



# OUR CITY, OUR COLLEGE

Built by Entrepreneurs

ENTREPRENEURSHIP REPORT 2014

**BAUER**  
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS  
UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

## AN INTRODUCTION

In a city built by entrepreneurs, it is only fitting that an entrepreneurial spirit echoes through the halls of Houston's business school — the C. T. Bauer College of Business — and permeates across the University of Houston campus and into the business community. The past year has been a banner one for Bauer's nationally ranked entrepreneurship program, the Cyvia and Melvyn Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship, with expanded programming and partnerships leading to record-setting student success.

The core of our entrepreneurship program has remained consistent over the past 23 years, as we encourage students to pursue their passions and turn ideas into successful businesses that in turn provide jobs and economic growth. Bauer's entrepreneurship program focuses on four ideas — academic instruction, enrichment programs, outreach and community service, and competition. We reach thousands of students on the UH campus and members of the Houston business community each year with our entrepreneurship offerings and in 2014, we have continued to expand that reach with partnerships in intellectual property, technology and other disciplines.

You'll find in this report more information about the success our entrepreneurship students have had this year in national business plan competitions, as they have developed business plans to commercialize technologies developed by UH researchers. This year's entrepreneurship report shares stories of the student teams who have had eight podium finishes this semester in business plan competitions, along with a young alumnus who is changing the way people share photos online with a new mobile app. You will also read about the success of RED Labs, the technology accelerator housed within Bauer that we launched last year, as well as our new Cougar Venture Fund, the early stage venture capital fund where our MBA students work with an advisory board of entrepreneurs, angel investors and venture capitalists.

At Bauer, we are proud to be part of a rich tradition of entrepreneurial spirit in the city of Houston. *The Princeton Review* and *Entrepreneur* have ranked our Wolff Center among the top three undergraduate entrepreneurship programs for seven consecutive years, with No. 1 rankings in 2008, 2010 and 2011. Our entrepreneurship students get to put their business plans into action as they compete against MBA students from leading business and technology programs across the United States, achieving 21 podium finishes in national business plan competitions in the past 12 years.

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## FIVE TEAMS

WORKED ON UH INTELLECTUAL PROPERTIES  
THAT INCLUDED CANCER RESEARCH, CLEAN  
WATER, LONG-LASTING BATTERIES & MORE



14 WOMEN  
10 MEN



24 STUDENTS WITH A PODIUM FINISH

9 LANGUAGES  
SPOKEN

ENGLISH

PORTUGUESE

FRENCH

ARABIC

SWEDISH

RUSSIAN

MANDARIN

URDU

SPANISH

## 2014 BUSINESS PLAN TEAMS



# REECYCLE

**Members:** Susan Tran, Cassandra Hoang, Casey McNeil & Bobby Jacobs

**Wins:** Baylor New Venture Competition, 1st place

First Look West (FLoW) Business Plan Competition, 1st place

U.S. Department of Energy National Clean Energy Business Plan Competition,  
Grand Prize, Audience Investor Choice Award, People's Choice Award

REEcycle reclaims rare earth elements from disposed of electronic waste. Rare earth elements are critical resources that help to increase the efficiencies of technologies such as cell phones, laptops, wind turbines and electric cars.



# ENERGETIK

**Members:** Rowbin Hickman, Jonathan Brown, Noy Shemer, Jonathan Cohen-Kurzrock & Brenda Rojo

**Wins:** *University of Nebraska-Lincoln New Venture Competition, 1st place, Texas Christian University Barrentine Values and Ventures Competition, 3rd place and special recognition with Energy Independence Award*

Energetik provides energy storage that is clean, simple and will help make renewable electricity reliable. This patent-pending technology is safer, stores more energy and costs less overtime.



# WAVVE

**Members:** Sergey Petrov, Valeria Bernadac, Julia Lonnegren, Ivette Rubio & Eric Beydoun

**Wins:** *Global Student Business Plan Competition (Nassau, Bahamas), 1st place*

*Rice Business Plan Competition, semi-finals and special recognition with Clean Technology Innovation Prize*

*Chapman University California Dreamin' Business Plan Competition, 3rd place*

Wavve LLC produces a nanotechnology patented coating solution that enhances the effectiveness of current water filters.



# CARA

**Members:** Corbin Bradford, Karey Gallagher, Rashmi Bhat, Jacob Hines & Alicia Ramirez

**Wins:** *University of North Dakota's Giants Entrepreneurship Challenge, 1st place*

Using nanotechnology, CARA revolutionizes the way wood is manufactured, treated, stained and sealed. This innovative coating has widespread applicability and inhibits the damaging effects of both water and saltwater on wood. The product eliminates the problems created by mold, mildew, shrinkage and warping and does it without the toxic chemicals found in treated wood and conventional sealants.

A group of five young adults, three women and two men, are standing in a row against a white background. They are all dressed in professional business attire, including dark blazers and suits. Each person has a gold-colored circular emblem on their left lapel. The woman on the far left is wearing a plaid skirt, while the others are in solid-colored bottoms. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera.

# OXIGINNE

**Members:** Ariana Thrasher, Christopher Wick, Aliko Thanos, Timothy Arnaez & Paula Musa

**Wins:** *University of North Dakota's Giants Entrepreneurship Challenge, 3rd Place*

Oxiginne is a medical device company that specializes in creating products to improve the quality of skin reconstructive care, which includes a Perfusion Mapping Device (PMD), a real-time 3D imaging system.





## RED LABS

Through RED Labs, a coworking space and startup accelerator housed at the Bauer College, UH students from all academic disciplines have the opportunity to pursue their business ideas with mentorship and connections that we facilitate. Our first class, which debuted their startups in 2013 at a Demo Day event, created a range of companies, from kits that preserve memories and stories on video, to a neon-colored skateboard lifestyle brand and technology for creating a personalized, cloud-based TV channel. Robert Dale Smith built Flinger. co during his time in RED Labs. The company has since won several awards, including first place in Microsoft's Imagine Cup Video Pitch Challenge.

Tri Nguyen, left, is a member of the second class of RED Labs, who was selected by crowdfunding website Upstart and backed with a \$5,000 investment by a venture capital fund founded by an executive chairman of Google for his idea for an artificial pancreas to treat type-1 diabetes.



## COUGAR VENTURE FUND

This year, Bauer College launched the Cougar Venture Fund, combining classroom instruction with hands-on experience for students who take our graduate-level venture capital course. They review live deals and recommend action based on analysis to a board of advisors for this \$1 million venture capital fund. Our students learn about deal sourcing, term sheet evaluation, portfolio management and other critical skills that position them for careers in entrepreneurship, venture capital or private equity. In 2013 and 2014, Cougar Venture Fund students have invested in:

- Molecule Software – a software platform that enables companies to better manage energy trading and risk management operations
- Cinegif – a software platform that allows marketers and advertisers to more easily create, incorporate, and track high-quality GIFs into digital strategy




## RECENT ALUMNI SUCCESS

Adam Cooper, 23, graduated from Bauer's undergraduate entrepreneurship program in 2013 and was recently featured in WIRED magazine for a mobile app he developed called Pixify, which lets users search public Instagram photos by time and place using a map interface.

WIRED writer Jakob Schiller calls Pixify one of his favorite new apps and says, "Once you get a taste, you'll wonder how you Insta'd without it."

During his time in Bauer's Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship, Cooper honed his startup skills with several other ideas, including a DJ music subscription service, an inventory management software and hardware allowing vending machine operators to remotely manage their products and a website where students could tutor one another over the Internet.



*"The Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship allowed me to build the relationships necessary to create a successful business. If it weren't for the incredible support I got from Bauer and WCE, I honestly wouldn't have made it to where I am today."*

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