



Emergy Labs Wins LES Foundation's 2016-2017 International Business Plan Competition Grand Prize

WASHINGTON, DC – May 10, 2017 — The Licensing Executives Society (LES) Foundation today announced the winners of its 2016-2017 International Business Plan Competition, a program that focuses uniquely on the intellectual property (IP) aspects of business strategy.

Throughout the competition, participating teams work closely with seasoned professionals to discover concepts that take many years of experience to learn. For more than a month, LES members mentored eight finalist teams from Canada, Hong Kong, Indonesia, and the United States on the intellectual property strategy aspects of their plans in preparation for the final round of the Competition, which was hosted at Baker Hostetler offices, Washington, DC in conjunction with the Licensing Executives Society Spring Meeting. The eight competitors presented business plans and videos in live virtual sessions and responded to questions from a panel of 12 on-site and at-large global experts, representing more than 200 collective years of business and IP strategy experience. The first round of the Competition took place over three months, during which time the teams had access to IP strategy mentors from LES and IP analysis tools.

Emergy Labs was named the Grand Prize Winner. Emergy Labs began as Porous Carbon Materials Company at the University of Colorado at Boulder with an innovative approach to creating catalyst (for chemical production). They are developing a low-cost and highly porous catalyst support material that more efficiently utilizes space and expensive catalysts. They convincingly argued that their technology uses the unmatched efficiency of a biological system that simultaneously produces a sophisticated material and clean food processing wastewater during production. The judges cited Emergy Labs for an exceptional business plan strongly supported by its IP strategy.

The Foundation's Global Prize was awarded to USA and Africa-based Takachar, a start-up company that includes members associated with the Massachusetts Institute of

Technology (MIT) and various African nations (most notably Kenya). Takachar has pioneered a process for low-cost pretreatment and densification of biomass at source. This project is expected to increase incomes for distributed small-holder farmers by creating new value from low-quality biomass and opening up new rural areas with biomass that previously have been deemed too far away to serve as an economic fuel.

NERv Technology of Canada earned the Best Student Team Prize and Solve for Alpha (Hong Kong) received the LES Members' Choice Award. NERv Technology is working in the Medical Research realm to develop a revolutionary biochip platform for detecting postoperative complications. Solve for Alpha's focus is on education, providing simplified knowledge and skill data to facilitate productive communication between parents and teachers.

The expert panel of Judges was chaired by Pamela Demain, retired Executive Director, Business Development & Licensing and Head, Relationship Management, Merck. The on-site judge panel consisted of Phillip Crowley, the Law Office of Philip P. Crowley LLC; Lalit Gaur, Head of Global Business Development and Licensing, Vetoquinal; Richard Gearhart, Founding Partner, Gearhart Law LLC; Patrick Govang, technology licensing officer, Center for Technology Licensing, Cornell University; Ted Sum, Partner, Smart & Biggar; and Elise Zoli, Partner, Goodwin Proctor LLP. Showing much dedication by calling in from around the world in Taiwan, UK and multiple time zones in the US were the at-large judges Shannon McCool, CEO, RxBio; Don Merino, founder, Merino IP Consulting; John Platt, Partner, Snell & Wilmer; Leah Rogers, Consultant, CEO Blue Ways; and Dr. John-Paul Rooney, Partner, Withers & Rogers LLP. LES Foundation Vice President, Director of 2017 Competition, Dr. Annemarie Meike, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, has managed the Competition's direction and development since 2012. She remarked, "I am encouraged by the increasing sophistication of the IP component in the business plan submissions over the years. It demonstrates the success of the mentors' arduous work and the constructive feedback of judges during the first and final round."

Emergy Labs will receive \$10,000 toward its project; Global Prize Winner Takachar will receive \$5,000; NERv Technology will receive a \$2,000 prize for Best Student Team and \$2,000 for the Members Choice Award will go to Solve for Alpha. All eight finalists received at least \$1,000 as well as in-kind prizes courtesy of the Business Plan Competition sponsors.

The LES Foundation International Business Plan competition, directed and developed by Dr. Annemarie Meike, is now in its 13th year. It is designed to partner start-up companies, which have received less than \$200,000 of equity investment funding, with senior leaders in the licensing and intellectual property (IP) community to provide mentorship and education about business basics and best practices in IP and licensing transactions. Plans submitted to the competition must include a core intellectual

property component and strategies describing how the intellectual property will be used to achieve overall business plan objectives.

The 2017-2018 competition will be announced in early Fall. To learn more about the LES Foundation and the International Business Plan Competition, visit www.lesfoundation.org.