Tulane Business Model Competition goes virtual

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Lydia Winkler (MBA/JD ’19) and Marco Nelson (MBA ’19), co-founders of Rent Check, pitch the company to judges at the 2019 Tulane Business Model Competition.

In response to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, Tulane University’s A. B. Freeman School of Business has announced that the 2020 Tulane Business Model Competition will take place virtually.

The competition, an annual presentation of the Freeman School's Albert Lepage Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, was scheduled to take place next week as part of New Orleans Entrepreneur Week.

“Given the recommendations of public health officials and with the safety of students, judges and the New Orleans community our foremost priority, we recognized that we would be unable to host the competition in its traditional live format,” said Ira Solomon, Freeman School dean.

“By enabling this year’s semifinalists to present their business models to judges via videoconference, we’re doing all we can to create a valuable experience for our participating ventures at a time when they’re especially in need of our support,” said Rob Lalka, executive director of the Lepage Center.

In honor of the competition’s 20th anniversary, the Lepage Center more than tripled the size of its prize pool. This year’s competition will award an all-time high of $125,000 to university-based startups and early-stage ventures that demonstrate high growth potential and a market-tested ability to adapt to customer needs.

This year’s semifinals will take place on March 24, and the final round will take place on March 26. The winning team will receive a grand prize of $75,000. The runner up will receive a $30,000 prize, and the third-place team will receive $20,000.

The 2020 Tulane Business Model Competition semifinalists are:

- **Rest.** (UCLA) – an online marketplace that helps consumers with simple estates connect with trusted providers for estate planning and execution support.
- **OxyGen** (Johns Hopkins) – a medical technology company bringing 1.6 million Americans on ambulatory long term oxygen therapy (LTOT) a more efficient portable oxygen concentrator (POC).
- **Oh Shoot** (Tulane) – a two-sided platform that matches students who are in need of high quality, convenient and guaranteed services with trained students who are looking for flexible ways to make supplemental incomes on campus.
- **360VR Technology** (University of Delaware) – a technology company whose flagship product is a web-based, critical building information platform for emergencies and operations.
- **Relavo** (John Hopkins) – a medical device company addressing shortcomings in home-based treatment systems such as peritoneal dialysis (PD), a modality of treatment for end-stage renal disease (ESRD).
- **Fastpoke** (Tulane) – a tech company that provides a human-focused platform for top headhunters and professionals to connect.

For more information about this year’s Tulane Business Model Competition, please contact Emily Egan, Lepage Center director of strategic initiatives, at 504-865-5462 or eegan@tulane.edu.