

## **DPI-backed teams to compete in startup pitch competition**

*5 student teams from UI System vie against 3 other schools for \$8,000*

URBANA, Ill. – The Discovery Partners Institute (DPI), an initiative led by the University of Illinois System to drive economic development through innovation, is sponsoring five entries of student startup companies in the Final Four Business Pitch at Chicago entrepreneurship center 1871 on Tuesday, Aug. 31. The teams of students from all three UI System campuses will face off against 15 other teams from DePaul, Michigan State and Purdue. The top four teams – one from each university – will share \$8,000 in prizes.

The five teams from UI System institutions are **AddIT**, a company that connects consumers in need of unique replacement parts with networks of additive manufacturers who have available capacity, led by Matt Hutchison from the University of Illinois Springfield; **Displayone**, which makes display products that allow people to showcase and protect their possessions, led by University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's Eddy Mejia; **Ringwing**, a catchable toy glider developed by UIUC student Benjamin Khachaturian; **Snapclips**, a flexible but secure barbell collar created by University of Illinois Chicago student Martin Dimitrov; and **Vitrix Health**, a company that provides affordable medical screening by using optical technology and machine learning, developed by UIUC students Ayush Kumar and Aashay Patel.

The teams will have a display table at the event to share information about their company, then all attendees will vote for their favorite business idea. The team from each university that receives the most votes will then deliver a five-minute pitch and participate in a question-and-answer session with the judges, who will then rank the teams and award the prize money.

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