

PNC Recognizes Student-Entrepreneur Winners of 2024 PNC North Carolina HBCU Pitch Competition

GREENSBORO, N.C., Feb. 7, 2024 – PNC today hosted the second PNC North Carolina HBCU Pitch Competition, with student-entrepreneur Tyshawn Adams representing Fayetteville State University placing first. Adams will receive a \$3,000 cash prize for his pitch, *TimeCRFT*, the mission of which is “to empower students to experience college at their highest potential through cognitive restructuring, behavioral activation and accountability techniques with groundbreaking education-technology solutions.”

Students representing Winston-Salem State University and Elizabeth City State University finished in second and third place, respectively. Vinsha Torain will receive a \$2,500 cash prize in recognition of her pitch, *Torain Ranch Trail Ride Club*. Receiving third place and a \$1,500 cash prize was James Spence III for his pitch, *3o7am*.

Today’s competition builds on the February 2023 inaugural [PNC North Carolina HBCU Pitch Competition](#) and the February 2022 launch of the PNC North Carolina HBCU Initiative, an effort designed to enrich the future of entrepreneurship and workforce opportunities for students at the five N.C. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) represented today: Elizabeth City State University, Fayetteville State University, Johnson C. Smith University, North Carolina Central University and Winston-Salem State University. As announced in 2022, a total of more than \$2 million in grant funding from PNC Foundation is being awarded to these institutions over a three-year period to support the development and delivery of entrepreneurship resources and programming.

“Today’s competition delivered a platform for student-entrepreneurs to demonstrate their skills, showcase their innovative work and take inspiration from peers,” said Venus Myles, senior vice president and PNC Community Development Banking market manager for the Carolinas. “But just as importantly, it provided a meaningful occasion to recognize and celebrate the rich tradition – and future – of innovation and leadership at HBCUs throughout North Carolina.”

The competition was held at the International Civil Rights Center & Museum in Greensboro. Throughout the day, the 15 student participants engaged with national and regional PNC executives, including Richard Bynum, PNC chief corporate responsibility officer; Weston Andress, PNC regional president for Western Carolinas; Jim Hansen, PNC regional president for Eastern Carolinas; and Monica Burch, PNC Community Development Banking Southeast territory executive.

Prizewinners were selected from an entrant pool of ten student-entrepreneur teams by a multi-disciplinary panel of judges including Michael Dwomoh, Ph.D., internal audit director, PNC Bank; Tiffany L. Jones-Boyd, area development director, UNCF; Madison Potter, business solutions officer, Carolina Small Business Development Fund; and Ben Redding, chief financial officer, NC IDEA.

Participating teams, which were selected by their respective institutions, were evaluated today on the quality and clarity of content, feasibility and long-term prospects for the viability and success of the concept or solution pitched, organization and ‘wow’ factor of the presentation and responses to judges’ questions.

The PNC Foundation, which receives its principal funding from The PNC Financial Services Group (www.pnc.com), actively supports organizations that provide services for the benefit of communities in which it has a significant presence. The foundation focuses its philanthropic mission on early childhood education and community and economic development, which includes the arts and culture. Through PNC Grow Up Great®, its signature cause that began in 2004, PNC has created a bilingual \$500 million, multi-year initiative to help prepare children from birth to age 5 for success in school and life.

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