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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
May 16, 2024

State Awards \$760,000 in Inaugural Round of Research University Commercialization Awards

SANTA FE, N.M. – The New Mexico Economic Development Department (EDD), through its Office of Strategy, Science & Technology (OSST), has awarded \$760,000 in grant funding and entrepreneurship consulting to three teams commercializing technology developed at New Mexico research universities in the inaugural round of the Research University Team Pitch Award.

First announced in September 2023, the New Mexico Research University Team Pitch Award Pilot Program is a competitive state-funded grant that awards non-dilutive grant funds and entrepreneurship assistance to science and technology commercialization proposals from faculty/student teams at New Mexico research universities. Applications were evaluated by the state's Technology Research Collaborative Board, with final awardees invited to make pitches at the finalist event on May 2, 2024, at the UNM Rainforest Innovations building, with additional funds being awarded to the best pitch.

The establishment of the pilot program seeks to support early-stage innovators and entrepreneurs in commercializing science and technology-based products or services created at New Mexico universities, assisting innovators to become a New Mexico-based business. The funds support the completion of tasks that bring technologies out of the university and into the marketplace, such as business establishment expenses, technology demonstration, patent filing, regulatory navigation, testing and validation, customer discovery, market entry research, etc.

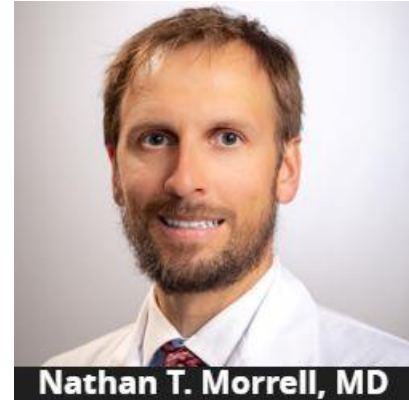
In addition to award funds, each awardee team will receive \$50,000 worth of entrepreneurship consulting services coordinated in partnership with the New Mexico Angels Mentors Program. Awardees will work with OSST over the following year as they launch and grow their startups, receive funds, and complete milestones in their respective scopes of work.

The funds for the first year of the pilot program come from a 2023 special appropriation to EDD for economic development and program administration.

The inaugural Research University Team Pitch Award Pilot Program awardees are:

Sandia Medical Technologies – Prosthetic Implant for CMC Arthritis: \$210,000

Nathan T. Morrell, MD, board-certified orthopedic hand surgeon and director of the UNM School of Medicine Hand Fellowship Program; **Dimitri Madden**, UNM PhD Candidate in Mechanical Engineering, University of New Mexico; **Ethan Darwin**, PhD Candidate in Mechanical Engineering, University of New Mexico



This UNM team is developing a novel implant that resolves the symptoms of osteoarthritis at the carpometacarpal joint, where the thumb meets the wrist, by inserting an implant that serves as a prosthetic replacement of the trapezium bone. The device combines aspects of proven surgical procedures with a unique and reliable metal implant that will return patients to their baseline. The PICA team's funds include \$10,000 awarded for giving the best pitch at the award finalist pitch event.



Sattwa-toyam – Creating New Fresh Water from Brackish and Sea Water: \$200,000

Ashok Ghosh, Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology; **Gabriel Maestas**, PhD Candidate in Mechanical Engineering, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology

energy production for operation.

This team from New Mexico Tech is developing a patented water desalination technology that generates additional water, reduces waste brine volume, reduces membrane fouling, and can be paired with renewable

YEEO (Yeast Encapsulated Essential Oils) Eco-Safe: \$200,000

Ivy Hurwitz, Research Associate Professor, UNM HSC Center for Global Health; **Michael Workman**, UNM HSC research scientist; **Dianne Peterson**, UNM Department of Biology graduate student



This team from the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center is developing a patented yeast-encapsulated essential oil larvicide, to reduce mosquito-borne diseases, that is safe for humans and non-toxic to beneficial insects.

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EDD's mission is to improve the lives of New Mexico families by increasing economic opportunities and providing a place for businesses to thrive. EDD's programs contribute directly to this mission by training our workforce, providing infrastructure that supports business growth, and helping every community create a thriving economy.

New Mexico Economic Development Department
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