



Article 135

April 25, 2010

## **Nineteen Startup Tech Companies to Pitch Ideas to Investors**

*By Michelle Mang, Promotions and Advertising Analyst at Technology Ventures Corporation*

Nineteen startup companies will pitch their business plans before investors May 19-20, 2010 at the 17th annual Technology Ventures Equity Capital Symposium hosted by Technology Ventures Corporation (TVC). The annual Albuquerque forum gives investors a chance to invest in companies that are commercializing advanced technologies developed in national laboratories, universities and other research institutions.

“Even in this challenging economy, TVC was able to select 19 great presenters from more states with a broader diversity of technologies than ever before,” said Sherman McCorkle, president and chief executive officer of TVC. The nonprofit, charitable foundation funded by Lockheed Martin Corporation and the Department of Energy bridges the public and private sectors to find commercial uses for technological discoveries made at publicly funded research centers, including Argonne National Laboratory, Brookhaven National Laboratory, Idaho National Laboratory, Los Alamos National Laboratory, Sandia National Laboratories, Savannah River National Laboratory and Y-12 National Security Complex

This year’s presenters were selected from a pool of 40 applicants. Since projects were selected in January, TVC business specialists have been working with the principals of each startup to develop their business plans and investment pitches. At the May event, each entrepreneur will have 10 minutes to present his or her company’s business plan to a group of nearly 100 investors.

Of the 19 presenters, seven are commercializing national laboratory- or university-sourced or related technologies in the areas of industrial energy, business products and services, electronics or instrumentation, information technology and software, biotechnology and consumer products and services.

Ken Newman, president of Roswell-based Berken Energy, hopes his company will become a leading clean-power provider through the use of its geo-thermovoltaic systems that convert the Earth’s heat into a zero-carbon, nonstop source of electricity. The company hopes to capture a significant share of the \$112 billion annual U.S. electricity market.

“TVC has provided us with seven world-class advisers and entrepreneurs — marketing specialists, venture capitalists, energy executives and patent attorneys,” Newman said.

“We are very thankful and impressed with the pertinent skill sets. The symposium brings a breadth of potential equity and strategic partners that we would not have been able to find on our own. We have a one in 1,500 chance of raising money on our own versus a one in three chance with TVC.”

Newman was referring to the one in three TVC symposium presenters who have received funding since the events started in 1993. Getting funding, if he’s successful, Newman said, “will allow us to fulfill orders both nationally and abroad and bring in the employees we need to manufacture here in New Mexico and distribute globally.”

Garth Gobeli echoed similar sentiments about how TVC’s coaching helped him incorporate his new business, EarPOD, and prepare for the investment symposium. EarPOD makes a hearing aid that relies on micro-speaker ear buds similar to those used with digital music players. Gobeli says his product will be more affordable and provide clearer reception than other hearing aids on the market.

The EarPOD prototype is fully developed and tested, but EarPOD needs funding to complete restyling of the product, find manufacturing facilities and launch its marketing and sales initiatives, Gobeli said. “Being able to present my innovation and my business plan to a large attendance of equity investors is an opportunity that is afforded few new businesses. The success rate for funding is considerably greater than if I were to approach potential investors on my own.”

In its 17 years of existence, TVC has helped form 105 new businesses, secure more than \$1 billion in funding commitments to its client companies and create more than 12,699 jobs.

For more information or to register, visit [www.techventures.org](http://www.techventures.org).

*Finance New Mexico is an initiative of the New Mexico Small Business Investment Corporation (NMSBIC) and its partners to assist individuals and businesses in obtaining skills and funding-resources for their business or idea. To learn more, go to [www.FinanceNewMexico.org](http://www.FinanceNewMexico.org).*

