

**NEWS RELEASE**



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Monday, September 24, 2018**

## **Top Eight Solution Finalists for BIG Pitch \$10,000 Award Are Announced**

In addition to the Ocean Exchange Neptune and the Wallenius Wilhelmsen Orcelle® Awards, the eighth annual Ocean Exchange event October 7-9, 2018 in Savannah, GA will feature eight collegiate finalists for the fourth year of the BIG Pitch Competition. These undergraduate & graduate innovations were developed to improve economies, health, and the environment, and fit under the theme of sustainability.

The eight collegiate finalists will present October 7 in front of delegates from business, NGOs, academia, and government. Delegates vote for the recipient of one \$10,000 cash award, sponsored by the Georgia Southern University College of Business Administration.

This year's BIG Pitch finalist solutions are:

**AWES (African Women Energy Solutions)**

**Brandeis University**

Produce and sell biogas and organic fertilizer from community run bio-digesters in conjunction with women's groups in developing countries in Africa.

**FLUX Marine**

**Boston University**

Design, manufacture, and market electric outboard motors for the recreational boating industry, with lower maintenance, increased reliability, and minimized pollution.

**Green Robotics Innovation Project (GRIP)**

**Virginia Commonwealth University**

Aquatic robot that uses optical identification to collect marine plastics, dynamically responding to conditions in its environment.

**SALI-bar****Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (Mexico)**

Point of care test using high specificity molecular diagnosis for early detection of bovine pregnancy, thereby reducing herd maintenance activities of females and reducing stress caused by conventional tests which impact herd birth rates.

**Surge Power Materials****Texas State University**

Renewably sourced, lower cost, high surface area graphene for advanced batteries.

**Symbrosia****Yale University and University of California Santa Barbara**

Closed system using red microalgae and Whiteleg shrimp with objective to sustainably farm shrimp while producing seaweed for incorporation into cattle feed with resulting methane reduction from the livestock.

**TX2O****Texas State University**

Reusable filtration canisters for water treatment from oil and gas extraction, solving today's problem of costly, environmentally sensitive disposal of conventional canisters.

**Vita Inclinata Technologies****Seattle University**

Revolutionary control system for hoisting industry to be used in helicopter rescue or any suspended loads in cranes, drone deliveries and fire-fighting operations for increased safety.

Our experts with backgrounds in intellectual property law, sustainable design, healthy oceans, energy, materials science and chemical engineering, and environmental strategy and operations reviewed and selected the top eight collegiate solutions. The winner in 2015 was Opus 12 from Stanford University, a solution for carbon dioxide capture and reuse. The student innovator was named to Forbes 30 Under 30 in Energy in early 2016. BIG Pitch 2016 winner was a sophomore undergraduate from the University of Illinois-Urbana with a piezoelectric energy generator. In 2017 the winning team co-founder from MIT, with a solution for early detection of water leaks in municipal water systems, was named to Forbes 30 Under 30 in Industry.

Ocean Exchange™ accelerates the adoption of solutions that help economies, health and the environment, while respecting cultures around the world.

# # #

For more information and a listing of major sponsors please visit [www.OceanExchange.org](http://www.OceanExchange.org) or contact [Millicent.Pitts@oceanexchange.org](mailto:Millicent.Pitts@oceanexchange.org). She can be reached at 912-257-0209.