**Eagle Innovation Competition at UMW Awards $3,500 to student entrepreneurs**

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**Fredericksburg, VA**: On April 20, the Fredericksburg small business community, local economic development offices, and banks came together in a big show of support for student entrepreneurship at the University of Mary Washington (UMW) and Germanna Community College. Fourteen student teams pitched their business ideas for an opportunity to win $3,500 in seed capital at the first [Eagle Innovation Pitch Competition](https://economicdevelopment.umw.edu/home/programs/eagle-innovation/) held at UMW.

* The first place prize of $2,000 was awarded to UMW sophomore Mariana Patterson for her startup *Bee Buzzed Candle Company.* This company produces 100 percent organic beeswax candles.
* The second place prize of $1,000 went to UMW students Ethan Cory, Patrick Fairfield, and Michael Gilchrist of *Pip’s Tips*, a children’s education mobile application that teaches youth how to do simple tasks like tying your shoes or riding a bike.
* The third place prize of $500 went to two Germanna students Quinton Mcreynolds and Brandon Davis of [*Quantum Glyphics*](http://www.quantumglyphics.com/), a branding services and marketing company with unique graphic design skills.

For many of the students, Eagle Innovation inspired them to turn their idea into an actual company. “The Eagle Innovation Competition was my first entrepreneurial experience at UMW. My initial business ideas and drive were greatly encouraged by Professor Machande and Kelsey Whitman, my internship mentors from StartUpUMW. I also benefited from the support and encouragement of friends and family. I am most grateful for the opportunity and encouragement to fully start up my business,” said Mariana Patterson, the first place prize winner.

Eagle Innovation is a joint collaboration between the UMW Center for Economic Development and three College of Business undergraduates and business owners: Daniel Pan, Denali Roberts and Nehemia Abel. The UMW Center for Economic Development supports student entrepreneurs through its [*StartUpUMW*](https://economicdevelopment.umw.edu/home/programs/student-entrepreneurship/) *program,* a semester-long internship that engages local business owners and professionals to help students develop their own business idea. Many of the students who participated in the competition also graduated from StartUpUMW. Eagle Innovation will be an annual competition.

“I am very proud of the students who participated in our first business pitch competition. I met with many of the students over several weeks leading up to the competition and saw firsthand how much hard work and passion they put into their ideas,” said Kelsey Whitman, the StartUpUMW and Eagle Innovation Manager.

A special thank you to our sponsors: [Spotsylvania County EDA](http://www.spotsylvaniaeda.com/), [Fredericksburg EDA](https://www.fredericksburgva.com/), [REDCO](http://redco504.org/), [Virginia Partners Bank](https://www.vapartnersbank.com/), [Discover Next Step](http://www.discovernextstep.com/) and the [Jacksonville Jaguars](https://www.jaguars.com/).

Check out the [UMW Center for Economic Development site](https://economicdevelopment.umw.edu/) for more information about how we support local business

**UMW Center for Economic Development**

The University of Mary Washington Center for Economic Development is in the College of Business, an AACSB accredited business school. The Center for Economic Development operates the UMW Small Business Development Center, the EagleWorks Business Incubation Center, the Government Contracting Assistance Center, and StartUpUMW. The Center is located at the Eagle Village Executive Offices. Learn more at <https://economicdevelopment.umw.edu/>.

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