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# Georgia Southern's College of Business announces winner of inaugural BIG Pitch competition

OCTOBER 21, 2015



*Dr. Dominique Halaby, director of BIG, presents a representative from Opus 12 with the award*

Georgia Southern University's Business Innovation Group (BIG) in conjunction with Ocean Exchange has named Stanford University the winner of the inaugural BIG Pitch Competition held Oct. 12 in Savannah, Georgia.

According to Millicent Pitts, CEO of Ocean Exchange, Stanford's team, Opus 12, edged out seven other collegiate teams to take home the \$10,000 cash prize. Its winning sustainable innovation, "Renewable Fuel Production from Carbon Dioxide," uses technology developed at Stanford University to take carbon dioxide and convert it into usable fuel, ethanol, which can then be used by oil refineries and corn ethanol plants.

"Opus 12 is extraordinary, and truly delivers on the vision of Ocean Exchange," states Ocean Exchange panel member Kelly Carnes, president and CEO of TechVision21 and former U.S. assistant secretary of Commerce for Technology Policy. "The team has combined a very innovative solution that transforms climate damaging [carbon dioxide] into useful products with a very sound business

plan to scale and commercialize the technology. I would also like to congratulate all of the BIG Pitch teams; all of the concepts were innovative and the presentations were polished and professional.”

During the competition, teams from around the nation had three minutes to pitch their sustainable innovations that improve economies, health and the environment to a panel of four members with varying backgrounds in transportation, agriculture, mining and construction, among others.

A panel of three review team members with skills in research and development, business development and marketing selected eight teams to advance to the finals. The finalists pitched their ideas to four distinguished panelists who questioned and judged the teams, and the crowd of 100 delegates in the audience also voted for the winner. Following the eight pitches, the delegates mingled with the finalists during a reception, where they further questioned the teams before voting closed.

“Our first BIG Pitch was a rousing success,” said Dominique Halaby, D.P.A., director of BIG. “The enthusiasm, passion and innovation each of the teams exhibited for making our world a better place was truly inspiring. I am very proud of each of the finalists and excited about what the future holds.”

BIG Pitch facilitates the adoption of undergraduate and graduate innovations that improve economies, health and the environment. BIG Pitch is part of the Business Innovation Group in the Georgia Southern College of Business and partners with Ocean Exchange.

For more information on the BIG Pitch Competition, the Ocean Exchange or Georgia Southern University entrepreneurship programs, please contact Millicent Pitts, CEO of Ocean Exchange, at 912-257-0209 or email at [millicent.pitts@oceanexchange.org](mailto:millicent.pitts@oceanexchange.org); or Dominique Halaby, D.P.A., director of BIG, at 912-478-2733 or email at [dhalaby@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:dhalaby@georgiasouthern.edu).

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/Research University founded in 1906, offers more than 125 degree programs serving more than 20,500 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelors, masters and doctoral degree programs built on more than a century of academic achievement. Georgia Southern is recognized for its student-centered and hands-on approach to education. Visit [GeorgiaSouthern.edu](http://GeorgiaSouthern.edu)