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### **Four Startups Advance to Final Round of Northshore's First-Ever Pitch Competition**

*Finalists to Compete Before Live Audience for Prize Package Valued at More Than \$60,000 in the NSpire Startup Slam*

MANDEVILLE, La – STartUP Northshore today announced the four finalists who will compete at NSpire Startup Slam, the first-ever startup pitch competition on the Northshore featuring local entrepreneurs vying for a prize package of cash and services valued at more than \$60,000. The live showcase will take place at the historic Columbia Theatre for the Performing Arts in Downtown Hammond on Friday, November 3, with a networking reception at 4:30 p.m. and the event kickoff at 6:00 p.m.

“The combined prize package of financial resources, services, and one-on-one expert coaching aligns with the mission of STartUP Northshore in that it extends beyond just a financial commitment; it’s an investment into the winning business’s journey ahead as they start up, scale, and grow right here on the Northshore,” said **Chris Masingill, CEO of St. Tammany Corporation**. “This competition elevates some of the most compelling business cases in our region, and we are excited for them to share with us their grit, passion, and enterprising spirit. The power of an idea will take center stage at the NSpire Pitch Competition.”

The four finalists will pitch their business to a live audience and a Shark-Tank-style panel of judges at the NSpire Startup Slam for a prize package complete with \$25,000 in cash funding matched by high-quality in-kind services, mentorship opportunities, and access to a network of investors and industry professionals valued at over \$35,000. The wrap-around in-kind service package includes business advisement services from The Bernard Group, Martin Business Solution, LLC; B2B CFO®; MCDS, LLC; marketing and branding strategy from Ninety by Three, LLC and PERK Social; startup legal services from The Sean Morrison Law Offices, LLC; and accounting consultation with HORNE.

Following two rounds of a rigorous application and review process, the four 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:

- **Kinkz**, a Slidell-based natural haircare line, simplifies hair care for women on their curly hair journey with easy-to-use styling tools, including innovative Kinkz Hair Ties, for quick and damage-free styling in just five seconds.

- **Unique XP**, based in Slidell, redefines fan engagement through personalized, real-time micro-experiences and itineraries, transforming passions into extraordinary adventures.
- **11th Haus**, a modern alchemy and wellness brand based in Covington, is all about connection, creating high-quality pheromone products to enhance relationships, self-discovery, and connection with the world, inspired by astrology's 11th house themes.
- **uLand**, an Australian-founded educational tech startup, offers engaging disaster preparation and sustainability education through storytelling and visualization, making learning impactful and user-friendly.

NSpire Startup Slam was open to any business that is under five years old, makes under \$1 million in revenue, and has a base of operations on the Northshore (St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, or Washington Parish) and participate in its entrepreneurial ecosystem.

This new pitch competition represents STartUP Northshore's latest investment in building programs that support local entrepreneurs and cultivate the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem by delivering 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.

"As a proud partner of STartUP Northshore, Tangipahoa Economic Development is excited to play a role in showcasing the creative, diverse, and original ideas of the four finalists that will compete in the NSpire Startup Slam and welcome audience members from across Southeast Louisiana to Downtown Hammond," said **Ginger Cangelosi, Executive Director of Tangipahoa Economic Development**. "This is a must-see event for startup enthusiasts and aspiring entrepreneurs during which the vibrancy of the Northshore entrepreneurial ecosystem will be on full display."

"The NSpire Startup Slam signals the beginning of spotlighting and supporting a new wave of innovative startups in the Northshore region, poised to shape the local economy and disrupt industries," said **Sean Mulligan, Senior Program Associate at The Idea Village**. "This competition is an incredible opportunity for founders who work day in and out to scale their companies. Each company that is competing has put in a ton of work, and this a great opportunity for them to share that growth and future potential with the Northshore community."

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, November 3, 2023, 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](#).

STartUP Northshore is made possible through the financial support and partnership of Chevron, Citizens National Bank, 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 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.

[www.startupnorthshore.com](http://www.startupnorthshore.com)

### About The Idea Village

The Idea Village's core belief is that entrepreneurship is an agent of social and economic change. As an early champion of entrepreneurship in New Orleans, the organization has played an integral role in catalyzing the city's entrepreneurial movement. In addition to supporting nearly 15,000 entrepreneurs, The Idea Village has successfully elevated New Orleans's reputation as a hub of innovation, entrepreneurship, and business. By serving as a catalyst and developing programs that provide direct support and education to founders and early-stage companies, The Idea Village helps entrepreneurs build innovative and industry-leading companies that generate revenue and jobs and help create a more vibrant, inclusive, and resilient local economy.

[www.ideavillage.org](http://www.ideavillage.org)

