

Consortium of Private and Public Industries Award Innovators Co-Creating Solutions to Curb Opioid Epidemic in New York

New York, New York – October 9, 2018 – In partnership with the State of New York, Northwell Health, the Office of the Staten Island Borough President, Columbia Engineering, and Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health, the Consortium for Affordable Medical Technologies (CAMTech) at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) convened over 200 people at the Empire State Opioid Epidemic Innovation Challenge on September 28-30, 2018 to co-create solutions to curb the local and national opioid epidemic.

The Challenge Summit on September 28, 2018 gathered clinicians, government representatives, public health experts, the private sector and affected community members to facilitate a discussion of challenges and provide critical insight into the opioid epidemic. The Challenge Summit included Keynotes from Staten Island Borough President James Oddo, New York Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul, NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) Commissioner Arlene González-Sánchez, Dr. Ram Raju, Senior Vice President of and Community Health Officer at Northwell Health and First Deputy New York City Police Commissioner Benjamin Tucker.

“The Empire State Opioid Epidemic Innovation Challenge brought leaders and experts together to create and discuss solutions to combat the epidemic,” said Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul, who attended the event. “As the opioid crisis continues to impact communities across New York and the country, we’re committed to putting forward investments in resources needed to save lives. We will not stop fighting to prevent addiction, expand treatment services, and help those in recovery. We must end this epidemic and break the cycle of drug abuse once and for all.”

“The State of New York is actively engaged in developing new initiatives that respond and react to the opioid crisis,” said Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services Commissioner Arlene González-Sánchez. “The Empire State Opioid Epidemic Innovation Challenge succeeded in turning out the best minds from across the state to co-create innovative solutions with the potential to reverse the opioid crisis and save many lives. I congratulate the winners and all participants for committing their time and efforts to help us fight this epidemic.”

Emceed by Erin Billups, Health Reporter from NY1, the Challenge Summit also included 20 panelists discussing the scope of the opioid epidemic, prevention, treatment and recovery. Linda Ventura of Thomas’ Hope Foundation, Avi Israel of Save the Michaels Foundation, Carlee Hulsizer of Youth Voices Matter and Stephanie Campbell of Friends of Recovery New York shared personal stories as individuals and families affected by the opioid epidemic.

“I’m so pleased to see this event come to life and be such a success,” said Staten Island Borough President James Oddo. “We recruited talented individuals with hard-to-find skill sets to help us add options to the toolkit we use to tackle the opioid epidemic. We are eager to see how these promising innovations progress and hope to apply the best of them on Staten Island. Thanks again to the Governor’s Office, NYS OASAS, Northwell Health, Columbia University’s Public Health and Engineering

Schools—and most importantly our organizing entity that made this all possible—CAMTech at Massachusetts General Hospital, for working with us to turn this idea into reality.”

Following the Challenge Summit, the Solutions Sprint on September 29-30 served as an open-innovation platform for a diverse community to co-create innovations over a 48-hour period. Participants with diverse backgrounds and skill sets pitched 40 challenges related to the opioid epidemic and formed 12 cross-disciplinary teams to solve for these needs. Teams practiced pitches with 23 mentors before final presentations to a cross-disciplinary panel of expert judges, which included Steve Hanson of NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), Patrice Wallace-Moore of Armes Acres, Dr. Joshua Sharfstein of Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health, Dr. Elizabeth Hillman of Columbia University School of Engineering, Udai Tambar of Northwell Health and Alan Batkin from the Board of Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health.

Award Winners

- **Empire State Opioid Epidemic Innovation Award – Team Random Access Network (RAN):** Stephanie Campbell (Friends of Recovery New York), Tim Cheney (Faces and Voices of Recovery), Maureen Farrell, Richard Isaacs (Ammerge), Liya Lomsadze (Northwell Health) and Michael Rand (Teachers College at Columbia) received \$2,000 for innovating a network that aims to change culture in emergency departments, standardize emergency department protocols for substance use disorder and engage patients using peers and linkages to services.
- **Northwell Health Innovation Award – Team Recover-We:** Angela Kedzior (Bowery Resident’s Committee), Carlee Hulsizer (Youth Voices Matter), Carol Michelle Hulsizer (Mission Recovery Hope), George Chao (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Gautham Harinarayan (Columbia University), Kevin Chen (Yale University School of Medicine) and Wendy Lin (United States Agency for International Development) received \$1,500 for innovating real-time, personalized peer support that connects peers with local resources via integrated search engines.
- **CAMTech Innovation Award – Team Quick Reversal:** Asher Varon (Columbia University) and Morgan Cambareri (Columbia University) received \$1,000 for innovating an intranasal patch that detects serious respiratory depression and automatically releases Narcan to prevent opioid overdose.
- **Opioid Epidemic Design Award – Team Addiction Recovery Kit (ARK):** Avi Israel (Save the Michaels Foundation), Julie Israel (Save the Michaels Foundation), Linda Ventura (Thomas’ Hope Foundation), Ben Beck (ELEVEN), Kara Rodecker (ELEVEN), Ryan Donovan (ELEVEN) and Malory Johnson (ELEVEN) received \$500 for innovating an integrated kit that consolidates and streamlines existing prevention, treatment, and recovery tools.

All 12 teams are eligible to compete for the \$10K grand prize and 6 months of acceleration support through the [CAMTech Accelerator Program \(CAP\)](#) at the Empire State Opioid Epidemic Demo Day on January 31, 2019.

“The people in this room have voted with their feet and are passionate about this issue,” said Dr. Kristian Olson, Director of CAMTech. “What’s important is that each of us bring our own life experiences and skill sets to help co-create solutions in response to the opioid epidemic.”

Through cross-disciplinary collaboration, mentorship and award incentives, teams fostered ideas into novel innovations with the potential to curb the local and national opioid epidemic.

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