



# INNOVATION CELEBRATION

*Recognizing the entrepreneurial spirit  
on campus and in the community.*

Welcome to the  
14th Annual Awards + Showcase

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Friday, March 29, 2019 | 5:30-8:30 p.m. | Parkland College

[innovationcelebration.com](http://innovationcelebration.com)



## About Innovation Celebration

Innovation Celebration provides recognition of those individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions, taken risks, and provided leadership to ensure the continuing economic success of Champaign County, the ongoing success of the University's economic development mission, and the growth of entrepreneurial talent and energy in our community.

Innovation Celebration is not merely an award for accomplishment, but a benchmark of success for those outstanding individuals, organizations and corporations who are nominated and selected to receive this prestigious award.

Innovation Celebration is hosted by the Champaign County Economic Development Corporation in partnership with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Parkland College, and community sponsors.



# Agenda

**5:30 – 6:30 p.m.**

**Food, Drinks, Networking, Company Demos, & Music**

**6:30 – 7:45 p.m.**

**Opening Remarks & Award Presentations**

## **Opening Remarks**

Carly McCrory, Executive Director – Champaign County EDC  
Stephanie Stuart, Vice President for Communications and External  
Affairs – Parkland College

## **Master of Ceremonies**

Tim Hoerr, CEO – Serra Ventures

## **Award Presentations**

Innovation Transfer Award—University of Illinois

*presented by Dr. Susan Martinis, Interim Vice Chancellor for Research  
– University of Illinois*

Alexis Wernsing Innovation Award—University of Illinois

*presented by Dr. Susan Martinis, Interim Vice Chancellor for Research  
– University of Illinois*

Innovation in Engagement Award—Parkland College

*presented by Dr. Pamela Lau, Vice President for Academic Services  
– Parkland College*

Entrepreneurial Excellence: Social Venture Award

Entrepreneurial Excellence: Student Startup Award

Entrepreneurial Excellence: New Venture Award

Entrepreneurial Excellence: Paul Magelli Advocacy Award

Entrepreneurial Excellence: Management Award

Innovation: Economic Development Impact Award

**7:45 – 8:30 p.m.**

**Food, Drinks, Networking, and Music**

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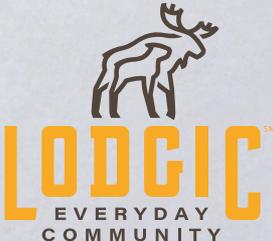
**CommunitySolutions**

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# University of Illinois: Innovation Transfer Award

*Recognizes an individual or group from the University of Illinois whose research has resulted in either a discovery or a work with the potential for significant societal impact.*

## Dr. Andrew Alleyne

### Thermosys™ / POETS Engineering Research Center

Dr. Andrew G. Alleyne is the College of Engineering Ralph M. and Catherine V. Fisher Professor and a Professor in the Department of Mechanical Science and Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is the director of the NSF Engineering Research Center (ERC) on Power Optimization of Electro-Thermal Systems (POETS). Previously, he served as the Associate Dean for Research for the College of Engineering at UIUC (2008-2012). Professor Alleyne received his B.S. in Engineering Degree from Princeton University in 1989 in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering. He received his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Mechanical Engineering in 1992 and 1994, respectively, from The University of California at Berkeley. His research interests are a mix of theory and implementation with a broad application focus. He has provided service to several industry, academic, and government boards including the U.S. Air Force's Scientific Advisory Board and the National Academies Board on Army Research and Development. He is being recognized for his work on dynamic modeling and control of complex systems, in particular the development of Thermosys™ and the establishment of the POETS ERC.

Thermosys™ is a suite of simulation tools for analyzing the behavior of air-conditioning and refrigeration systems (both steady-state and time-dependent). POETS has an ambitious, innovative approach to improving the power density of next generation electro-thermal systems integrating traditionally separate research efforts in mechanical, electrical, and materials engineering across different technical domains.



[thermosys.us](http://thermosys.us) / [poets-erc.org](http://poets-erc.org)

# University of Illinois: Alexis Wernsing Innovation Award

*Recognizes an individual or team from the University of Illinois that has channeled their experience living with a disability into positive change through the creation of new products, environments, or protocols that enhance quality of life.*

## Adam Bleakney

### Illinois Wheelchair Athletics

Adam Bleakney has served as the Head Coach of the University of Illinois Wheelchair Track and Road Racing team since 2005. In that time his athletes have won 44 medals across three Paralympic Games while setting 13 world records on the track, and have won the Boston Marathon, London Marathon, Chicago Marathon and NY City Marathon. In recognition of such performances, Adam has been named the USOC U.S. Paralympic Coach of the Year on three occasions ('07, '13, '16).

Since its inception in 1948, the Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services has sought to advance the educational, social, psychological, and vocational participation of persons with disabilities through the collaborative promotion, provision, and/or pursuit of innovative accommodative and educational services, and interdisciplinary disability research. DRES has a rich and storied history of programmatic firsts in interdisciplinary disability research, many of which resulted from the applied disability research and/or educational outreach of its faculty and staff.



[disability.illinois.edu](http://disability.illinois.edu)



[@adambleakney](https://twitter.com/adambleakney)



[facebook.com/UIUC.DRES](https://facebook.com/UIUC.DRES)

# Parkland College: Innovation in Engagement Award

*Recognizes an individual or group at Parkland College who has shown support of the college's community engagement mission.*

## Peg Boyce

### Dental Hygiene Program

A Cissna Park native and 1980 Parkland graduate, Peg worked as a dental hygienist for Dr. Russell Pitch in Paxton for 26 years. During 11 of them, she also worked part-time as a dental hygiene instructor at Parkland, while also raising her sons Luke, Micah, and Carter with her late husband Bud. She was also part of several mission trips caring for patients in Guatemala, India, and Ecuador. In 2007, Peg was named director of the Parkland program, where she takes pride in preparing hundreds of dental hygiene professionals as well as expanding the program's outreach to the local community.

The Parkland College Dental Hygiene program admitted their first class of dental hygiene students in 1968. Subsequently, over 1,050 students have graduated as dental hygienists. The program accepts 36 students each fall and the cohort progresses through the five semester curriculum. Students perfect their skills in the seventeen chair Dental Hygiene Clinic under the direction of licensed dental hygiene instructors and a clinical dentist. Students rotate through the Smile-Healthy Dental Center, provide oral health programs in the community, create interprofessional videos for educating other health professionals, and participate in volunteer clinics. The program is accredited through the Commission on Dental Accreditation.



[parkland.edu/Main/Academics/Departments/Health-Professions/Areas-of-Study/Dental-Hygiene](https://parkland.edu/Main/Academics/Departments/Health-Professions/Areas-of-Study/Dental-Hygiene)



[@parklandcollege](https://twitter.com/parklandcollege)



[facebook.com/pchealthprofessions.edu](https://facebook.com/pchealthprofessions.edu)

# Entrepreneurial Excellence: Social Venture Award

*Serve as change agents by creating and implementing sustainable solutions to reshape society, benefit humanity, and address social concerns.*

## The Land Connection

Founded in 2001, The Land Connection (TLC) envisions a community-based food system in which every farmer has the opportunity to grow food in a sustainable manner and every person has access to locally grown and produced foods. Their work starts with soil by educating farmers of all experience levels and interests in resilient, restorative farming techniques. TLC's work ends at the supper table by providing the Champaign Farmers Market as a space for local farmers to sell their product, but also where all people of our community, regardless of socioeconomic status, have access to locally grown and produced foods.

 [thelandconnection.org](http://thelandconnection.org)  [@LandConnection](https://twitter.com/LandConnection)  [facebook.com/TheLandConnection](https://facebook.com/TheLandConnection)

## New American Welcome Center at the University YMCA

In December 2016, the University Y was one of 18 YMCAs nationwide selected by Y-USA to pioneer the development of a New American Welcome Center (NAWC). New American Welcome Centers are designed to help immigrants fully integrate into American society and prepare receiving communities to be welcoming and inclusive. This is accomplished through a combination of integration services, collaborations with community partners, and strategies to connect and build cross-cultural understanding between immigrants and U.S.-born residents. Their efforts currently focus on facilitating a community-wide immigrant welcoming plan, community bridge-building activities, resource navigation services, legal services, and pathway to citizenship.

 [universityymca.org/welcome](http://universityymca.org/welcome)  [@UniversityYUIUC](https://twitter.com/UniversityYUIUC)  [facebook.com/ynawc](https://facebook.com/ynawc)

## Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center

The Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center is a grassroots organization committed to using media production and distribution as tools for promoting social and economic justice in the Champaign County area.

 [ucimc.org](http://ucimc.org)  [@UCIMC](https://twitter.com/UCIMC)  [facebook.com/ucimc](https://facebook.com/ucimc)

# Entrepreneurial Excellence: Student Startup Award

*Formed by students in the last three years and demonstrates a commitment to continuing success through entrepreneurial talent, creativity and energy.*

## RingWing, LLC

Since releasing RingWing® on March 15th, 2018, they have sold thousands of RingWing® gliders on their website and into 23 stores in 15 states. Aside from winning \$10,000 in cash and in-kind for having the best pitch at the Cozad New Venture Competition, they have also received \$15,000 in funding as a startup in the iVenture Accelerator at the University of Illinois. Now they are excited to soon launch new products while seeking more opportunities for RingWing®.



[CatchRingWing.com](http://CatchRingWing.com)



[@catchthewonder](https://twitter.com/catchthewonder)



[facebook.com/catchthewonder](https://facebook.com/catchthewonder)

## HexNest

HexNest is currently working to develop a type of gymnastics mat. Current mats respond to an impact the same way, no matter how you fall on it. This means that the athlete must choose the proper mat ahead of time to prevent their injury. Essentially, current solutions require the athlete to predict the unpredictable. HexNest's product reacts to how an athlete is falling and eliminates the guesswork. They are wrapping up R&D and are now starting to tackle manufacturing behind a team of five (spanning undergraduate to Ph.D. programs).



[hexnest.net](http://hexnest.net)



[facebook.com/hexnestmats](https://facebook.com/hexnestmats)

## DeepWalk

DeepWalk is using computer vision to help make complete wheelchair accessibility a reality. They are developing a mobile application that makes 3D models of curb ramps, then checks for compliance with Accessibility Standards for wheelchair users. Their product will allow any user to ensure that their property is accessible to everyone without hiring an expert. As a result, cities can plan to update inaccessible areas, business owners can check their property for compliance, and construction contractors can more efficiently design replacement ramps.



[deepwalkresearch.com](http://deepwalkresearch.com)

# Entrepreneurial Excellence: New Venture Award

*Formed in the last three years, and demonstrates a commitment to continuing success through entrepreneurial talent, creativity and energy.*

## AirScout, Inc.

AirScout was founded by 5th generation Indiana farmer, pilot, and inventor, Brian Sutton. He understands the challenges of field scouting and the devastation crop stress can cause for a farm family and their operation's profitability. Sutton noticed that when a corn crop is most vulnerable to problems, it's also the toughest to ground scout. The intervention window is very small and time is critical. His work over several decades of experimentation has resulted in a stunning breakthrough in agricultural aerial imagery, AirScout® Thermal™ Imagery.

 [airscout.com](http://airscout.com)  [@AirScoutInc](https://twitter.com/AirScoutInc)  [facebook.com/airscoutinc](https://facebook.com/airscoutinc)

## EarthSense, Inc.

EarthSense is creating advanced machine-learning and robotics products to manage urgent threats to agriculture such as herbicide resistant weeds. TerraSentia - the first ultracompact, autonomous, teachable robot created by EarthSense - is currently being used by leading crop breeders and plant scientists, to obtain unique high-value data about plant traits and health from under the canopy.

 [earthsense.co](http://earthsense.co)  [@EarthSense\\_Inc](https://twitter.com/EarthSense_Inc)

## SimBioSys, Inc.

Founded with the mission to empower precision medicine in Oncology, SimBioSys is committed to delivering technology that assists in clinical decision making. The company's software platform is powered by sophisticated biological computing that enables physicians to improve patient outcomes and lower costs. Their current solution integrates the comprehensive datasets collected during diagnosis into personalized virtual tumors, which act as platforms for computational scenario analysis. Simulations of the patient's 3D tumor comprehensively test a variety of drugs/therapies prior to the treatment decision, identifying which therapies show the best promise, and why a treatment will or won't be effective.

 [simbiosys.tech](http://simbiosys.tech)  [@SimBioSysInc](https://twitter.com/SimBioSysInc)

# Entrepreneurial Excellence: Paul Magelli Advocacy Award

*Actively engage, encourage, coach and mentor entrepreneurs in the community, and provide extensive support to help them achieve success.*

## Mark Aardsma

Mark Aardsma is founding investor and Managing Partner of First Leaf Capital. He previously founded three startups, and led them to success as CEO. He is an advisor to companies and their leaders, and his investments have consistently outperformed the market by wide margins. In 2016, his book, *Investing With Purpose*, was published. He is grateful for the opportunities entrepreneurship in America has afforded him, and he enjoys the triple win of 1) helping other entrepreneurs realize their visions, 2) backing products and services that benefit customers, and 3) earning superior returns on capital at the same time.



[firstleafcapital.com](http://firstleafcapital.com)



[facebook.com/FirstLeafCapital](https://facebook.com/FirstLeafCapital)

## Edwin Moore

Ed Moore has over 30 years of biopharmaceutical, pharmaceutical, and clinical diagnostic industry experience from global companies, Baxter Healthcare Corp and Abbott Laboratories, in R&D product development. In 2014, Ed co-founded BioPhia Consulting, Inc., with three others, and today the company has 20 science and technology subject matter experts in various areas of biopharmaceutical, pharmaceutical, and medical device product development. Ed also mentors startup companies at EnterpriseWorks, the University of Illinois incubator. Ed was a post-doctoral fellow at University of Michigan, has PhD in Biochemistry from Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, and received BS in Biochemistry from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



[biophia.com](http://biophia.com)

## Roland Garton

Roland Garton is President & Lead Consultant for Garton Consulting Services. He has over three decades of experience with grant development government contracting, program and financial management, training and documentation, and program administration. His work history includes the University of Delaware as a manager of educational computing; two small businesses in Champaign, Illinois working with computer-based training and software security; and scores of clients via his consulting practice.



[garcoserv.com](http://garcoserv.com)



[@RolandGarton](https://twitter.com/RolandGarton)

# Entrepreneurial Excellence: Management Award

*Demonstrates expertise in assembling resources, creating an organization, and working to build and implement effective action plans.*

## Landon Frye, Jake Kreider, and Sophie Roney - Granular, Inc.

Granular is an agriculture software and analytics company dedicated to helping agriculture leaders and farmers build stronger and smarter farms. With cloud, mobile and advanced data science technology, the Granular and AcreValue platforms make it easier to manage the business of farming and use data for critical decisions. Granular's rapidly growing network of farms in the U.S. and Canada is finding new ways to profit from aggregated data, expertise and market power. Headquartered in San Francisco, Landon Frye (Director of Business Development), Jake Kreider (Engineering Director), and Sophie Roney (former Talent Coordinator) were crucial in advocating for the company to open up their second office in Champaign and worked together to build out the local office and team, now up to 60+ employees (& growing).

 [granular.ag](http://granular.ag)  [@GranularAg](https://twitter.com/GranularAg)  [facebook.com/GranularAgriculture](https://facebook.com/GranularAgriculture)

## Shira Epstein and Dan Epstein - Champaign Outdoors / RuggedOutdoors.com

In 2010 Dan and Shira Epstein decided to follow their passion for the outdoors and purchased Champaign Surplus from Shira's parents. Dan and Shira combined their complimentary work skills and experience with climbing, hiking and backpacking to bring the 70 year old local outdoor specialty shop into the new era of retail. Since 2010, their efforts have grown the company over 400%. In 2018 the company undertook several major initiatives including the building of a brand new Champaign Outdoors brick-and-mortar retail store with companion attached outlet. Additionally, a new 20,000SF warehouse was outfitted to house ruggedoutdoors.com, the nation's leading, independently-owned eCommerce enterprise in the outdoor industry. Ruggedoutdoors.com was launched by Dan & Shira in 2014 as the Champaign Surplus national e-commerce presence.

 [champaignoutdoors.com](http://champaignoutdoors.com)  [ruggedoutdoors.com](http://ruggedoutdoors.com)  [@ChampaignOutdrs](https://twitter.com/ChampaignOutdrs)  [@RuggedOutdoors](https://twitter.com/RuggedOutdoors)  [fb.com/champaignoutdoors](https://fb.com/champaignoutdoors)  [fb.com/ruggedout](https://fb.com/ruggedout)

## James Langer - Serionix

Jim Langer received his B.S. in Chemistry (2002) from the University of St. Thomas, and after several years in pharmaceutical R&D, received a Ph.D. in Materials Science and Engineering (2012) from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). He cofounded Serionix in 2011 to commercialize high performance filtration materials for removal of toxic chemicals from air and water. Since then, he has built a scrappy, dynamic team and successfully directed business and technical development resulting in combined public and private funding in excess of \$4M.

 [serionix.com](http://serionix.com) / [colorfil.com](http://colorfil.com)  [@serionix\\_inc](https://twitter.com/serionix_inc)  [facebook.com/serionix](https://facebook.com/serionix)

# Innovation: Economic Development Impact Award

*Has made a significant economic development impact in the community and continues to demonstrate their commitment to Champaign County.*

## Small Business Incentive Program (City of Champaign)

Through their Small Business Incentive Program, the City of Champaign offers financial support to small businesses for a variety of eligible one-time expenses. Participants can request up to \$7,000 in matching funds for professional services or business expenses such as legal, financial and marketing services; education expenses; equipment purchases or other needs. This program is targeted at new and existing small businesses within the city limits of Champaign.

 [champaignil.gov/city-incentives](http://champaignil.gov/city-incentives)  [@champaigncity](https://twitter.com/champaigncity)  [fb.com/ChampaignCity](https://fb.com/ChampaignCity)

## Lodgic Everyday Community

Lodgic Everyday Community provides a creative hub for business, family, and personal growth through their restaurants, childcare center, workplace, and event hall. Everyday Kitchen's delicious twist on American classics are available to everyone, everyday. Clever Moose Market Café provides fresh, energizing food and drink with free wifi. Kids Camp features a fun, curriculum-based drop-in childcare center open nights and weekends for maximum flexibility. Workplace hosts coworking, office space and all the amenities to facilitate your professional growth. Event Hall creates a gathering place for everyone, whether for conferences or fun celebrations. And 100% of profits benefit children at Mooseheart Charities.

 [lodgic.org](http://lodgic.org)  [@LodgicChampaign](https://twitter.com/LodgicChampaign)  [facebook.com/LodgicChampaign](https://facebook.com/LodgicChampaign)

## Matt Cho (Cake Design Development)

Matt Cho specializes in collective mixed-use development in downtown Urbana. Using real estate as a vehicle for business incubation, Cake Design Development has provided infrastructure for numerous food/drink, retail, and media startups - which include: [co][lab], Cafeteria & Company, Sipyard, Broadway Food Hall, Analog Wine Library, Bento, King Kuma, Adjacency, and Urbanalove. Currently Matt is working on his next startup, which will focus on microhousing research, design, and fabrication. Prior to returning to his hometown in Urbana, Matt was an Associate for Booz Allen Hamilton in Washington D.C. and has obtained Master degrees in Architecture, Urban Planning, and Civil Engineering from the University of Illinois and a Masters in Information Systems and Bachelors in Bioengineering from the Johns Hopkins University.

 [facebook.com/cakedesigndevelopment](https://facebook.com/cakedesigndevelopment)



## Event Committee

**Carly McCrory**, Champaign County EDC

**Jordan Landeck**, Champaign County EDC

**Liz Kellner**, Singleton Law Firm (Committee Chair)

**Stephanie Larson**, University of Illinois-Technology Entrepreneur Center

**Nicole Nair**, University of Illinois-Office of Technology Management

**Stephanie Stuart**, Parkland College

**Laura Frerichs**, University of Illinois Research Park

**Laura Bleill**, University of Illinois Research Park

**Jenny Kim**, University of Illinois Research Park

**Dana Cohen**, University of Illinois - Office of Academic Human Resources

**Shawna Culp**, Pixo

## Special Thanks

**Amanda Baker**

**Five Foot Productions**

**Tim Hoerr**

**Parkland College**

**Brittany Heyen**

**Michaels' Catering**

**Anna Longworth:**

**Photography and Design**

**Dennis Beard**

**Jake & Jackson**

**InnSight Technology**

**Petronics (Sprite Robotics)**

**PSYONIC**

**Granular**

**PhotoniCare**

**RingWing, LLC**

**Parkland Entrepreneurial**

**Network (PEN)**

*This event would not be possible without the efforts of many who have taken time out of their busy schedules because they care about economic development in our community.*



# INNOVATION CELEBRATION

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If you are interested in sponsoring future Innovation Celebration events, please contact:

Champaign County Economic Development Corporation  
carly@champaigncountyedc.org  
217-359-6261

[innovationcelebration.com](http://innovationcelebration.com)