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Three Startups Advance to Final Round of 2025 NSpire Startup Slam Pitch Competition

Finalists to Compete Before Live Audience for Prize Package Valued at More Than \$115,000

MANDEVILLE, La – STartUP Northshore today announced the three finalists who will compete at the 2025 NSpire Startup Slam. This award-winning premier pitch competition on the Northshore features local entrepreneurs vying for a prize package of cash and services valued at more than \$115,000. The live showcase, presented by Chevron, will take place at the historic Columbia Theatre for the Performing Arts in Downtown Hammond on Friday, January 10, 2025, with a networking reception at 4:30 p.m. and the event kickoff at 6:00 p.m.

“The NSpire Startup Slam exemplifies what STartUP Northshore is all about—empowering entrepreneurs with the resources, connections, and support they need to thrive right here on the Northshore,” said **Chris Masingill, CEO of St. Tammany Corporation**. “By celebrating these visionary startups, we’re nurturing a robust ecosystem that empowers businesses to succeed and inspires others to pursue their own entrepreneurial endeavors. The success of programs like the award-winning NSpire Startup Slam underscores the Northshore’s dedication to cultivating a vibrant entrepreneurial culture. This is an essential component of the economic vitality of our region.”

The three finalists will pitch their business to a live audience and a panel of judges at the 2025 NSpire Startup Slam for one of the Gulf South’s largest prize packages complete with \$50,000 in cash funding, provided by Capital One, as well as high-quality in-kind services valued at over \$65,000. The in-kind service package is designed to equip finalists with resources that support every stage of business growth. This includes business advisement services from **The Bernard Group, Martin Business Solution, LLC, B2B CFO®**, and **MCDS, LLC**; marketing and branding strategy from **Ninety by Three, LLC** and **PERK Social**; startup legal, business, and intellectual property consulting services from **Arena Collective**; accounting and bookkeeping consultation from **Bienville Consulting Group** and **OfficeOps**; business card and sign printing services from **Mele Printing**; team design and human resource strategy from **JAJ Consulting**; a one-year founding membership to **Palette Northshore**, a workspace community for entrepreneurs; and memberships to the **St. Tammany Chamber of Commerce** and **Tangipahoa Chamber of Commerce**.

Following two rounds of a rigorous application and review process, the three finalists were selected to advance to the main stage after pitching to a Finalist Selection Committee made up of local business leaders from across the Northshore. As the finalists prepare to take the stage, each startup will receive

one-on-one professional pitch coaching from Abbey Kish, CEO & Founder of Kish Consulting and a three-time national champion speaker.

The finalists selected to compete in the live competition are as follows:

- **Cantaloupe AI** cuts human pre-screening time by nearly 100% in the hospitality industry with instant AI voice interviews. Cantaloupe AI empowers every applicant across every role to speak for themselves, reducing time-to-hire and giving hiring managers powerful data on their next potential employee before they ever meet.
- **Forefront360** is transforming property insurance with proactive, data-driven solutions that ensure accurate claims, fair settlements, and quick repairs. Based in the Gulf Coast, Forefront360 aims to lower premiums and minimize out-of-pocket costs, bringing the industry back to its core mission of reliable coverage and fast recovery after natural disasters.
- **QMS2GO** is an AI-powered quality management assistant that streamlines QMS integration and management, functioning like an on-demand consultant. QMS2GO provides analysis, organizes company-wide knowledge, and simplifies document creation. It's especially beneficial for military contractors, ensuring audit readiness and compliance at reduced costs. QMS2GO frees quality managers to initiate improvements, saving time, money, and resources by empowering teams with document control and knowledge retention.

The finalists will be evaluated by a panel of judges on core criteria that includes concept and business model, market viability, scalability, traction, investment readiness, presentation skills, as well as the ability and commitment to generate a significant positive impact on the region.

The 2025 NSpire Startup Slam judges panel includes:

- **Caitlin Hunter**, Corporate Affairs Representative, Chevron
- **Karen DeBlieux**, Greater New Orleans Market President, Capital One
- **Kwamena Aidoo**, Managing Partner, Corridor Ventures
- **Will Boudreaux**, Founder, Former CEO, Board Member, Netchex
- **Josh Fleig**, Chief Innovation Officer, Louisiana Economic Development
- **Donna Miller**, Franchise Owner & Operator, PJ's

This pitch competition represents STartUP Northshore's commitment to and investment in building programs that support local entrepreneurs and cultivate the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem. The organization delivers world-class programming, networking opportunities, access to capital, and mentorship from esteemed industry leaders, investors, and founders at little to no cost to the startups.

"The NSpire Startup Slam highlights the creativity and entrepreneurial spirit of our region while showcasing the strength of our collaborative ecosystem," said **Ginger Cangelosi, Executive Director of Tangipahoa Economic Development**. "Tangipahoa Economic Development is proud to partner with STartUP Northshore to welcome audiences from across Southeast Louisiana to Downtown Hammond



for this must-see event, where the vibrancy of the Northshore entrepreneurial ecosystem will take center stage.”

NSpire Startup Slam will include an exhilarating live showdown to be held at the historic Columbia Theatre for the Performing Arts in Downtown Hammond on **Friday, January 10, 2025, with a networking reception at 4:30 p.m. and the event kickoff at 6:00 p.m.** Rising entrepreneurs will showcase their groundbreaking ideas, connect with industry leaders, and compete for a robust prize package. Admission is free and open to the public, and registration is encouraged and available online at [this link](#).

The 2025 NSpire Startup Slam is made possible through the financial support and partnership of our presenting sponsor, **Chevron**, and our grant prize sponsor, **Capital One**. Additional funding partners include **Tangipahoa Economic Development Foundation, St. Tammany Corporation, Washington Economic Development Foundation, Cleco Power, Hancock Whitney Bank, and the Northshore Community Foundation.**

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About STartUP Northshore

STartUP Northshore is a three-year entrepreneurial ecosystem pilot program with the purpose of catalyzing entrepreneurship, innovation, and business formation on the Northshore through strategic partnerships with recognized entities in the startup community, including anchor partner The Idea Village, to deliver first-class programming for entrepreneurs and second stage companies. STartUP Northshore is supported through the collaboration of St. Tammany Corporation, Tangipahoa Economic Development, and Washington Economic Development Foundation. Through this initiative, the next wave of local entrepreneurs from all three parishes will gain access to immersive education, networking opportunities, access to capital and mentorship from esteemed industry leaders, investors, and founders, all of which come together to form a critical support system that will set their business up for success. STartUP Northshore is managed by St. Tammany Corporation.

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