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Winners of the 2015 Rochester Venture Challenge announced

The announcement was made today at the 7th annual Celebration of Entrepreneurship Luncheon held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Rochester, attended by more than 300 of the area's business leaders, entrepreneurs and investors.

Earlier this morning, five finalists presented their executive business pitches to the panel of judges, which decided upon the winners and runners-up.

- **Black Cloud Analytics, Inc.** (Robert Castleman) Software
- **FlixAcademy** (Raymond Leone) Online Education
- **Mendon Precision, LLC** (John Bonzo) Food & Agriculture
- **Parts Dashboard** (Toby Dallas) Software
- **Splyce eSports** (Marty Strenczewilk) Gaming

The 1st place winner receives a grand prize of \$25,000 cash, up to a full year of incubation services and office space valued at \$5,000 from High Tech Rochester, and marketing services from Dixon Schwabl valued at \$2,500.

The 2nd place winner receives \$5,000 cash, up to nine months of free incubation services and office space valued at \$3,600 from High Tech Rochester, and marketing services from Dixon Schwabl valued at \$2,500.

The 3rd place winner receives \$2,500 cash, up to six months of incubation services and office space valued at \$2,500 from High Tech Rochester, and marketing services from Dixon Schwabl valued at \$2,500.

The two runners-up receive marketing services provided by Dixon Schwabl, valued at \$1,000 each.

“Rochester has a wealth of intellectual capital and innovation potential, as evidenced by all of our finalists,” said James Senall, president of High Tech Rochester. “As we congratulate the winning company, we have to say there are really no losers here. Each of these companies has great potential to do themselves and Rochester proud.

“If innovation is the lifeblood of economic growth in the 21st century, then the Rochester region is poised for great health and long life.”

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The panel of judges based its decision on criteria that includes the probability of success of the business coupled with the size of its potential economic impact (the larger the impact, the better).

This year's independent panel of judges:

- Nasir Ali, Chief Executive Officer, Upstate Venture Connect
- Don Golini, Chairman, Rochester Angel Network
- Rami Katz, Chief Operating Officer, Excell Partners

The Rochester Venture Challenge is a collaborative initiative aimed at stimulating more entrepreneurial activity in the nine-county Greater Rochester Region. The planning committee includes High Tech Rochester, Inc. (www.htr.org), Digital Rochester (www.digitalrochester.com), The Entrepreneurs Network (www.ten-ny.org), Excell Partners (<http://www.excellny.com>), Rochester Institute of Technology (www.rit.edu), Nazareth College School of Management (www.naz.edu) and the University of Rochester (www.rochester.edu)

Company Descriptions

Black Cloud Analytics, Inc.

Black Cloud Analytics creates software targeting emerging opportunities in The Internet Of Things (IoT). We are building an Analytics, Diagnostic and Optimization platform that will effectively and efficiently manage increasingly complex networked systems. Our platform is based on what Black Cloud Analytics has termed "Swarm Technology", a software technique modeling the swarming and self-organizing behaviors seen in schools of fish and flocks of birds. This enables the analysis of entire networked systems rather than the focus on singular data sources, as is current practice.

Principal: Bob Castleman, President/CEO

castleman83@gmail.com

www.blackcloudanalytics.com

FlixAcademy

Whether you're an educator trying to make your lesson plans more exciting and engaging, a parent expanding the horizons of your children, or a student looking for different perspectives, FlixAcademy brings great educational content, including movies, television shows and videos all together in one place.

Principal: Ray Leone, Co-Founder and COO

ray@flixacademy.com

www.flixacademy.com

Mendon Precision LLC

HopsHarvester (of Mendon Precision LLC) is a manufacturer of harvesting implements for the hops farming industry. Our mission is to enable small-scale hops growers to more effectively meet the demand from craft brewers. To do this, we offer mobile agricultural equipment that is designed and built in the U.S.A. Based near Rochester, N.Y., HopsHarvester draws from the agricultural and industrial heritage of the Finger Lakes region and strives to support the resurgence of hops growers throughout the Northeast and Midwest U.S.

Principal: John Bonzo, Founder and CEO/COO

hopsharvester@gmail.com

www.hopsharvester.com

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Parts Dashboard Inc.

Parts Dashboard makes a simple software platform for small businesses where engineers, designers, and creators can store, organize, backup and share their information in the cloud. We provide a searchable interface that enables people to build relationships between items, track revisions, and collaborate through comments and file sharing. The platform also connects users with external suppliers who can bid their work.

Principal: Toby Dallas, Founder

toby.dallas@partsdashboard.com

www.partsdashboard.com

Splyce eSports

At Splyce, we build simple, straight-forward, free-to-use websites that allow the eSports fan to spend less time searching for eSports information and more time enjoying games. No more spending hours searching for information when they can just head to our websites, quickly find what they need and get on with their day. With our websites streamlining information to the eSports fan, game developers and event organizers can focus solely on making great games and events.

Principal: Marty Strenczewilk, Founder and CEO

martyesports@gmail.com

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