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EARLY STAGE MT NAMES 7 REGIONAL TECH COMPANY WINNERS FOR SUMMER 2019

[Early Stage Montana](#), a nonprofit organization dedicated to accelerating the growth of the tech ecosystem in Montana, is pleased to announce the winners of three Regional Showcase Competitions held early this month in Missoula, Bozeman, and Billings. Dozens of entrepreneurs from around the state submitted applications for the competitions, and each business was assigned a score by a group of experienced judges. Seventeen of the highest scoring companies were chosen to present their business plans in front of an audience, and to a panel of judges who scored them on dimensions such as the size of the opportunity, the quality of the solution, leadership potential, and the likelihood of creating jobs here in MT. The results are in, and seven finalist companies are moving on to attend the 2019 Early Stage Montana HyperAccelerator program. The regional winners are:

- [DRIMS](#), a Missoula company, focuses on aiding disaster recovery programs around the world by offering a digital platform that streamlines communication and planning for all the various agencies involved with helping victims of natural disasters.
- [Charmed](#) is not your typical dating app. The Missoula-based company actually compliments numerous other dating services by leveraging artificial intelligence to provide messaging feedback and dating advice to individual users while they're searching for a potential mate.
- [Vision Aerial](#) from Bozeman, is building sophisticated drones to assist in the inspection process of public and commercial infrastructure.
- [Tadpull](#), a Bozeman company, offers a software platform to help mid-market, e-commerce companies improve their digital marketing, resulting in better insights and increased sales.
- [DugalHealth](#) is a Bozeman-based company working to transform the lives of those suffering from Type 1 diabetes with a software tool that helps individuals more closely track their eating habits by using machine learning tools that determine proper insulin dosages.
- [RavenCSI](#), a Billings company, is striving to help healthcare organizations improve customer retention and health outcomes by speeding up the feedback cycles from patients to administrators to caregivers.

There was also one company selected as a “wild card” entrant by members of the Board of Directors of The Montana High Tech Business Alliance. The wild card went to [MyShippingPost](#) a Butte company with software and tools to make shipping packages easier and less expensive.

As a next step, Early Stage Montana is providing these companies with a free, week-long intensive training program called “HyperAcclerator” from June 3–7. This unique opportunity provides finalists with the opportunity to work with over 50 highly-experienced business mentors on everything from their product strategy and sales plans to financial planning and fundraising strategies. The in-depth workshop will help the entrepreneurs sharpen their business plans, preparing them for faster growth so they can create quality jobs in our Montana communities more quickly than they might otherwise.

Seeing an increasing demand for program services, Early Stage Montana is expanding the opportunity for more entrepreneurs to receive mentorship by providing an additional HyperAccelerator program in September. Tech businesses who didn’t get to attend the Regional Showcase Competitions, or who need more time to prepare, will also have the chance to gain the coaching and training needed to grow. “Companies are much more likely to be successful if they have seasoned entrepreneurs and mentors helping guide them, avoiding the pitfalls that often cause businesses in the early stages of growth to stall and ultimately fail,” says Pat LaPointe, managing director of [Frontier Angels](#) and Board Chairman of Early Stage Montana.

Finally, on November 7, 2019 in Missoula, ten finalist companies will gather at the 2nd annual Early Stage MT Statewide Showcase to compete for a \$50,000 investment provided by Frontier Angels. The Statewide Showcase is a celebration of Montana’s tech ecosystem. Entrepreneurs, mentors, investors, and community leaders join together with distinguished guests from all over the Western US in helping these companies accelerate their pathways to growth and job creation within our communities. More information on ticketing and location for The Statewide Showcase coming soon.

According to LaPointe, “Because of the training and visibility they got from participating in Early Stage MT, last year’s top 7 companies went on to raise over \$6M in growth capital so far and have already created over 20 jobs in our ecosystem. We have equally high expectations for this group and more, given that we’re expanding to accommodate more companies this year.”

Early Stage MT is a collaboration of a broad group of organizations across Montana, including:

- 406 Labs in Bozeman
- Big Sky Economic Development in Billings
- Blackstone LaunchPads at both Montana State University and the University of Montana
- Frontier Angels
- Missoula Economic Partnership
- Montana Chamber of Commerce
- Montana Governor’s Office of Economic Development

- Montana High Tech Business Alliance
- Montec in Missoula
- Next Frontier Capital
- Prospera Business Network in Bozeman

For more information, contact [Pat LaPointe](#), Board Chairman of Early Stage MT.
Access photos [here](#).