

# VVM Accelerator Program Awards \$252,000 to Diverse Cohort of Startups

*Winners Prepared and Connected for Significant Growth*

SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS, UNITED STATES, June 1, 2016 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Twelve competing startups were awarded a total of \$252,000 in prize money at a spirited VVM Accelerator Awards ceremony held on Thursday, May 26 at the Mass Mutual Center in downtown Springfield, MA. About 550 people attended.

Valley Venture Mentors (VVM) Accelerator Program is an annual four-month intensive boot camp that prepares high-potential startups for serious growth. In only its second year, this year's cohort of 35 teams was selected from over 200 applicants. The startups were 50% female-lead and 36% minority-lead—an important diversity metric, well above national averages for business accelerator programs.

At the close of the boot camp, the 35 startups self-selected 12 finalists following a high-stakes pitch contest. On May 26, a cadre of angel investors and venture capitalists from New England and New York heard the finalists' pitches

and determined who got how much of the \$252,000. According to one investor, "These companies understood their businesses more than most seed stage companies I see."

Following is a full list of VVM Accelerator winners and how much they were awarded:

1. \$50,000 to [Celia Grace](#), a fair trade, ethical wedding dress purveyor that gives back & empowers women around the world.
2. \$45,000 to [Homebody Holistics](#), all-natural & handcrafted herbal cleaning solutions that are purely safe & clean with a conscience.
3. \$32,000 to [Scout Curated Wears](#), a designer, curator, and producer of thoughtful women's accessories.
4. \$21,000 to DaVinci Arms, a designer and manufacturer of industry leading firearms suppressors



and accessories for mission critical applications.

5. \$21,000 to Treaty, a nanotechnology company with its flagship product, FogKicker, a biodegradable anti-fog solution made from nanocellulose.
6. \$19,000 to Prophit Insight, a software company that helps healthcare providers identify and acquire unique sources of physician referrals to drive top-line growth.
7. \$18,000 to Livingua, an app that connects travelers to locals that know the language and the culture wherever and whenever they want.
8. \$15,000 to Name Net Worth, a



connective platform that leverages trusted relationships, to measure and strengthen a user's personal and professional networks.

9. \$9,000 to iRollie, a niche market phone case manufacturer and online retailer with its flagship product, the rolling tray phone case.
10. \$9,000 to NEED/DONE, instant help for kids and home from people your parent network trusts.
11. \$7,000 to Sumu, helping you find and secure your next home.
12. \$6,000 to Anycafé, a company striving to develop hot beverage solutions for the future.

But prize money is just the beginning. These winning teams have the knowhow and connections to take their businesses to the next level. According to Paul Silva, VVM co-founder, last year's accelerator startups generated a total of \$10 million in revenue and investments and hired 220 employees (FTE). According to Silva, "The quality, depth and diversity of our participants and the industries they represent bode well for the future of opportunity in Springfield and throughout the region."

Valley Venture Mentors (VVM) is building, supporting and maintaining a community to launch an entrepreneurial renaissance. By nurturing startups, VVM impacts the employees they hire, the customers they serve, and the neighborhoods they revitalize. Everyone involved—VVM, startups, the mentors who guide them and the community—can give, get and grow.

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Dorota Glosowitz  
Valley Venture Mentors  
4132251223  
email us here

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