



Alabama
Entrepreneurship
Institute

OCTOBER 2024



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Message from Dr. Theresa M. Welbourne, Executive Director

Welcome to our October 2024 newsletter!

The Fall semester is keeping all of us busy, and we are looking forward to several upcoming events that we hope you can attend. Please scroll down to learn about River Pitch, Demo Day, Entrepreneur Resource Groups, the news about City Detect's \$2 million seed round investment (they are part of our Crimson Accelerator pilot), new tenants at The EDGE, and more.

Roll Tide,
Theresa

Upcoming Events



ABOUT THE COMPETITION

This competition helps innovators and entrepreneurs with their early-stage business ideas. Not only can they win funding to move their ideas forward, but they also receive valuable feedback and connections

It is FREE to participate and open to any student, faculty, staff, or community member in West Alabama. There will 10+ competition booths. Each booth will have one winner winning \$1,000 in prize money.

Event Details:

Date: November 19, 2024

Time: 5:00PM - 9:00PM

Location: Tuscaloosa River Market | 1900 Jack Warner Parkway

If you are an entrepreneur with a business idea, then all it takes is:

3 MINUTES - 2 PITCH - 1 IDEA

SIGN-UP TO COMPETE

SIGN-UP TO BE A JUDGE



ABOUT THE EVENT

Demo Day also is part of Global Entrepreneurship Week. Using an open-house format, we invite you to meet our teams and network, Entrepreneurs will showcase their businesses, and we offer several presentations during the day.

Event Details:

Date: November 21, 2024

Time: 11:30AM - 8:00PM

Open house format with lunch, networking, presentations and guest speakers

Agenda forthcoming

Location: The EDGE | 2627 10th Avenue

[RSVP TO ATTEND HERE](#)



ABOUT THE ERGs

Are you interested in collaborating with other entrepreneurs and getting more resources to move your business or your idea forward? If so, join our Entrepreneur Resource Groups (ERGs) at The EDGE.

Monthly Meeting Details:

Date: Third Tuesday of every month

Time: 5:00PM - 7:00PM

Location: The EDGE | 2627 10th Avenue

[Learn more about the ERG initiative here.](#)

GET CONNECTED & INVOLVED IN AN ERG TODAY

Highlights

STUDENT LEARNING AT THE EDGE

In September, Vishal Gupta hosted an entrepreneurship panel at The EDGE.

To access this panel discussion, join our FREE Acelevents community platform, The AEI Hub, by clicking [HERE](#). Panelists are listed below.

- Pamela Dobbins - [Delightful Cookies and Treats](#)
- Andrew Morris - [Gyft](#)
- Tanner Jones - Supporta
- Tracy Comas - [TPM Research](#)



THE 2024 CRIMSON ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACADEMY

This summer, we ran our 6th Crimson Entrepreneurship Academy (CEA) program with a

total of 27 students. This pre-accelerator program focuses on helping student progress their ideas. Students receive a \$4,000 stipend to support their working on their business ideas full time in the summer. They meet experts, participate in workshops with guest speakers and benefit from one-on-one coaching. The CEA curriculum is based on three pillars: building confidence, building a business and building networks. Meet the students at Demo Day, where they will be sharing their ideas and work.

Thank you to Medical Properties Trust for their support of this initiative.

To learn more about CEA and apply for next year, click [HERE](#).

In The News

NEWS FROM CITY DETECT

[City Detect](#) (founders Gavin Baum-Blake and Dr. Erik Johnson) has successfully raised its \$2M Seed Round led by Las Olas Venture Capital (LOVC) out of Ft. Lauderdale with participation from Knoll Ventures and Atlanta Seed Company, both out of Atlanta!

During the summer raise they tapped into their network and engaged with some wonderful investors across the United States. Benzamin Choi of Alabama Capital Network was a catalyst this round by introducing City Detect to Scotty Lefkowitz., who did a phenomenal job of overseeing their deal from start to finish. Working through the deal was a smooth process with the team. Gavin Baum-Blake flew down to meet the investors in person and knew it was the right fit.

LOVC quickly understood the value of what they've built and how it would be a no-brainer for local government customers and partners. They've proven to be excellent partners and The City Detect team is proud to be a part of their portfolio.

City Detect will use the new funding to expand their sales and marketing efforts, and to rapidly expand into new innovative cities across the country!

To learn more, click [HERE](#).



NEWS FROM COOLER COMRADE

After 6 years, [Cooler Comrade](#) (founder is Slade Johnston) was officially granted their Patent! While patiently waiting on their patent approval, they have become one the top suppliers for custom drink holders in the outdoor industry. If you need some for your business, let them know!

Spotlights

NEWEST EDGE MEMBERS



Daufe Hair

Daufe Hair was founded and incorporated in 2020 by Dr. Pamela Payne Foster after winning two business pitch competitions for a new concept which could revolutionize the hair care industry. Thus, Daufe Hair was formed. The name comes from a Ghana Adinkra symbol which means femininity, love, beauty and care. It is depicted as a wooden comb with six teeth and an oval placed horizontally above it. The name Daufe is a combination of the Akan word “wood” and “comb”. The company’s vision embodies the symbol by being a company “that improves the lives of people through hair care accessories and other cultural products.” The company’s first product is “Kwanzaa in a Box”, which packages and brands materials needed to start celebrating Kwanzaa, a national African American holiday founded in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga, to provide a broad sense of commitment and unity primarily for people of African descent and others throughout the world.

Neptune Foils

Hunter Stepanovich and Ramsey Ponchaud are the co-founders of Neptune Foils, an innovative startup specializing in affordable hydrofoil solutions for water sports enthusiasts. They leverage advanced 3D printing technology and eco-friendly materials to create high-quality wake foils. Their patent-pending



manufacturing process allows them to produce foils at a fraction of the cost compared to traditional methods, while also enhancing customizability and efficiency. This unique approach sets them apart in a rapidly growing market. Targeting a diverse demographic, including college students and water sports clubs, Neptune Foils aims to make foiling accessible to everyone, providing exceptional products that elevate the water sports experience.



Trackable

Ace Moran and Walker Yashko are the co-owners of Trackable, which is a mobile application for coaches and trainers to communicate and share training plans with their teams or clients. Coaches can monitor user progress, track individual training sessions, and communicate with clients and players. This application is designed to combine training data and efficient communication to increase coaches' and trainers' effectiveness.

Zapp AG

Ross James Wylie is the new Chief of Sales Officer in the USA for Zapp AG. Zapp is a German based company that has built up a network of production locations and service centers on three continents. Locations are in important sales markets ensure the fastest possible delivery. An international team supports them in choosing the right semi-finished products. This is how they support our customers – and have been doing so for over 300 years!

ZAPP

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Contact Us

Connect with us using the links below

Phone: 1.205.348.3343

Email: aei@ua.edu



The Alabama Entrepreneurship Institute is housed at **The EDGE**, Tuscaloosa's home for startups. The EDGE is a partnership between The University of Alabama, the West Alabama Chamber of Commerce, and the City of Tuscaloosa. Resources from all three groups come together to help grow a vibrant ecosystem that supports entrepreneurship, business growth, and personal enterprise. The Alabama Entrepreneurship Institute is a campus-wide initiative powering the programs that are offered at The EDGE.
