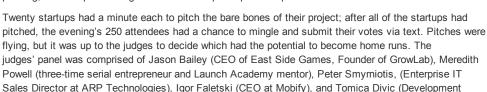
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Launch Academy Pitch Day Celebrates Year of Canadian Startup Success

by Sumari MacLeod on Mar 26, 2013 | Startups

Manager at BCIC.)

The Vancouver Public Library's Alice MacKay Room was the host of Launch Academy's Pitch Day on Monday night, an event meant to foster the local startup community and provide the entrepreneurs under their umbrella with an opportunity to practice pitching, and compete for high-level mentorship and public exposure.



The five finalists contained a broad range of viable business models. A few of the finalists had been finalists before.

Monday night was not the first rodeo for Thinkific, myBestHelper, or WealthBar—in fact, this was the third time that Thinkific had taken part. Neither Mobipay nor Change Heroes had taken part before. And not only did they make the finals, but the winners' circle too.

The lack of philanthropic rivals in the finals all but guaranteed Change Heroes' victory; Change Heroes' combination of practical thinking and humanitarian vision made it something of a ringer. Thinkific made second place, winning a prize at long last. Mobipay landed itself in third.

Each of the winners will be heading to metabridge, one of the most anticipated tech events of the year. Metabridge is an annual retreat in Kelowna, BC that connects senior tech leaders from the Silicon Valley with leading Canadian startups.

The night was significant for the contestants, but Launch Academy had—and still has—some celebrating of its own to do. April 1 marks the first anniversary of Launch Academy itself; whether or not Launch Academy intends to have a proper anniversary bash is still undecided.

Monday also marked the first public screening of GROW Inc., a locally produced documentary which highlighted many startups featured in the room. Director Bradley Shende was on hand to present, but the presentation of the film itself left something to be desired. The timing of the documentary coincided with the cellular voting time—the lights were on, and the din of eager voters enjoying pizza and beer made for a distracting screening environment.

At the end of the night, Ray Walia stood proud of both the winners and Launch Academy itself.

"The final results represent what Launch Academy is all about," he said. "You have Change Heroes, really trying to change the world, being progressive but still looking from a business perspective. You have Thinkific, and while it's their third time presenting they've demonstrated real growth each time. And then we have Mobipay, which is at the heart of Launch Academy: collaboration and joining forces and making each other better."

"And here we are," he continued. "We didn't know if we'd make it past month two, and we've just been growing and growing. At the end of the day, Launch Academy is about the community, and it's the community that's grown Launch Academy. It's not the management, or the sponsors: if it wasn't for the community that kept building upon itself, we'd be nothing. Thankfully, the community's just growing and growing, and now we've got 70 companies helping us grow. It's been amazing."

The next Pitch Day hasn't been posted to the calendar. One hopes that a new year will bring new talent, or at least the subject of the evening's opening toast: "To \$#!%-tons of money!"

Sumari MacLeod

Sumari MacLeod debuted from Humber's postgraduate Advertising and Copywriting program with an Applied Arts Student Competition win under her belt, and after interning at both a traditional agency and a PR firm, has found herself at home as a



writer for TV and web. She graduated from UBC with a B.A. in English Literature and History, and previously covered video game news for The Village Gamer.... » more





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Company:

myBestHelper

Location:

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

thinkific

Company:

Thinkific

Location:

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

WEALTH AR

Company:

WealthBar

Location:

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada



Company:

Launch Academy

Location:

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

myBestHelper is the essential digital tool that gives families the easiest way to access and use all options of care that they need - paid and free, just-in-time and most suited to their needs. 59% of families feel daily life is overwhelming. mostly related to managing child and/or elder care. We are doing for family life what Linkedin did for our professional lives - helping families make the... » more

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Launch Academy is a pre-accelerator program that helps entrepreneurs execute on their startups through education, mentorship, lean metrics and networking opportunities. Launch Academy has established an environment where ideas are vetted, business models are tested and successes are celebrated. Founded on the values of innovation, opportunities and accountability, Launch Academy addresses the...

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Awesome article Sumari! Loved the PitchDay event!

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Thank you Sumari for capturing so well the event and most importantly, writing about the value Launch Academy has brought to our tech scenes and to our beautiful city.

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was a real pleasure and pitching on itself is an achievement! love from Crowdsway.com Pitch number 15:-) The video crowdsourcing website.

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Huge thanks to Launch Academy, Coast Capital Innovation Hub, Accelerate Techtoria, Institute B and the Vancouver Tech community for all the support for Change Heroes last night and over the last 8 months!

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Fun night.



Sunil Sharma · 3 years ago

Congrats all! Look forward to seeing the film.

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