

Syracuse University Startup SparkCharge is a Finalist in 43North \$5 Million Competition

43North has announced 18 finalists for its 2018 \$5 million startup competition. One was created at Syracuse University. SparkCharge founder and CEO Josh Aviv '14, G'17, will compete against competitors hailing from across North America in two rounds of live pitching at Shea's Performing Arts Center in Buffalo on Oct. 3 for a shot at one of 43North's eight cash awards, which include a \$1 million grand prize and seven awards of \$500,000.

The finalists in one of the world's largest business plan competitions represent top companies in life sciences, B2B tech, consumer products and clean tech/manufacturing. They were selected from 485 applications.



Josh Aviv '14, G'17

SparkCharge “launched” from the Blackstone LaunchPad at Syracuse University to acceleration stage as part of Techstars in Boston. SparkCharge developed a portable, ultrafast charging unit for electric vehicles that fits in the trunk of a car and charges

at level 3 speed, giving users one mile every 60 seconds. Aviv developed and launched the company as a student at SU. R&D operations for the company are based at the *Syracuse Center of Excellence in Environmental and Energy Systems (SyracuseCoE)*, led by CTO Christopher Ellis and lead systems engineer Richard Whitney.

The company has achieved significant milestones, growing from a college student's idea to an award-winning company that has won many awards, including the grand prize in the 2017 New York State Business Plan Competition.

SparkCharge has raised institutional funding and is now rapidly scaling. The company's latest investment round closed in spring 2018.

Supporting SparkCharge's growth is PJC, a Boston-based venture capital firm that focuses on consumer and enterprise technology investments. PJC takes an active approach to building market-leading companies with innovative founders and serial entrepreneurs. The firm and its partners have backed market-leading companies across multiple industries such as Nest Labs, Yandex, Expensify and GetWellNetwork.

The 43North Finalists for 2018:

- AXIS is developing a retrofit solution for motorizing window shades; the company developed Gear, a smart device that motorizes and automates any existing window shade in minutes. Hometown: Toronto
- Capti is reinventing reading to enable authentically inclusive education. Its mission is to empower people to process information more effectively. The company's product is Capti Voice—a reading assistant for students of all abilities that helps students keep up with their reading. Hometown: Stony Brook, New York
- Dimien is a growing business dedicated to solving clear, defined market challenges in cleantech by leveraging chemical manufacturing routes to unique compounds that provide its strategic partners with a competitive advantage in the market. Hometown: Buffalo
- Forsake designs all-weather boots and sneakers for travel and adventure. Hometown: Boston
- HiOperator provides customer service-as-a-service. HiOperator helps companies overcome the classic challenges of customer service through a combination of automation, technology and amazing people. Hometown: San Francisco
- Immersed Games helps teachers deliver hands-on, Next Generation Science learning—with a video game! The game, Tyto Online, builds science and engineering skills with student experiences like solving an invasive species problem, building ecosystems and breeding dragons. Teachers assign standards-aligned content and receive student assessments based on gameplay. Hometown: Gainesville, Florida

- Innovative Wellness Systems is a biomechanical footwear, technology and data analytics company. The IWS team has more than 30 years of footwear, technology and medical experience to provide smart solutions for health and wellness problems as an integral part of the mobile health ecosystem. Hometown: Dover, Massachusetts
- Kickfurther is the world's first inventory crowdfunding platform where anyone can support the growth of brands they love. Hometown: Boulder, Colorado
- LegWorks is a social enterprise revolutionizing access to high-quality prosthetics for amputees. The company believes every amputee, no matter where they live, has the right to walk with confidence. LegWorks designs, manufactures and distributes innovative and patented prosthetic technologies, and uses a tiered-pricing model to serve diverse patients globally. Hometown: Buffalo
- Magnusmode leverages mobile technology to help people with autism and cognitive special needs live with greater inclusion and independence. The company's flagship product, MagnusCards, helps people worldwide to learn life skills (e.g. cooking, traveling, personal care) through partnership with content-producing customers, including Colgate, CIBC, A&W and Toronto Pearson Airport. Hometown: Waterloo, Ontario
- MF Fire is a team of fire scientists engineering the perfect wood stove. The company's MIT-award-winning, app-driven, smart wood stove delivers the cleanest burn ever achieved. MF Fire re-imagined wood stoves as clean energy sources and created smart technology that's up to 60 times cleaner, releases 30 percent less CO2 and achieves 90 percent real-world efficiency. Hometown: Baltimore
- NaturAll Club uses food technology to offer the first hair products on the market made from fresh ingredients like avocado pulp, bananas and coconut creme. NaturAll Club connects customers with the right hair ingredients using an algorithm quiz on its eCommerce site. Hometown: Philadelphia
- Routeique synchronizes supply chains. The company align partners, large and small, to enable data and product to flow seamlessly from partner to partner. From the largest manufacturers to their networks of distributors, to retailers large and small, Routeique ties them all together into a single, harmonious system, improving profitability along the way. Hometown: Vancouver
- Rozzy Learning Company is a subscription-based software company that sells digital education materials with a focus on STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) and careers. In 18 months, the company signed up more than 400 schools, generated over \$300,000 in revenue, and retained 98 percent of its clients. Hometown: St. Louis

- Savormetrics is a technology leader in Artificial Intelligence-driven, portable sensing devices that provide businesses in the food sector with meaningful food safety and quality metrics. Savormetrics helps food processors, grocery chains and grain elevators reduce shrinkage costs due to spoilage, regulatory issues and out-of-spec recalls. Hometown: Mississauga, Ontario
- SparkCharge offers a portable electric vehicle charging unit that is small, ultra fast and modular. Since the chargers are compact, they can be delivered to an EV owner on demand via Uber, Lyft or AAA. This creates a mobile on-demand charging infrastructure allowing electric vehicle owners to have their cars charged ultra fast anywhere. Hometown: Syracuse, New York
- Touchjet is a unified collaboration platform with hardware, software and a SaaS business model transforming how people collaborate digitally in meeting rooms and classrooms. The company's solution is cost effective to enable large touchscreen interactivity with mobile integration and cloud services for people to share content and collaborate. Hometown: Campbell, California
- Water Hero is an IoT device that allows individuals to control water with their smartphone. The user gets real-time water usage information. A user can turn water on/off remotely, and if a pipe breaks in the user's house, Water Hero automatically shuts off the water and sends the user a text. Hometown: Beverly, Massachusetts

More about the competition:

43 North is funded by New York State and supported by sponsors such as the New York Power Authority. As of September 2018, 43North's portfolio of 37 companies achieved a combined \$108 million in outside investment, and conservative estimates place the portfolio's total valuation at \$332 million, an increase of more than \$300 million since 43North's inception in 2014. These startups are collectively responsible for more than 250 full-time jobs based in Western New York, with new hires added nearly every day.

Those interested in attending this year's finals are encouraged to reserve their seats now through 43North.org, the Shea's Performing Arts Center box office and [Ticketmaster](https://www.ticketmaster.com). Details on the event are below:
43North Finals

Wednesday, Oct. 3

6-8:30 p.m. (Doors open at 5 p.m.)

Shea's Performing Arts Center, 646 Main St., Buffalo