light LLC was awarded GLEQ Coach of the Year. Gillis coached four entrepreneurs in this cycle of the competition and two, Kimberly Kassner of EmpowerMind and Gwen Stanton of What Happens Next, lobbied for John to receive this award. They said John is “caring enough to tell you the things you need to hear even though you may not want to hear them.”

Grace Hsai, Warmilu, was awarded the GLEQ Spirit of Entrepreneurship which recognizes an entrepreneur that demonstrates passion, compassion, commitment, coachability and integrity. Grace was nominated by Gerry Roston who was struck by her eagerness to help others and her commitment to making the world a better place.

Loch McCabe, Shepherd Advisors, was recognized for his success in the Vision to Action Challenge for using the Business Model Canvas to create a new business vision supported by a clearly articulated action plan.

The GLEQ awards event was held in the Atrium of the James B. Henry Center on the MSU campus. The event was part of the full-day Entrepreneur Connect 2013 conference which included learning and networking sessions and the inaugural Pure Michigan Social Entrepreneurship Challenge awards.

GLEQ, now in its 14th year of continuous operations, is a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) educational program designed to accelerate the formation of high-growth companies in Michigan. GLEQ leverages a roster of volunteer business and investment experts to provide training, coaching and mentoring. Entrepreneurs in the business plan competition receive as many as four written critiques from members of the investor community. GLEQ is funded by Michigan Economic Development Corp. through an Entrepreneurial Support Services grant.

The 2014 GLEQ Business Plan Competition opens for registration on Monday, Aug. 26. Awards will be announced at the Annual Collaboration for Entrepreneurship 14 in January 2014.

Additional information is available at [www.gleq.org](http://www.gleq.org/) or by calling Diane Durance, GLEQ executive director, at (734) 255-3183.

Top sponsors for Entrepreneur Connect and the GLEQ Business Plan Competition Awards included the MEDC, the MSU Innovation Center, Brinks Hofer Gilson & Lione, Michigan Corps, Consumers Energy, MSU Bioeconomy Institute, Automation Alley, MSU Broad College of Business Institute for Entrepreneurship, Magic Johnson Foundation, Michigan Medical Device Accelerator, NextEnergy, MSU Federal Credit Union, Rehmann and Start Garden.

# Crain's Detroit BusinessOriginally Published: June 02, 2013 6:00 AM  **Modified: June 05, 2013 6:47 AM**

# Crain’s Detroit Business: A startup degree for startup makers[[11]](#footnote-11)

## New UM program offers state's only master's in entrepreneurship

By [Amy Haimerl](mailto:ahaimerl@crain.com)

[Print Article](http://www.crainsdetroit.com/print/article/20130602/NEWS/306029951/a-startup-degree-for-startup-makers)[Email Article](mailto:?body=Grace%20Hsia%20is%20passionate%20about%20saving%20infant%20lives.%20So%20passionate%20she%20decided%20to%20become%20an%20entrepreneur%20and%20enroll%20in%20the%20University%20of%20Michigan%27s%20inaugural%20Master%20of%20Entrepreneurship%20class.%20When%20Hsia%20was%20a%20materials-science%20engineering%20student%20at%20the%20university%2C%20she%20discovered%20some%20sobering%20data%20...%0A%0Ahttp%3A%2F%2Fwww.crainsdetroit.com%2Farticle%2F20130602%2FNEWS%2F306029951%2Fa-startup-degree-for-startup-makers&subject=A%20startup%20degree%20for%20startup%20makers%20%7C%20Crain%27s%20Detroit%20Business)[Share on Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/sharer/sharer.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.crainsdetroit.com%2Farticle%2F20130602%2FNEWS%2F306029951%2Fa-startup-degree-for-startup-makers)[Share on LinkedIn](http://www.linkedin.com/shareArticle?summary=&title=A%20startup%20degree%20for%20startup%20makers&mini=true&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.crainsdetroit.com%2Farticle%2F20130602%2FNEWS%2F306029951%2Fa-startup-degree-for-startup-makers&ro=false&source=)[Share on Twitter](https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?text=A+startup+degree+for+startup+makers+%40crainsdetroit&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.crainsdetroit.com%2Farticle%2F20130602%2FNEWS%2F306029951%2Fa-startup-degree-for-startup-makers)

[](http://www.crainsdetroit.com/apps/pbcsi.dll/storyimage/CD/20130602/NEWS/306029951/AR/0/Grace_Hsia.jpg&MaxW=900&MaxH=900)

*LON HORWEDEL*

When Grace Hsia learned that 4 million low-birthweight babies die every year, many from hypothermia, the University of Michigan student became an entrepreneur — and one of 17 students in UM's first Master of Entrepreneurship program.

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[CORRECTIONS](http://www.crainsdetroit.com/article/20130609/NEWS/306099983)[Can you study to be an entrepreneur? To a degree, yes](http://www.crainsdetroit.com/article/20130602/NEWS/306029960)

#### Correction appended

Grace Hsia is passionate about saving infant lives. So passionate she decided to become an entrepreneur and enroll in the **University of Michigan**'s inaugural Master of Entrepreneurship class.   
  
When Hsia was a materials-science engineering student at the university, she discovered some sobering data from the **World Health Organization**: Nearly 4 million low-birth weight infants die annually. She learned that many of these deaths are caused by hypothermia because hospitals in developing countries cannot afford incubators and heat lamps, which can cost $500-$20,000.   
  
To solve the problem, she and her partners, Rachel Rademather and Alex Chen, developed an infant warming blanket.   
  
"My senior design project is what sparked entrepreneurship in me," said Hsia, 23. "My adviser believed passionately about taking engineering and helping people with it, not just sitting behind a cubicle. And an infant warming blanket can be the difference between life and death."

[](http://www.crainsdetroit.com/apps/pbcsi.dll/storyimage/CD/20130602/NEWS/306029951/H2/0/infant_warming_blanket.jpg&MaxW=900&MaxH=900)

*PHOTO COURTESY OF GRACE HSIA*

Hsia and her partners developed a infant warming blanket and a business, Warmilu LLC.

Hsia, Rademather and Chen started their company,**Warmilu LLC** (warm+I love you), and then entered business-plan competitions and boot camps to get the funding to build a prototype. By the time Hsia graduated, she was looking at taking the Warmilu product to trial in Bangalore, India. It was through that process that she realized she didn't have the business acumen to make Warmilu a success.   
  
"I wanted to be more useful to the company," Hsia said. "I wanted to take my passion to save infant lives and counterbalance that with the business, financial, legal things you need to know to start a business. Entrepreneurship still isn't the most accepted life path, so I knew this would help me. I knew the MsE would get me into the air sooner rather than later."   
  
Hsia was one of 17 students in the first Master of Entrepreneurship degree program at UM. They graduated in late May and are now completing their summer work component, either launching their own business or working with other startups or venture capital firms.   
  
At the same time, the degree, which is offered jointly between the **Stephen M. Ross School of Business**and the **College of Engineering**, is accepting students into its second class. Tuition for the one-year program is $40,000 for in-state students and $56,000 for out-of-state students. So far, 20 students have committed, and there are another two dozen in process.   
  
"There has been a 20 percent increase in completed applications," said Anne Perigo, the associate program director. "It's not a hard sell; this is either the right degree, or not, especially once explained."   
  
The degree was started with a $1 million gift from Don Graham, a UM alumnus and founder of York, Pa.-based **The Graham Group**. The program exclusively admits STEM students -- science, technology, engineering and mathematics -- and unites them with a number of entrepreneurial resources from across the campus, including the **Center for Entrepreneurship** in the engineering school and the **Samuel Zell & Robert H. Lurie Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies** in the business school.  
  
"It is an amazing trifecta that brings together resources from across campus," said Aileen Huang-Saad, co-director of the program. "We have all of these people who really think about technology and entrepreneurship under one roof."   
  
"It's not just a business degree," Perigo added. "It's different because an MBA, a very valuable degree, is intended to give you the skill set to manage a large, ongoing concern, but it doesn't give you the skill set to start one and scale one."   
  
Beyond the how-tos of starting a business, the curriculum teaches students to identify opportunities, commercialize technology, understand value chains, build relationships with manufacturers and suppliers, protect their intellectual property and prepare for legal issues.   
  
"An MBA doesn't tell you how to start up a business or go through all the pain of starting a manufacturing process," Hsia said. "The MsE is for someone who is starting their own business. It allows you to build relationships with key channels. ... It teaches you how to go from an idea to a working product to something that is consumer ready."   
  
Michigan isn't the only university, of course, to have a master's in entrepreneurship. Nor is it the first. In fact, the first course in entrepreneurship was offered in 1947 at the **Harvard School of Business**, according to the Washington, D.C.-based **Council of Graduate Schools**.   
  
"The general concept of entrepreneurship is starting to permeate higher education at many levels, both at the graduate and undergraduate levels," said Brian Mitchell, associate provost for graduate studies and research at **Tulane University** and a member of the Council of Graduate Schools. "It's probably a decade old, but even more so in the past five years."  
  
UM is the only institution in the state that offers a graduate degree in entrepreneurship, but **Wayne State University** and **Michigan State University**offer certificates in entrepreneurship as well as significant on-campus resources, including courses, business-plan competitions, mentoring and more. **Eastern Michigan University** offers graduate students a certificate as well as a major and minor in entrepreneurship for undergraduate students. The **University of Detroit Mercy** offers undergraduate students a minor in entrepreneurship, as does **Oakland University**, in addition to a concentration for MBA students.   
  
For UM, it was crucial to offer an actual degree in entrepreneurship as a way to help students move beyond their technical degrees and commercialize their technologies.   
  
"We recognized that as the global economy is changing, it is critical that we offer out students the opportunity to diversify themselves," said Huang-Saad. "They can't just say, 'I'm a really high-quality engineer.' That's not sufficient. They have to understand how what they're developing impacts the rest of society, business and the end user."   
  
That proved true for Steven Sherman. While studying chemical engineering at Michigan, he was looking at algae biodiesel. As an engineer, he was purely interested in the technology. But he realized that it wasn't ready for market because customers weren't willing to pay for it.   
  
"I was still really an engineer and looking at the technology," Sherman, 24, said. "But as an entrepreneur, I realized it's about creating value, not so much about the technology."   
  
This summer Sherman is working at Ann Arbor-based **Huron River Ventures** evaluating deals and doing due diligence. Additionally, he's working on his own startup, **YouKnowWatt LLC**, which will work with home energy auditors to offer electricity monitoring and analysis. He expects to work with an auditor by the end of the summer and have a pilot program in a UM dorm.  
  
Meanwhile, Hsia completed trials of Warmilu's warming blanket during the year and is now going through FDA approvals. She found a manufacturer in Indiana and will start a trial with hospital, EMT and EMS customers. Once their feedback comes in, the partners will set a price and begin selling by the fall. They are shooting for 20,000 units sold by the end of 2014.   
  
"Ann Arbor and Michigan have a fantastic ecosystem for student entrepreneurs," Hsia said. "We have innovators coming from the university, and people from **Eastern Michigan University** and **Wayne State University**, plus all of the world-class students. But you also have the manufacturers embedded here in the Midwest that you don't have on the East or West coasts. Finally, you have the investors. There are so many ways of finding financing here in Michigan."  
  
Amy Haimerl: (313) 446-0416,[*ahaimerl@crain.com*](mailto:ahaimerl@crain.com). Twitter:[*@haimerlad*](http://www.twitter.com/@haimerlad)

Correction: An earlier version of this story omitted information on Eastern Michigan University's entrepreneurship programs. This version is correct.

# CBS DetroitCBS62logoNEW2013_blue_final_header_Whitewwj950-sm2011b971-ticket-35smb35h_CBSSportsRad_Detroit EMU, UM Students Design No-Power Warming Blankets For Premature Babies Overseas[[12]](#footnote-12)

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**Matt Roush**

Matt Roush joined WWJ Newsradio 950 in September 2001 to spearhead the...

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YPSILANTI — Technology is rapidly changing how medicine is practiced, and nowhere is it more evident than with premature babies, who are surviving longer than in the past. In developing countries, however, keeping pre-term infants alive and healthy can be challenging.

Experts estimate that approximately 140 low birth weight infants from around the world die every hour from hypothermia-related causes.

A team of one Eastern Michigan University student and several from the University of Michigan recently designed a warming blanket that can help such babies retain or increase their body heat in order to improve their survival rate.

The blanket, called Warmilu, “was designed to bridge the gap between the hospital and homecare in low-resource settings,” said team member Ana Maria Barge, a senior from Eastern Michigan in the Apparel, Textiles and Merchandising program.

Initially called MWrap, the idea originated in 2011 as a class project for materials science engineering students at UM. Their challenge: Create a low cost, non-electric thermal warming blanket.

The students won  $5,750 from the Michigan Clean Energy Venture Challenge to develop the idea and see it through to launching. The Ann Arbor-based TechArb Accelerator, which helps students with entrepreneurial ventures, provided office space, mentors and a $10,000 grant.

The next step was to design the product and develop a prototype.

Max Shtein, associate professor of materials science and engineering at UM, advised his students to contact EMU professor Cathryn Amidei, whose background is in fine arts and in apparel, textiles and merchandising. Amidei and her husband, Dan, a high energy physicist at UM, had collaborated with Shtein in the past.

Amidei asked Barge to participate because she could help to design the product.

Said Amidei: “Ana is that special student who wants to solve problems like this project. I knew she had the tenacity to come up with something that would be lightweight, retain heat, was comfortable and at a low cost.”

The engineering students initially pieced together a prototype made of newspaper and tape.  Barge examined the paper prototype and realized it needed to be made with fabric.

“I reconfigured the prototype with fabric to make it more practical,” said Barge, 45, of Ypsilanti.

Barge consulted with the engineering students on materials, construction and the sample pattern.  She then developed a workable prototype, using blue nylon for the outside of the blanket and 100 percent cotton flannel for insulation, similar to the insulation in oven mitts.

“I tested the fabric’s performance and sent the lab report to UM,” Barge said. “I found that flannel wasn’t the best to use because of its pilling and low thread count, and I replaced the outside nylon cover with a jersey knit,” a fabric similar to that used in T-shirts.

Fabric pilling occurs when short or loose fibers form small, fuzzy balls on the fabric’s surface.

While Barge was experimenting with the design and fabric, the remaining team members developed a chemical interaction that could heat plastic tubes and be regenerated in boiling water.

The tubes resemble tubing used in glow sticks and warming units for hiking, and can be inserted into small pockets located inside the front cover.

Barge also was involved with the production, and worked with standardizing and perfecting the product.

The final prototype features a waterproof outer cover, an inner cover, a reflective layer, insulation, and special tubing to provide heat. The team then tested the wrap on a live baby. It was a success in providing heat and comfort.

“Ana contributed her life experiences as a mother and her pattern-making skills for this wonderful project,” Amidei said. “As an older woman, she has good time management skills and she could see the eventual outcome.”

Barge felt her experience as a single mother of three children and her background in design helped. She also credited Eastern’s program with her success.

“Everything Professor Amidei taught me was important,” Barge said. “Eastern’s program is very practical and it offers the courses I needed to work on the project, and to build up my portfolio.  It’s very cool to work with another university and it was a great experience.”

01Mar 2013

## The Ann Magazine: Big ideas Big money[[13]](#footnote-13)

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*[](http://www.theannmagazine.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Feature.png)*

**Can Ann Arbor become the next big thing in high tech?**  
Story by Julie Halpert  
Photos by benjamin Weatherston

Grace Hsia, a 23-year-old graduate student at the University of Michigan, thinks she has the next big business idea and she spends most of her waking hours making sure it succeeds. • As an undergraduate engineering student, she and a team of five others got a patent on a non-electric heat technology they use to make infant warming blankets. She’s CEO of a company they founded, Warmilu, which seeks to reduce infant mortality from hypothermia, a condition that kills 140 infants in developing countries every hour, she said. • “I am passionate about spreading warmth to save lives,” she said. Hsia and her five partners have raised $30,000 to launch the product, which is being tested in Bangalore, India. • For the past 17 months, Hsia has spent as many as 90 hours a week nurturing her startup from her cramped, 196-square-foot apartment in downtown Ann Arbor. She tends to her pet project while perched on her lone piece of furniture, a cappuccino-colored futon. • She also takes a full 16-credit class load in her master’s of entrepreneurship program and works 20 hours a week at U-M’s Institute for Research on Labor, Employment and the Economy. She even manages to squeeze in exercise, logging 56 miles on a stationary bike on a recent Saturday while typing away at her laptop. • She doesn’t sleep much. “When you know your technology is saving lives, it really makes you go the extra mile,” she says. • Hsia is extraordinarily committed, but she’s not alone. Ann Arbor has a growing techie subculture of people chasing their dreams, hoping to cash in on the next great idea.  
  
Grace Hsia, a 23-year-old graduate student at the University of Michigan, thinks she has the next big business idea and she spends most of her waking hours making sure it succeeds.  
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She doesn’t sleep much. “When you know your technology is saving lives, it really makes you go the extra mile,” she says.  
Hsia is extraordinarily committed, but she’s not alone. Ann Arbor has a growing techie subculture of people chasing their dreams, hoping to cash in on the next great idea.  
Tech-oriented entrepreneurs are getting help from an expanding support group: the University of Michigan, the state, economic development organizations, national technology companies setting up offices in Ann Arbor, other young professionals who view Ann Arbor as the perfect place to launch a tech business, and new venture capital firms which are filling the need for seed money.  
This combination of dreamers and backers is fueling a fast-growing high-tech startup culture here.  
According to a Feb. 1 report by the Brookings Institution, Ann Arbor has the seventh highest rate of patents per capita in America.  
The University of Michigan’s Office of Technology Transfer launches a startup company, on average, about every 30 days.  
Sara Wurfel, a spokeswoman for Gov. Rick Snyder, says nearly every part of the information technology industry is represented here, with more than 300 companies offering all levels of technical services, including cloud computing, website hosting and development, and mobile app creation.  
“Ann Arbor is considered one of the top performing cities in the entrepreneurship sector in the entire state,” said Martin Dober, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation’s senior vice president for entrepreneurship and innovation.

**A false start**

Ann Arbor missed its first opportunity to capitalize on the high-tech boom three decades ago, said Craig Labovitz. He said he began working on the development of the Internet for the National Science Foundation here in 1982. Though Ann Arbor, with its strong engineering talent, was considered the hub of the effort, there wasn’t an ecosystem to retain the talent, so companies started moving to the East and West coasts, taking the engineering talent with them.  
“We went from the pinnacle of the Internet to nothing,” he said.  
He said he’s seen an “incredible transformation” in the last 10 years.

**M go high tech**

The University of Michigan is the most important high-tech driver. Its $1.27 billion research budget makes it the top research spender of any public learning institution. The money has provided a pipeline for starting and growing new tech businesses and commercializing ideas.  
Steve Forrest, U-M’s vice president for research, points to a 2007 speech by U-M President Mary Sue Coleman, when she discussed the importance of partnering with the state and industry to further develop business ideas.  
Forrest said there was a recognition that to attract the brightest faculty, you needed to offer them entrepreneurial opportunities. That “required us to change,” he said.  
The university receives a third of the royalties and equity generated from faculty members’ intellectual properties, and that money is reinvested in entrepreneurial initiatives. This serves to help make Ann Arbor a more attractive community to students, Forrest said, adding that “a high-tech startup is not the only economic outcome of entrepreneurs. It’s all the businesses that support the startups, from dry cleaners to hotels and restaurants.”  
Kenneth J. Nisbet, executive director of U-M’s Technology Transfer Office since 2001, has a $5 million budget to license ideas, provide patents and assist faculty inventors in starting companies.  
Over the past 10 years, his office has helped produce more than 3,000 inventions, launch 98 startups, raise more than $1 billion in private venture funding and create more than 1,500 jobs with startups. Tech Transfer also runs a venture accelerator which houses 16 U-M startup companies.  
This places U-M in the top 10 among all universities in tech transfer performance, Nisbet says.  
In addition, U-M’s Medical School partners with industry to help commercialize faculty ideas in health care. Connie Chang, the Medical School’s Office of Business Development director, says that 40 percent of all U-M invention disclosures each year are from the health-care system.  
The Center for Entrepreneurship, housed out of the Engineering College, has helped launch more than 100 startups. Doug Neal, the center’s executive director, said about 8,000 students are involved in entrepreneurial programs throughout the university.  
The Center for Entrepreneurship and the Zell Lurie Institute at the Ross School of Business co-manage TechArb, intended to help any U-M student who wants to start a company. Roughly 15 teams of students over a six-month period take advantage of a workspace, caffeine and the Internet and get feedback on ways to grow their idea.  
Out of the 97 companies started by students from 2008-12, 25 were funded, three were acquired, 39 failed and the rest are still active.  
One success story is Mobiata, which manufactures iPhone apps for trip planning. It was generating more than $2 million in revenue when it was purchased by Expedia in 2010. Mobiata is still in Ann Arbor. In fact, many of the companies remain here, fostering a “dynamic startup culture in Ann Arbor,” said Will Stone, TechArb’s coordinator.  
The big boys play here

The university works with Ann Arbor SPARK, which works to attract new businesses to Ann Arbor and convince local businesses to stay and expand.  
SPARK has made high-tech development a priority. From 2006-12, it invested $6.6 million in 29 Washtenaw County companies, part of the $25 million it received from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to provide early-stage capital to startups.  
SPARK has helped attract major tech players to the area, including Google and Barracuda Networks.  
Google set up an Ann Arbor office in 2006 for its AdWords operations, designed for advertisers to reach out to customers using Google. It moved to its current East Liberty location a year later.  
Google spokeswoman Julie Currie said the talent base from U-M is a big attraction to Google. She wouldn’t disclose how many employees work here.  
Silicon Valley-based Barracuda Networks, which focuses on network security and storage, outgrew its 12,000-square-foot Depot Street location where it had been since 2008 – jumping from 25 people to 200 – before it moved downtown into the former Borders space in November, encompassing 45,000 square feet. It’s now at 250 employees and is hiring one to two people a week.  
“Ann Arbor is a logical place for a Silicon Valley company to expand,” says Sean Heiney, Barracuda’s vice president for strategic initiatives. “You get incredible engineers at a fraction of the cost of Silicon Valley.” Plus, he says, there’s lower turnover, because Ann Arbor employees appreciate a job with good pay and benefits and “are not concerned with bouncing around for the best thing of the day.”  
Systems in Motion, a technology services company also headquartered in the San Francisco Bay area, picked Ann Arbor over Phoenix, Chapel Hill, N.C., and Austin, Texas, as a place to open its delivery center in January 2010. It now employs 130 people. Motivators were relatively lower resource costs and the university, said Debashish Sinha, chief marketing officer: “The talent at the senior level and the entry level has been outstanding.”  
MyBuys, which offers personal shopping services for online retailers headquartered in the San Francisco Bay area, has grown its Ann Arbor workforce by 20 percent each year since 2008 when it set up shop here.

**Spawning entrepreneurs**

This tech culture is benefitting from so-called “serial entrepreneurs,” those who have started successful companies and moved on to another company once those are sold.  
One of them is Jen Baird, 45, who launched the medical devices company Accuri Cytometers in January 2005. By the time she left in 2010, the company had a presence on seven continents. It was sold in 2011 and remains in Ann Arbor. She is now CEO of Ann Arbor-based Accio Energy Inc., which manufactures turbine-free wind energy.  
She says it’s a good thing for the community when companies are sold, especially if they remain in Ann Arbor. She said a sale is often necessary to provide investors a return on their investment, and that also opens up the opportunity for those who started the company to redeploy.  
“People form new companies and that’s a more organic way of growing,” she said, resulting in the Ann Arbor “ecosystem getting stronger.” She says all the senior executives of Accuri are now in other companies, and only one has left town. “That experience base is spreading out. Good people get passed around and help build new value.”  
Labovitz, a co-founder of Arbor Networks, went on to co-found DeepField in November 2011. That company, which enhances delivery of cloud-based services, has a goal of being cash-flow positive this year.  
Tony Grover, managing director of RPM Ventures, a $60˛million venture capital firm, says the large “exits” by companies that Labovitz and Baird started are “helping to create the next generation of entrepreneurs, since it spawns people with wealth and startup experience in a high-growth, high-technology business who use that to start the next company.”  
He said it will ultimately take decades to realize the ripple effects on a large scale, but “we are starting to see elements of that in town.”

**The techie godfather**  
  
Dug Song, 37, a computer security guru who helped develop the music-sharing service Napster, co-founded Arbor Networks, which grew from six to 300 people in the decade before it was sold. He’s already on to his next big computer security business; last year he started Duo Security, which has 1,000 customers in 80 countries.  
But Song’s passion is breeding a pay-it-forward culture he saw modeled in Silicon Valley. He’s focusing on ways to help other startups, recently helping raise $1.5 million for DeepField.  
He also founded Tech Brewery, where entrepreneurs can rent inexpensive space in a recently renovated former brewery built in 1880. It’s the ultimate hip space – an open room full of exposed brick and floor-to-ceiling windows where twenty- and thirty-somethings dressed in jeans and T-shirts sit side by side at computers.  
Song negotiated an arrangement with the landlord, Doug Smith, where tenants can rent a desk for as little as $50 a month. “Dug is the den mother,” Smith says. “He takes people under his wing.”  
Song pointed to Olark as an example of a tenant which grew from a single desk to a full-fledged office.  
“I’m trying to build a grassroots tech community from the ground up,” Song says. “I want to provide a crucible for folks to run into each other and recombine.”

**Silicon Valley’s little brother?**

Ann Arbor has a long way to go before it becomes the next Silicon Valley. Grover says locals startups typically sell to larger firms for $150 million to $300 million. That’s respectable, but far less than the wealth that came from Dell, for instance, which transformed Austin. Having a company like that “would completely change Ann Arbor,” he said.  
Lindsay Aspegren, a general partner in North Coast Technology Investors, agrees that Ann Arbor needs a recognizable public company to put it on the map. “Ann Arbor in the tech world is not something that really pops into the forefront of people’s minds when they think of success,” he says.  
Tim Petersen, managing director of Arboretum, says the city needs more companies with “meaningful exits,” adding, “We need to encourage the Dug Songs of the world to stay here and start more companies.”  
Song has no plans to leave, but he agrees that he’s one of the few entrepreneurs focused on building the high-tech community here. “In Silicon Valley, being an angel investor is a badge of honor,” he said. “We need folks who care enough to roll back in and contribute.”  
He says too many who have benefitted financially from starting high-tech companies aren’t getting involved in the next wave of innovation. In Silicon Valley, he says, the atmosphere is exuberance, with the feeling that anyone can be a millionaire; here, the culture feels more adversarial.  
At the same time, he doesn’t think it’s appropriate to model Ann Arbor after Silicon Valley. It’s more on par with the next tier down, university towns like Austin and Boulder.  
“Boulder has gotten it right,” Song says. “It has a network of entrepreneurs and successful people rubbing elbows.” But he adds that with roughly $1 billion in startup exits over the past five years and a company sold every year, Ann Arbor is keeping pace.  
SPARK CEO Paul Krutko says “the biggest challenge that will hold this region back is the mismatch between the jobs we’re helping to create and the qualifications and ability of our workforce training system to provide talent to fill those jobs.” He says that continuing to attract and retain talented people in Ann Arbor will remain a priority for his organization.  
Krutko agrees with Song that it’s not appropriate to compare Ann Arbor to Silicon Valley, since Silicon Valley has about 10 times the population. But he says local access to advanced manufacturing expertise, especially in the area of connected vehicle research, offers a promising niche.  
Nesbit says this area lacks a “critical mass” of early-stage funding, entrepreneurial talent and growth-stage industry. He hopes the university’s resources and mentoring will help address that situation.  
“We have a natural Silicon Valley that’s never quite congealed,” adds U-M’s Forrest; there’s not enough intermingling between the academic community, the physical community of Ann Arbor and the high-tech industry that is common in Silicon Valley.  
The university is reaching out to form strong partnerships with industry, he says, but there’s only so much the university can do. “We cannot cause the revolution. It will ultimately take local industry to make it happen.”

**Beer, hacking and pitching**  
  
But it’s hard to see the shortcomings when looking at the number of well-attended tech gatherings in the area. One event, “Beer: 30,” occurs in the Tech Brewery every Friday, where up to 80 people convene to socialize and network.  
On a recent Friday, Lida Hasbrouck, 26, was there with her shitsu dog that she brings to work every day. She was getting feedback from another tenant on the progress of the startup she and her husband launched last July for a virtual course pack. “This is not just about cheap rent. It’s about like-minded people providing support and encouragement,” Song said.  
Anthony Oliver, 31, founder of a company called Sight Machine, which uses cameras in manufacturing for quality control, often stops by on Fridays. Oliver says Ann Arbor provides a quality of life unmatched in Silicon Valley. He recalls a recent conversation with a Silicon Valley entrepreneur, who said he was jealous of Oliver’s digs; he pays only $1,400 in monthly rent for a 1,600-square-foot house in Dexter on 10 acres. Ann Arbor “is a great community to start a tech startup,” Oliver said. “You feel more like a person and less of a number here.”  
David C. Bloom, a 51-year-old startup coach, is on the board of a2geeks. He describes it as a group that “supports and promotes geek culture in greater Ann Arbor,” sponsoring events that attract thousands.  
Bloom said, “California-based companies like Barracuda, Google and MyBuys are sitting here because we’re all about resources, ecosystem and growth, stuff that’s hard to retain out West.”  
The day after the Tech Brewery event, Song was a judge in the third annual Start Up Weekend Ann Arbor at Rackham Auditorium, a 54-hour event where 104 students and professionals pitched 55 primarily website and mobile-app-based businesses. On the same day, just down the street at Palmer Commons, students organized Mhacks, the largest student hackathon in the country. That 36-hour event attracted 550 students from all over the country, including 275 from U-M. Students formed teams and built web and mobile applications, vying for more than $10,000 in prizes.

**seeds and blooms**

As technology development has flourished, the venture capital industry is growing along with it. The number of venture capital firms with an Ann Arbor presence has grown from four in 2000 to 16 in 2013. Some firms are headquartered in Ann Arbor, while others are setting up offices here.  
Firms in Ann Arbor manage $1.8 billion, according to the Michigan Venture Capital Association.  
This growth is occurring at a time when the number of venture capital firms has dropped by 30 percent nationally. And venture capital firms outside the state don’t hesitate to invest in companies here as well.  
“If you talked to a venture capitalist on the West Coast 10 years ago and said you were building a company in Ann Arbor, he would have thought you were crazy and (would have) asked you to relocate,” said Grover. Now, he says, Ann Arbor garners as much respect as Austin.  
When Jim Adox started EDF Ventures in 1997, he was the only firm in town. Now he sees an “explosion” in venture capital activity. He’s currently the managing director of the Ann Arbor office of Venture Investors, based in Madison, Wis. He has subleased the ninth floor of the First National Bank Building, where he’s located next to two other firms – Fletcher, Spaght Ventures, based in Boston, and Early Stage Partners of Cleveland. Now, a total of $400 million to $500 million is managed by collective funds located in the building. Adox says it lends itself to a water-cooler collaborative atmosphere, where they can invest in some of the same projects.  
Petersen, the managing director of Arboretum, a $140˛million fund, says Ann Arbor’s activity has gone from small to meaningful in the past 15 years, though “we could use a few more funds the size of ours” to provide some stability and longevity and to write big enough checks.  
Angel investment, where individuals contribute money to startup firms, is active. A group called Ann Arbor Angels, made up of 14 private investors, provided $3.4 million to eight companies in 2012.  
“We’ve seen steady growth” in Ann Arbor, said Michael Cole, director of Ann Arbor Angels.

**The high-tech road ahead**

Jen Baird believes many important elements are converging, boding well for Ann Arbor’s high-tech future. “There’s increasing sophistication among angel investors,” she said. “Venture capital groups are expanding. We have a network of people with startup experience. All of that adds to the ecosystem.”  
Hsia hopes that ecosystem will help her as she stays in Ann Arbor to work on her startup after graduating this year. Fully aware that nine out of 10 startups fail, she’s confident that she’ll become another Ann Arbor high-tech startup success story.  
If not, she says she’s already had a marketable learning experience. “If this fails, I can connect with others to work on another startup,” she said. “It gives you the chance to look for the next great problem to solve.”

[top]

##### **About the Author**

*http://0.gravatar.com/avatar/4c2d60f6a1acdc9a03878a9b2746e07d?s=60&d=http%3A%2F%2F0.gravatar.com%2Favatar%2Fad516503a11cd5ca435acc9bb6523536%3Fs%3D60&r=G*

Home

# The Michigan Daily: New business incubator offers mentorship opportunities[[14]](#footnote-14)

[PRINT](https://www.michigandaily.com/print/72052)| [E-MAIL](https://www.michigandaily.com/forward?path=node/72052)| [LETTER TO THE EDITOR](https://www.michigandaily.com/letters)

By [AMRUTHA SIVAKUMAR](https://www.michigandaily.com/people/amrutha/Amrutha%20Sivakumar), Daily Staff Reporter  
Published April 1, 2013

optiMize, a new program that links entrepreneurial social service and innovation, aims to bring entrepreneurship to social initiatives. With help from mentors, students will compete to have their social innovation ideas funded.

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* [From the Daily: Encouraging entrepreneurship](https://www.michigandaily.com/opinion/09stanford-startx18)
* [MPowered expands fair beyond start-ups](https://www.michigandaily.com/news/1starting-careers-mpowered1)

To bring new social entrepreneurship opportunities to LSA students, University alum Jeff Sorensen co-founded the initiative last semester to provide healthy competition for students interested in fostering social change.

While he said he believed that programs hosted by Center for Entrepreneurship and the Entrepreneurship Commission of the CSG provided an outlet for students who wanted to be entrepreneurs “for entrepreneurship's sake,” he said optiMize was a platform through which students could “take action on problems that matter.”

With around 90 applicants and members ranging from freshman to doctoral candidates, optiMize kick-started its preparations for the competition aspect in January.

“We’re really happy about the demographics because, unfortunately, a lot of the entrepreneurship initiatives here are like men’s clubs,” Sorensen said. “The proportions are not where they should be; we are really happy that about 40 percent (of optiMize participants) are women.”

optiMize aims to “connect students who want to do things with people who know how,” Sorensen explained.

Business sophomore Sripriya Navalpakam, who founded a micro-financing start-up, turned to optiMize with a business pitch and an aspiration to expand it into the greater community.

“One thing that they’ve created right now is a community of excited students who are really passionate about creating change,” Navalpakam said. “We weren’t really a part of this before we joined optiMize.”

Navalpakam explained that working with low-income community members on her venture has led to a number of typical challenges. While accepting that social entrepreneurship entailed a fair degree of stress, she said optiMize has connected her with lasting mentors.

“Moving forward it’s going to give us a really strong ecosystem,” Navalpakam said. “Being entrepreneurs, it gets really stressful and I just find myself reaching out to everyone for advice.”

Grace Hsia, co-founder and CEO of Warmilu — a social startup created to help infants who are at a high risk of death from hypothermia — worked with the optiMize teams and members and provided “realistic, grounded critiques.”

“For social ventures, the people who (need the help) may not be able to afford the product or the service,” Hsia said.

On April 4, the 19 teams of students who have been working with the optiMize team will gather to present their business pitches. Four to five teams will then take their developed businesses to compete for a stipend and showcase their products on April 18 at 7 p.m. at the University of Michigan Museum of Modern Art.

While Sorensen hoped the start-ups developed through optiMize would be able to continue to grow after the challenge, education is the real goal.

“Most first start-ups aren’t going to be the ones to change the world,” Sorensen said. “But at the same time, in order to get to that point you need to try and fail.”

He said optiMize’s next step would be to develop an educational curriculum that could integrate with course plans of LSA students. Currently in talks with administrators, Sorensen said he hoped optiMize would be able to provide to students several one-credit courses on social problems and solutions to inspire pitches among students.

“I think something that’s not as obvious is that people who want to do this, want it to be rigorous,” he said “It needs to be an experience where by the time you go through it you are actually prepared to start doing something.”

### MORE LIKE THIS

* [Business showcase promotes social change with competition](https://www.michigandaily.com/news/45optimize11)
* [LSA planning new Social Innovation Alliance center](https://www.michigandaily.com/news/lsa-create-innovation-center-0)
* [From the Daily: Encouraging entrepreneurship](https://www.michigandaily.com/opinion/09stanford-startx18)
* [MPowered expands fair beyond start-ups](https://www.michigandaily.com/news/1starting-careers-mpowered1)

Through potential collaboration with the [Flipped Semester](http://www.michigandaily.com/news/86flipped-semester32), Sorensen said the program would be able to attract a larger membership.

“In terms of the future of education at U-M, I think this kind of action-based, immersive learning experiences are what’s going to keep Michigan a Leader and Best.”

***Correction Appended:***A previous version of this article misspelt Grace Hsia's last name.



**Systematic Review**

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# Tropical Medicine & International Health: Innovative newborn health technology for resource-limited environments[[15]](#footnote-15)

1. L. Thairu1,
2. M. Wirth2,
3. K. Lunze3,\*

Article first published online: 24 DEC 2012

DOI: 10.1111/tmi.12021

## Tropical Medicine & International Health

[**Volume 18**, **Issue 1**,](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/tmi.2012.18.issue-1/issuetoc)**pages 117–128**, **January 2013**

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### Abstract

#### Objectives

To review medical devices addressing newborn health in resource-poor settings, and to identify existing and potential barriers to their actual and efficient use in these settings.

#### Methods

We searched Pubmed as our principal electronic reference library and dedicated databases such as Maternova and the Maternal and Neonatal Directed Assessment of Technology. We also researched standard public search engines. Studies and grey literature reports describing devices for use in a low- or middle-income country context were eligible for inclusion.

#### Results

Few devices are currently described in the peer-reviewed medical or public health literature. The majority of newborn-specific devices were found in the grey literature. Most sources described infant warmers, neonatal resuscitators, and phototherapy devices. Other devices address the diagnosis of infectious diseases, monitoring of oxygen saturation, assisted ventilation, prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, assisted childbirth, weight or temperature assessment, and others.

#### Conclusion

Many medical devices designed for newborns in the developing world are under development or in the early stages of production, but the vast majority of them are not available when and where they are needed. Making them available to mothers, newborns, and birth attendants in resource-limited countries at the time and place of birth will require innovative and creative production, distribution, and implementation approaches.

# TheAtlanticLogoThe Atlantic: These Students Love Startups Like the Animal House Guys Loved Beer[[16]](#footnote-16)

[ALEXIS C. MADRIGAL](http://www.theatlantic.com/alexis-madrigal/)SEP 20 2012, 12:46 AM ET

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More

*These are kids who probably first heard Start Me Up on a Microsoft commercial.*



The second I started to mill around [TechArb](http://cfe.umich.edu/techarb/), the University of Michigan's student start-up accelerator, I was approached by three students who were the very picture of youthful energy. Nancy Xiao, Shiva Kilaru, and Mitch Adler are all involved with various start-up promotion schemes on campus, from [Startup Weekend Ann Arbor](http://annarbor.startupweekend.org/) to MPowered, a student entrepreneurship organization; to a career fair they created for local startups to find talent at the university. They talk in lock-step. They know the successful University of Michigan grads (Dick Costolo\*, Larry Page). And they say things like, "We're not the next Silicon Valley. We're Detroit. We're Ann Arbor. We've got something special." (That was Xiao talking, but all three agreed on the basic principle.

Xiao's even gotten former University of Michigan and NFL football player Dhani Jones to help her buy a house on campus for student entrepreneurs. "It's going to be like [General Assembly](http://generalassemb.ly/about/) gone crazy," Xiao says.

[](http://www.theatlantic.com/special-report/start-up-nation-2012/)

Ideas and entrepreneurs from Chicago to Pittsburgh  
[**Check out the whole road trip**](http://www.theatlantic.com/special-report/start-up-nation-2012/)

What I couldn't help thinking, while talking to these brilliant students, was how deeply start-up culture has penetrated general culture. The idea that building a business is something exciting and rewarding rather than a way to pay the bills is startling. "You ever been to a U of M football game?" Kilaru asks me. "That's the energy we bring to entrepreneurship."

I mean, I'm not even in Generation X and I find it easy to be cynical about this kind of excitement for putting one's shoulder to the capitalist wheel. At the same time, their excitement is infectious. I spent the rest of my time at TechArb excitedly talking with students about the companies they're trying to build and before I knew it, two hours had gone by and I was still not quite ready to leave. These are kids who probably first heard "[Start Me Up](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Start_Me_Up#Pop_culture)" on a Microsoft commercial. [You say you want a revolution? Well, you know, we all want to change the world](http://www.lyrics007.com/The%20Beatles%20Lyrics/Revolution%20Lyrics.html).



Meet Ricardo Rodriguez and Shamik Ganguly, the co-founders of YouTrivia, a game now in alpha testing that uses YouTube videos as fodder for a trivia game. Apparently there's a market, as a music-only Facebook trivia game called Songpop has already reached 24 million unique users. Stay tuned for more from these two.



This is Omeid Seirafi-Pour, founder of MyFab5, which is trying to solve some of the problems with local restaurant reviews that Yelp introduced through its success. Yelp, Seirafi-Pour contends (and I agree) has become "a platform for complaining." So, his company lets users rank their five favorite things in any given restaurant category. So, five favorite dessert places for ice cream, five favorite pizza places for deep dish pizza, five favorite Mexican places for tacos al pastor, etc. It's faster, he says, and provides more structured data to reveal interesting things about local restaurant scenes. MyFab5 is about to launch locally in Ann Arbor and begin looking for investment.

I also spoke with Grace Hsia, CEO of [Warmilu](http://www.warmilu.org/faq/), which is attempting to commercialize heating blankets for infants who are born preterm. Infant hypothermia, she told me, kills thousands of infants each year, particularly in places within the developing world that lack access to electricity. Hsia herself was born preterm and is passionate about her cause and business. She's a student in a new one-year master's degree in entrepreneurship that's a collaboration between University of Michigan's engineering and business schools.

\* In a previous version of this story written quite late at night, perhaps while listening to Elvis Costello, I typo'd Twitter CEO Dick Costolo's name as Dick Costello. Sorry, Mr. Costolo, though I'd still like to hear you sing, "[Welcome to the Working Week](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztZcktJFLnc)."

The Eastern Echo

# The Eastern Echo: Premature infants to benefit from students' effort[[17]](#footnote-17),[[18]](#footnote-18),[[19]](#footnote-19)

http://d2c076l7bqbhhm.cloudfront.net/theme20121129001/assets/icons/comment.gif [0 Comments](http://www.easternecho.com/article/2012/06/premature_infants_to_benefit_from_students_effort#disqus_thread)

[Text size](http://www.easternecho.com/index.php/article/2012/06/premature_infants_to_benefit_from_students_effort)

By [Princess Gabbara](http://www.easternecho.com/staff/princess_gabbara)

**Last updated:** 06/05/12 9:59am

Students at Eastern Michigan University and the University of Michigan are coming together to create a non-electric infant warming blanket for premature babies in developing countries: The project is called Warmilu. According to it’s website, warmilu.org, 450 infants die every hour worldwide in part because of hypothermia-related causes.

The blanket was designed to increase and maintain body temperature in premature infants; it’s made of a light-weight material with a waterproof outer cover, and insulation layers for heat retention.

Cathryn Amidei, EMU associate professor of apparel, textiles and merchandising, said the idea began in 2011 as a class project for materials science engineering students at U of M.

“They needed somebody to work with,” she said. “It wasn’t something that I could just answer their questions and off they go. And so, I had one great student who had the appropriate skill set to work with them.”

Amidei asked Ana Barge, an EMU apparel, textiles and merchandising major, whether she would be interested in helping design the blanket. Barge said her experience as a single mother of three children inspired her to become involved with the project.

“I think when it had something to do with a baby, I jumped at it,” Barge said. “I did a lot of sewing for my kids when they were small.”

Amidei said part of what makes this blanket unique is the special tubing used to provide   
heat.

“That’s the material science element of it that is really important to this success. Otherwise, this is just a blanket,” she said.

The blanket, which only reaches 42 degrees to prevent overheating, was tested on a human infant and was successful in providing heat and comfort.

There is still a long way to go before distribution, but Barge said they’re making progress every day.

“They’re going to take a new prototype to India next week,” she said. “That’s the only place in the world where they found that they have a similar product, but they’re only selling it in India.”

Their next goal is to create a warming blanket from at least 75 percent recycled materials, which would allow Warmilu to mass produce the blankets in the United States instead of shipping them overseas.

Barge said perfecting the prototype has been the most challenging part of the entire process.

“It’s still evolving. It’s my job to keep making the corrections until it is perfected,” she said. “It’s a process. You can’t just make it and say ‘boom’ it’s ready. It doesn’t work that way.”

Despite the challenges, Barge said she’s proud to be participating in a project that would give so many infants a greater chance at life.

“I think it’s a good cause,” she said. “I mean, who doesn’t want to see a little baby survive?”

Published **Jun 4, 2012** in [News](http://www.easternecho.com/section/news)



# MICEVC: [Testimonials from the 2011-2012 Clean Energy Venture Challenge](http://micevc.com/2012/06/testimonials-from-the-2011-2012-clean-energy-venture-challenge/)[[20]](#footnote-20)

by [ADMIN](http://micevc.com/author/admin/) on JUNE 3, 2012 · [0 COMMENTS](http://micevc.com/2012/06/testimonials-from-the-2011-2012-clean-energy-venture-challenge/#comments)

**Babette Ten Haken (Mentor):**

*I participated as a mentor in the inaugural year of the CEVC. It was one of my most rewarding mentoring experiences. The quality of the candidates and projects was exceptional. The syllabus and timeline were feasible and well-communicated. The guiding lights directing this collaborative journey are exceptional and inspirational. If you are a highly motivated professional who enjoys rolling up your sleeves for a hands-on mentoring experience, and motivating and pivoting the entrepreneurs of tomorrow, I highly recommend that you become part of this tremendous initiative.*

**Brett Merkel (Team Member):**

*The mentors and judges proved to be an extremely valuable asset as we perfected our pitches.  Also, the contacts we made and the experience of progressing through the competition were instrumental in our team’s progress thus far.*

**Jeff Golota (Mentor):**

*What a great experience, working with talented engineers to mentor them and claiming 25K prize.*

**Justin Moyer (Team Member):**

*The Michigan Clean Energy Venture Challenge (MiCEVC) was a wonderful opportunity for our company. Not only were there many great resources (experienced mentors, fellow entrepreneurs, and skill-building sessions), but the fast-paced set up of the challenge forced us to adapt quickly and progress from an idea to a product with a market. The structured milestones, pitch sessions and mentor meetings helped keep us motivated and progressing toward our goals. I would recommend the MiCEVC to anyone with an interest in clean energy innovation!*

**Diane Durance (Mentor):**

*Having mentored a team from the Upper Peninsula with no previous experience in venture creation, business planning or entrepreneurship, I can say each step in the MCEVC offered a valuable learning experience for them. This team, particularly the Fisheries and Wildlife students, had never considered the possibility of creating their own businesses or developing an innovative technology or process in their field of study. I’m happy to report the team continues to work together, has added team members, and was recently awarded a Michigan Initiative for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (MIIE) grant. This team’s progress and development clearly demonstrates how effective the MCEVC is in guiding university students into entrepreneurship.*

**Grace Hsia (Team Member):**

*The Michigan Clean Energy Venture Challenge showcases the talents of Michigan entrepreneurs. Innovation is something you can nurture and teach. This is something the CEVC accomplishes in its seminars, mentorship, and funding. MICEVC provides undergraduate and graduate students the opportunity to take their idea to a higher level and even to the national stage. This would have been unfathomable to me had I not been a participant and semifinalist in the last MICEVC. Because of MICEVC, our company (Warmilu, LLC) was able to take our idea to the real world and we are now seeking to commercialize our clean technology for use in resource settings.*

**Emma Wendt (Mentor):**

*Through the CEVC, my mentees turned their initial idea around supporting electric vehicles into a product that provides real value to customers.  They gained a deep understanding of their users, customers, and potential partners through many interviews and observations, and learned to incorporate that feedback as their product and company developed.*

**Barclay Johnson (Professor Who Referred Multiple Teams, and Mentor):**

*Three of my classroom laws are:*

1. *You can’t teach entrepreneurship from a text with multiple choice answers*
2. *Business Plan are for losers (especially those on nice paper and in color)*
3. *Horatio Alger was fantasy*

*The U of M CEVC addresses Entrepreneurship with the total package from passion to idea validation methodology, all culminating with a real life pitch in front of some very aggressive angel and venture capitalist investors.*

*This provided my teams a very special experiential experience that has a NPV well beyond the money they won! The value added by the CEVC staff was enormous in driving our teams successes.*

*The special sauce for me was being able to integrate the 6 month journey into my other classes with real time blow by blow of the challenges, failures and successes of the competing teams. That surpasses any case study from any text! I also had my competing teams actively engaged in my classes for peer to peer reality checks and inspiration.*

*My favorite memory is of my students that lived a six month journey and willing devoted time and resources (including coordinating a wedding around contest commitments) and were able to share the stage with some of the best students in the State of Michigan.*

**Max Shtein (Professor Who Referred Multiple Teams, and Mentor):**

*I was very glad to see that the students in my 489 class took up the challenge and the opportunity to compete in CEVC. In some ways, I geared the class to help students first realize that starting a company is within their capability, and then to encourage them with some practical procedures in actually doing that. That two of the student teams from the class (out of 10) took it into the finals of the competition beats the Rule of Everything (i.e. that (100-90)% of everything is not crap) by a factor of 2! Now, part of that is enabled, I think, by having such a competition right here.*

**Viktor Brandtneris (Mentor)**

*I was very impressed with all the participants in the Clean Energy Venture Challenge. The student teams were earnest, driven and technically very well prepared. Moreover, I was pleased with their willingness to learn, understand and incorporate the aspects of business plans that are critical to outside investors. Equally impressive were the other Mentors I got to meet. To a person they were willing to share their experiences, offering truly valuable ‘real-world advice’ to these new businesses. Regardless of whether these teams make it to the marketplace, I’m very confident that the experience the students had to go through will make them much better prepared for entrepreneurial endeavors in the future.*

# http://www.rapidgrowthmedia.com/galleries/Features/Issue%20287/StartGardenLogo.jpgStart Garden: [Week 3 Investments: Infant Warming Blanket, Global Women’s Fashion](http://startgarden.com/news/week-3-investments-infant-warming-blanket-global-womens-fashion/)

**POSTED**on**MAY 17, 2012**by**PAUL MOORE,**filed under[**PRESS RELEASES**](http://startgarden.com/news/category/press-releases)**[[21]](#footnote-21)**

**Grand Rapids, Mich., May 17, 2012**-- Today Start Garden, the $15,000,000 seed fund that selects ideas each week for $5,000 investments, announced the results from the third week of submissions to startgarden.com.

The fund’s management team takes submissions through startgarden.com. Ideas with potential to become businesses can be submitted. Each week the Start Garden team selects an idea and the broader community on the website endorses another idea to receive $5,000. Start Garden can continue to invest up to $500,000 in a single idea.  
  
The idea selected by the Start Garden team for funding was [**Warmilu**](http://strt.gd/x3lj), an infant warming blanket using non-electric heat technology. The cofounders are recent University of Michigan graduates in engineering. The idea chosen from visitor endorsements on the website was [**Ntewani**](http://strt.gd/x9ii), an online/brick & mortar hybrid retailing women’s fashions and fabrics from around the globe. The idea submitter, Brandi Washington is from Raliegh, NC. Each idea receives a $5,000 investment, pending the completion of the investment agreement, which can be found on startgarden.com.  
  
Each Thursday at noon the ideas on startgarden.com are stored in the database, and the slate is cleaned for the next week. Anybody who has already submitted an idea and wants it reconsidered for the next week must go back to the website to resubmit.  
  
The next round of $5,000 investments will be announced Thursday next week, May 24, after the noon deadline. Today, Start Garden hosts the Michigan Lean Startup Conference. Tech-centric in nature, it’s a day to share lean startup methods around how to quickly launch a new business offering (Minimum Viable Product) and quickly adapt it within the marketplace. “In just the first few weeks of Start Garden, we’ve seen evidence of how much we need to spread fundamentals about entrepreneurship,” said DeVos. “For instance, many submissions haven’t considered that investors want to know how to get a return on investment and that influences who we choose. Gatherings like this conference are essential to build knowledge from people who've been in the trenches. We’ll be launching more learning events soon.”

# PR Newswire: news distribution, targeting and monitoringSTEL Technologies and Warmilu Awarded Best of Ann Arbor SPARK Boot Camp[[22]](#footnote-22),[[23]](#footnote-23)

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ANN ARBOR, Mich., April 16, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- At the conclusion of Ann Arbor SPARK's 20th Entrepreneur Boot Camp, STEL Technologies was awarded Best of Boot Camp and Warmilu, LLC was awarded Boot Camp's Best Pitch.  As Best of Boot Camp, STEL Technologies received membership to the New Enterprise Forum (NEF) and a NEF coaching team for one year as well as an engagement with the Ann Arbor SPARK business accelerator.

STEL Technologies is a University of Michigan spin out that is developing engineered tissue for replacement of torn knee ligaments in dogs.  Unlike current methods that alter knee function and have long recovery times, STEL Technologies' tissue grafts enable dogs to grow new ligament, walk shortly after surgery and maximize long-term pet health and mobility.

"SPARK's Boot Camp provided us the resources to leave our comfort zone of the biomedical engineering laboratory environment and tackle a business plan," said Ellen Arruda of STEL Technologies.  "The Boot Camp environment is as supportive as it is intense.  The talented drill instructors, mentors and expert volunteers offer criticism and input; the Boot Camp experience is invaluable to start-ups."

Warmilu has developed and is commercializing nonelectric, instant heat technology, specifically for infants.  The company's innovation has the ability to save lives in disadvantaged, austere locations where infant mortality due to exposure is high; 450 infants die every hour worldwide, and up to two-thirds of those infants will die from lack of consistent heat.

"SPARK's Boot Camp was an excellent and unparalleled opportunity for Warmilu to take our early stage company forward," saidGrace Hsia of Warmilu.  "Warmilu is exploring how to commercialize our heat technology to spread the warmth to save lives. We came in with a for-profit social enterprise, but we needed guidance and direction for the business, financials, and pitching.  The Boot Camp mentors and guides are absolutely amazing and this venue was the perfect place to build relationships with those who could help our company establish meaningful business channels."

Fourteen teams participated in Ann Arbor SPARK's Entrepreneurial Boot Camp.  A bi-annual program, Boot Camp has assisted more than 240 companies since 2002.

**ABOUT ANN ARBOR SPARK**Ann Arbor SPARK, a non-profit organization, is advancing the region by encouraging and supporting business acceleration, attraction and retention. The organization identifies and meets the needs of business at every stage, from start-ups to large organizations. Ann Arbor SPARK collaborates with business, academic, government, and community investor partners including the University of Michigan, Eastern Michigan University, Washtenaw Community College, Washtenaw County, Washtenaw County Michigan Works Agency, the City of Ann Arbor, Bank of Ann Arbor and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. For more information, please call (734) 761-9317 or visit [www.AnnArborUSA.org](http://www.annarborusa.org/).

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# Maternova Blog: Guest Blogger Shwetha Maddur of Warmilu Talks Sustainability[[24]](#footnote-24)

Maternova often tracks innovative products that have come from university design or engineering classes. These incredible products benefit from the natural incubation that a vibrant learning community provides. Unfortunately, sometimes with the close of the academic year, these companies struggle to maintain momentum. Maternova asked Warmilu LLC, which grew out of the University of Michigan, to talk about how they navigated the post-academia environment, and how other start ups can thrive after class is over.

Warmilu LLC's Shwetha Maddur writes....

Entrepreneurial fever has hit college campuses around the country! More professors are encouraging students to pursue their own dreams and create jobs for themselves in our recovering economy as university classes are becoming a breeding ground for startups; but its not a task for the faint at heart. It takes more than dreams, colorful post -its, and lots of coffee to keep an entrepreneur going as it becomes increasingly difficult to transform a class project into a sustainable business. A few lessons learned during my time working at Warmilu have made it just a little bit easier.

The first step, is to acknowledge that you are no longer working on a class project, but a company in the making.That in itself is a huge step forward. Being stuck in that mentality of a classroom setting is easy and at times comforting. But entrepreneurship is all about getting way far out of that comfort zone. There is no longer a professor providing strategic guidance every step of the way. There are no more reminders of deadlines approaching. There are no more rubrics! Most importantly, your decisions and actions have consequences that affect your team, investors, and your company’s future. While daunting at times, it’s an exhilarating experience that provides adrenaline when you are working into the wee hours of the night - night after night after night.

Now, remember how much fun the sandbox was to play in on the playground? It was a place for you to go create things, meet your friends, and have fun! Well, incubators are sandboxes for grownups! It is important to surround yourself with a good network of mentors and investors that share your goal and want to help you achieve it. Incubators, Accelerators, Narnia - call it what you may, but they are a great place to start a new business. At the University of Michigan’s incubator, TechArb, start up companies have open workspace and resources beyond their wildest beliefs. Warmilu has been fortunate enough to receive great mentorship and guidance from serial entrepreneurs and subject matter experts from TechArb affiliates, making great friends along the way. Working at incubators makes the work a lot more fun! In fact, some places have rules about not sleeping overnight so as to ensure that residents actually get some sun. The resources invaluable, networking opportunities bountiful, and friends plentiful. Essentially, a sandbox.

Keeping these points in mind as you progress from an idea in the classroom to a pitch in the conference room, your class project can transform into a sustainable business venture.

**-Shwetha Maddur | *Former* Co-Founder and Chief of Medical Relations Warmilu LLC**

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