

# "Shark-Tank" Style Competition Supporting Tennessee Youth Led by The Patton Foundation

*Vanderbilt students are given 10 minutes to pitch their business ideas before a panel of seasoned entrepreneurs and live audience for up to \$5,000 in grants.*

NASHVILLE, TN, UNITED STATES, January 15, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Patton Foundation](#) is thrilled to start the New Year with the highly anticipated Patton Foundation Entrepreneurship Challenge (PFEC), hosted at Vanderbilt University. Aimed at fostering entrepreneurial literacy and innovation among Tennessee's youth, this "Shark Tank"-style competition offers students the chance to compete for grants of up to \$5,000.

Founded by [Tennessee native Spencer Patton](#)—the founder behind successful ventures such as Route Consultant, Patton Logistics, and Hello Truck Lease—the PFEC reflects his steadfast belief that entrepreneurship and small business leadership are vital to thriving local economies. In under a decade, Spencer grew his business from \$0 to over \$100 million, exemplifying the power of entrepreneurial spirit and perseverance.

The Vanderbilt PFEC will take place on January 23, 2025, at Featheringill Hall on Vanderbilt's campus. The event kicks off with an inspiring keynote address aimed at encouraging young entrepreneurs to pursue their dreams and overcome challenges. Following the keynote, finalists will present their business ideas during a 10-minute pitch, followed by a five-minute Q&A with a panel of seasoned entrepreneurs. Grants will be awarded to the top three participants:



**PATTON FOUNDATION**  
**ENTREPRENEUR CHALLENGE**

WINNERS OF THE PATTON FOUNDATION ENTREPRENEUR CHALLENGE

Name	Grant Amount	Category
M.J. BEARDEN	\$5,000.00	Caterers and Event Planning
LILLIAN DAWSON	\$2,500.00	Spencer Patton, Founder & President
ZUNIYAH + SANIJAH	\$1,000.00	Spencer Patton, Founder & President

**JANUARY 23, 2025**  
**6:00 PM - 8:00 PM**

**AT FEATHERINGILL HALL  
VANDERBILT CAMPUS**

Register at: [spencerpatton.com/foundation](https://spencerpatton.com/foundation)

 

Winners of The Patton Foundation Entrepreneur Challenge at Austin Peay University

First Place: \$5,000  
Second Place: \$2,500  
Third Place: \$1,000

To help students refine their pitches, the PFEC will include a workshop series offering real-world advice, resources, and mentorship from successful Tennessee entrepreneurs. These workshops empower students to succeed in a competitive business landscape.

Looking ahead, [the next PFEC challenge will be hosted at The University of Memphis](#), open to students statewide. Join Spencer Patton on January 24, 2025, at the Crews Center for Entrepreneurship to learn more about PFEC and prepare for the Memphis competition, scheduled for March 4, 2025.

Competitions like the PFEC foster a vibrant community of young innovators, creating an environment conducive to collaboration, creativity, and shared learning. Stay updated on PFEC events and announcements by visiting [spencerpatton.com/foundation](https://spencerpatton.com/foundation).

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Founder of The Patton Foundation Spencer Patton



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