

# Healthcare Technology Startups Win \$60,000 from Pittsburgh-based Healthcare Safety Challenge

Wednesday, April 28, 2021

PITTSBURGH, PA (April 28, 2021) – Innovation Works (IW) and the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) hosted the finale of the JHF Healthcare Safety Challenge on April 27<sup>th</sup> with five finalists competing live for \$60,000 in cash prizes. The 4-month competition launched at the beginning of January received over 125 submissions from 15 countries around the world, showcasing promising, innovative healthcare safety solutions against the backdrop of the world's largest healthcare crisis in a century. Technology innovators at Elemeno Health from Oakland, California won first place receiving \$25,000, with Medsix from Boston, Massachusetts and READE.ai from Pittsburgh taking second (\$7,500) and third (\$2,500) respectively.

Built on IW and AlphaLab Gear's International Hardware Cup model, the JHF Healthcare Safety Challenge sought to apply the power of technology--whether software, hardware, life sciences or some combination of multiple technologies--to uncover new ideas for patient safety. COVID-19 has demonstrated the pressing need to improve safety in the U.S. health system; a recent report from Press Ganey suggests hospital safety has decreased throughout the pandemic. Despite the potential of applying technological safety advances from other industries to medical settings, healthcare systems have not implemented available solutions at scale.

The five finalists, also including ResTec Solutions from Pittsburgh and Vuetech Health Innovations from Charlottesville, Virginia, pitched their patient safety innovations to a panel of five expert judges: David Motley, Managing Partner, BlueTree Venture Fund; Mary Beth Navarra-Sirio, Senior Vice President Product Management, ConnectiveRX; Ven Raju, Vice President, Technology Ventures, Northwell Holdings and Ventures; Ken Segel, CEO & Managing Director, Value Capture, LLC; and Dr. Karen Wolk Feinstein, President & CEO, Jewish Healthcare Foundation.

"Each of our finalists crossed industry boundaries to apply the potential of technology to advance healthcare safety. We need this kind of bold thinking to address the persistent problem of medical error," said Karen Wolk Feinstein. "We also suffer in health care from having no single federal agency solely focused on patient and worker safety to make the steady progress that the National Transportation Safety Board does for its industry. NTSB brings technology solutions and innovations to scale, preventing errors before they happen."

Using a cloud-based solution, Elemeno Health has developed a customized microlearning 24/7 service to provide frontline healthcare teams with immediate point of care training and communication so they can provide safer care at the bedside or in practice precisely

when needed. "Our solution gets hospital-specific best practice information into the hands of frontline teams and clinicians at the point of care, when and where it is needed most," said Dr. Arup Roy-Burman, Founder & CEO. "We've seen our easy-to-use bite-sized guides reduce errors, increase efficiency, and reduce staff burnout. Integrating our on-demand support directly into the average workday equips frontline caregivers to deliver the best care possible to every life they touch."

Medsix is building novel sensors for surgical drain monitoring including a software dashboard with predictive analytics for improved patient outcomes after surgery. The device and software can be used both in and out of the hospital to address the needs of patients and providers alike, saving lives and money. READE.ai has developed innovative machine learning software to detect and alert a surgical team of stroke during surgery. ResTec Solutions applies disinfection technologies in healthcare settings much as automatic dishwashers do for dishes. Vuetech Health Innovations employs real-time predictive technology and monitoring to anticipate the risk of falling in hospitals, allowing immediate intervention.

"We see every day how important it is to have new, creative solutions to boost healthcare safety and avoid preventable errors," said Rich Lunak, president and CEO of Innovation Works. "Our criteria throughout the competition has been to seek out the novel technologies that are the most likely to be adopted and have the greatest impact on patient safety. We are looking forward to seeing many of these innovations applied in healthcare settings to improve patient outcomes - a goal that we've learned is difficult to achieve but incredibly necessary."

In addition to the five finalists, the JHF Healthcare Safety Challenge also recognized five kicker prize winners. The kicker prize winners received \$5,000 each and were selected based on the potential to apply their technology to health safety. The kicker prize winners include Advanced Robotics Corp from Pasadena, California; Augment Health from Atlanta, Georgia; Hubly Surgical, Inc. from San Francisco, California; Lumis Corp from Pittsburgh; and OxiWear from Arlington, Virginia.

Further details can be found at <https://www.healthcaresafetypgh.org/>.

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### **About the Jewish Healthcare Foundation**

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) and its three operating arms — the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI), Health Careers Futures (HCF), and the Women's Health Activist Movement Global (WHAMglobal) — offer a unique brand of activist philanthropy to advance healthcare innovation, advocacy, collaboration, and education in the interest of better population health. For more information, visit [jhf.org](http://jhf.org).

## **About Innovation Works**

Innovation Works (IW) is the Pittsburgh region's most active early-stage investor and one of the nation's top investors in early-stage technology startups. Along with investing more than \$100 million into the tech startups of the region, IW provides these emerging companies with assistance and the network to customers and other investors that startups depend on to grow and succeed. IW is SWPA's Ben Franklin Technology Partner, a statewide network of four centers that was created by the Commonwealth to concentrate investors and experts to grow the state's innovation community and to diversify and strengthen PA's economy.