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## Shark Tank Meets Utah State

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# Shark Tank Meets Utah State

## News Warehouse

### Shark Tank Meets Utah State

By Ashley Brasseaux

USU Campus—Students in the Entrepreneur Leadership Series class gathered in the Eccles Conference Center on Wednesday April 1st to watch four fellow classmates pitch their business ideas to angel investors in Utah State's very own Shark Tank. As the students filed into class, the atmosphere was full of excitement for those pitching and hoping to win monetary prizes, mentorship, and the opportunity to be featured in Forbes Magazine. Aggie entrepreneurs knew this Shark Tank event could mean the difference between failure and success for their start-up businesses.

The night started with the introduction of the four sharks: Amy Rees Anderson, founder of MediConnect Global; Brad Oldroyd, founder and CEO of TeamONE Management Group; Paul Woodland, former CFO of Dryer's Grand Ice Cream; and Steve Peterson, general partner of Millrock Capital. The Sharks took their seats on stage and the competition began with Spencer Finch pitching his start-up, Rental On Me, a website that allows users to connect and rent their personal belongings. The idea of this website is to allow everyone to participate in experiences they might not otherwise be able to afford if they had to buy the equipment themselves. Finch said that he's had a variety of posts from hammocks and projectors to things as crazy as a \$100 magic show.

Next to take the floor was Seth Christensen, founder of Christensen Genetics. Seth works in the cattle industry artificially inseminating cows. Seth can make his profit by charging for the artificial insemination to impregnate the cows, leasing bulls, and by providing clients to buy the calves after they've been born. Seth has extensive experience with cattle, having worked with them since he was 11 years old. He entered the tank hoping the Sharks would invest in his company so he can buy a trailer to transport his bulls to the different locations of his clients.

The third entrepreneur of the night was Cody Pickering, founder of Align Boards, a skateboard company that manufactures skate decks made of aluminum. By using aluminum, the longevity of the board is prolonged as it can't be warped from the moisture or humidity that ruins the life span on a traditional wood deck. Cody's unique board design has specifically piqued the interest of Carver Boards, a skateboarding brand based out of California. Cody hoped to use the prize money to help with manufacturing costs to get his board to the market and onto Carver Board's website.

Danny Noall was the last entrepreneur to take the stage with his idea for a flavoring extension for a water bladder (such as CamelBak). Danny's product, Infuze is a flavoring system that attaches to the mouth piece of a water bladder and allows flavored concentrate to flow out of the mouthpiece at the same time as the water from the bladder of the pack. This allows the user to switch from water to flavor as desired, without leaving a flavor stain in the water bladder.

At the end of the night the Sharks gathered together to discuss monetary prize winners and the results were presented to the audience. The fourth place prize of \$500 was awarded to Spencer Finch for his company Rental On Me. Spencer is hoping to use the money to enter a few expos this year to market his website. The third place prize was awarded to Cody Pickering of Align Boards for \$1000. In second place, Seth Christensen was awarded \$1500 for his cattle insemination company Christensen Genetics. The first place prize of \$2000 was awarded to Danny Noall of Infuze. Infuze was also voted the crowd favorite. In addition to the monetary awards, Amy Anderson who writes for Forbes, announced that she would be writing an article that featured all four Aggie Entrepreneurs in her next piece for Forbes Magazine.

Congratulations to the Utah State students who have worked incredibly hard, and good luck as you continue to pursue your businesses.