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Healthcare Makerthon a Runaway Success!

By Kunal Mehta (http://entrepreneur.nyu.edu/blog/author/kunal-mehta/)

Thu (http://entrepreneur.nyu.edu/blog/2017/10/12/), Oct 12 (http://entrepreneur.nyu.edu/blog/2017/10/), 2017 (http://entrepreneur.nyu.edu/blog/2017/)

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The 3rd annual NYU Healthcare Makerthon culminated on October 9th with 12 cross-disciplinary teams presenting their disruptive solutions to address some of the most pressing challenges in healthcare today. Challenges ranged from combatting childhood obesity, telemedicine for congestive heart failure and kidney disease, to applying frontier technology to improving the antiquated ECG report. The Makerthon is a collaborative effort between the NYU Entrepreneurial Institute (http://entrepreneur.nyu.edu/about/) and NYU Langone Heath (http://nyulangone.org). Under the leadership of the Institute's Dee Dao and Langone Health's Dr. Paresh Shah, the initiative brings together clinicians along with engineering, design, policy and business students over a 48-hour period to develop innovative solutions to challenges identified by the Langone Health community. At the end of the weekend four winners were selected to receive a total of $10,000 in prizes along with the promise of continued startup training and support in the months to follow.

The Makerthon weekend kicked off with resounding praise and encouragement from NYU President Andrew Hamilton who said, *"If I were in venture capital today, I would look at New York University's investment in the Healthcare Makerthon and its teams as a runaway success. NYU and the medical community benefit from the ideas and experiences gained over this weekend."* The success to which President Hamilton alluded to was Levitas (http://entrepreneur.nyu.edu/blog/2017/07/21/levites-wins-nyu-yale-pitchoff/), a healthcare startup venture conceived during the 2016 Makerthon that is reducing the risk of patient falls through wearable devices. Levitas now has active pilots across New York City health facilities, and was the winner of the NYU-Yale Summer Accelerator Pitchoff (http://entrepreneur.nyu.edu/blog/2017/07/21/levites-wins-nyu-yale-pitchoff/) this past summer.

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Dr. Nedal Shami (CAS '00), co-founder & Chief Strategy Officer of CityMD

In the spirit of promoting entrepreneurship and the often grueling challenges associated with building a company, over a hundred aspiring entrepreneurs packed into Kimmel to hear from Dr. Nedal Shami (https://www.linkedin.com/in/nedal-shami-1b716923/) (CAS '00), co-founder and Chief Strategy Officer of CityMD (https://www.citymd.com). Shami foreshadowed the weekend ahead by sharing his own experience of building CityMD. *"Mistakes will be a part of this process. It is supposed to be messy. Don't try to figure it all out at once."* Shami went on to say that the success of CityMD has been generally guided by its core principles of intimately understanding the problems faced by the customer and constantly reimagining what the ideal experience for a patient could be. Dr. Paresh Shah, the Chief of Surgery at Langone Medical Center, presented the challenges and talked about the disconnect that has typically existed between technology and medicine. *"The problem with healthcare and hackathons is that everyone brings a hammer to search for a nail to bang on. Instead, we have gone to the frontlines to find out what problems exist and are now showing you the opportunities that you all can solve."*

content/uploads/2017/10/DSC_8341 1.jpg)
NYU President Andrew Hamilton

The five opportunities ripe for disruption included Wearables for Geriatric Patients, Telehealth, Reimagining the EKG, Tools for Clinical Nursing Care and Gamifying Nutrition to Combat Childhood Obesity. Over the weekend, teams worked diligently with mentorship from medical experts, entrepreneurs, designers and researchers, to prototype viable solutions that accounted for HIPPA laws, hospital purchasing decisions, cost, scale and impact. These solutions were presented to a panel of experts who ultimately awarded prizes of over $10,000 to four teams: **Heart 2 Heart**, **HealthHuddle**, **CardiaCare** and **Gware**.

(http://entrepreneur.nyu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/IMG_0584.jpg)If a primary goal of the Makerthon was to spur cross-school collaboration, the goal was amply achieved, if not exceeded. Makerthon weekend participants came from 12 schools across campus, with the most stemming from the Tandon School of Engineering, the College of Arts & Science, NYU Langone Health and the School of Medicine. Almost half of the participants were women, 43% of participants were graduate students, 30% were undergraduates, and 27% were NYU faculty, staff and clinicians. The Entrepreneurial Institute believes that teams with multi-disciplinary skillsets are a key indicator of success for startups. The four winning teams serve as an early proof point for this perspective, as each of the winning teams represented at least three different NYU school affiliations, while one team, Heart 2 Heart, boasted team members from five NYU divisions.

The Makerthon is one of many initiatives at the Entrepreneurial Institute to foster innovation across specific industry verticals. If you would like to learn about more opportunities such as this one or learn about other programs offered at the Entrepreneurial Institute, please visit our website (http://entrepreneur.nyu.edu/) and attend Startup School!

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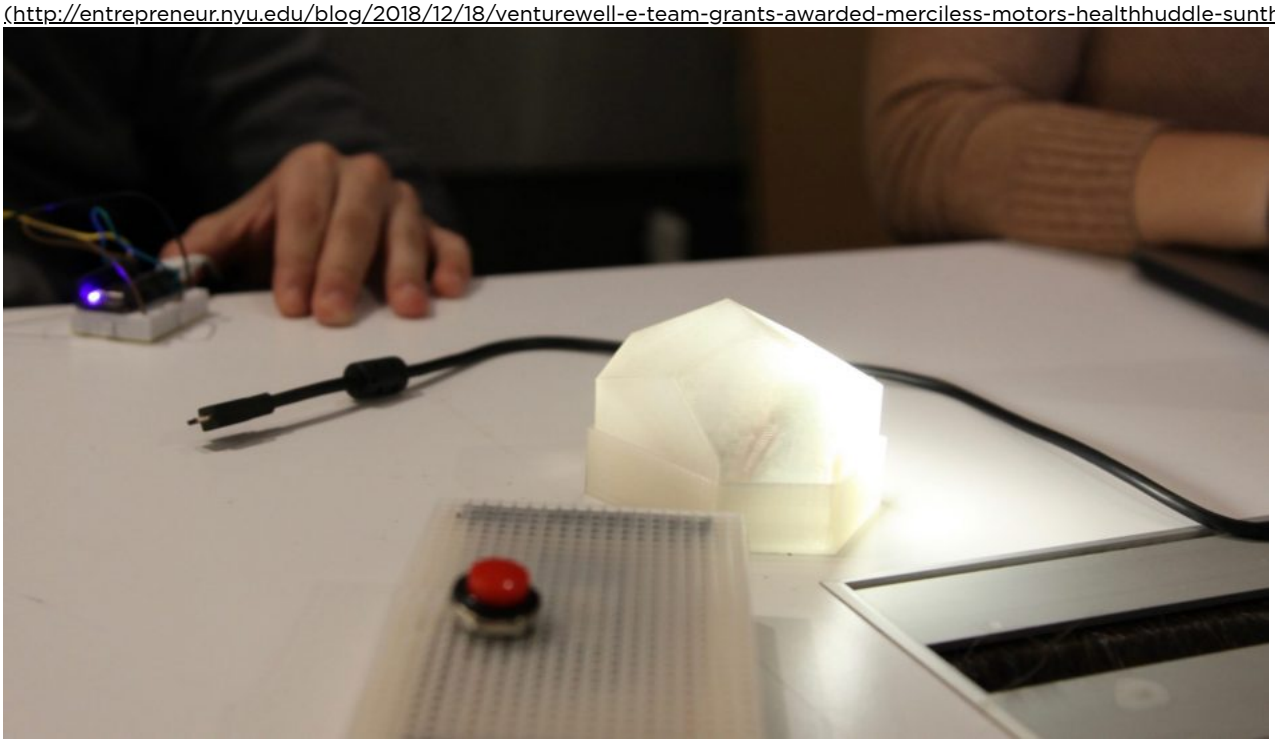

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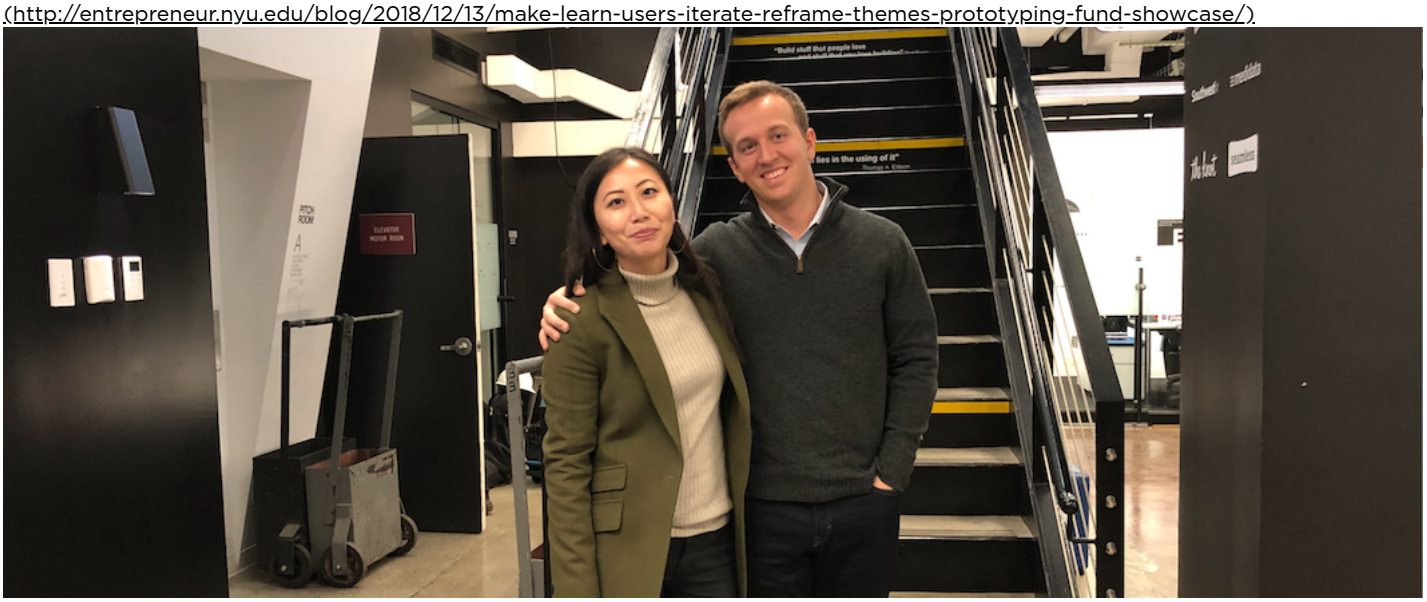

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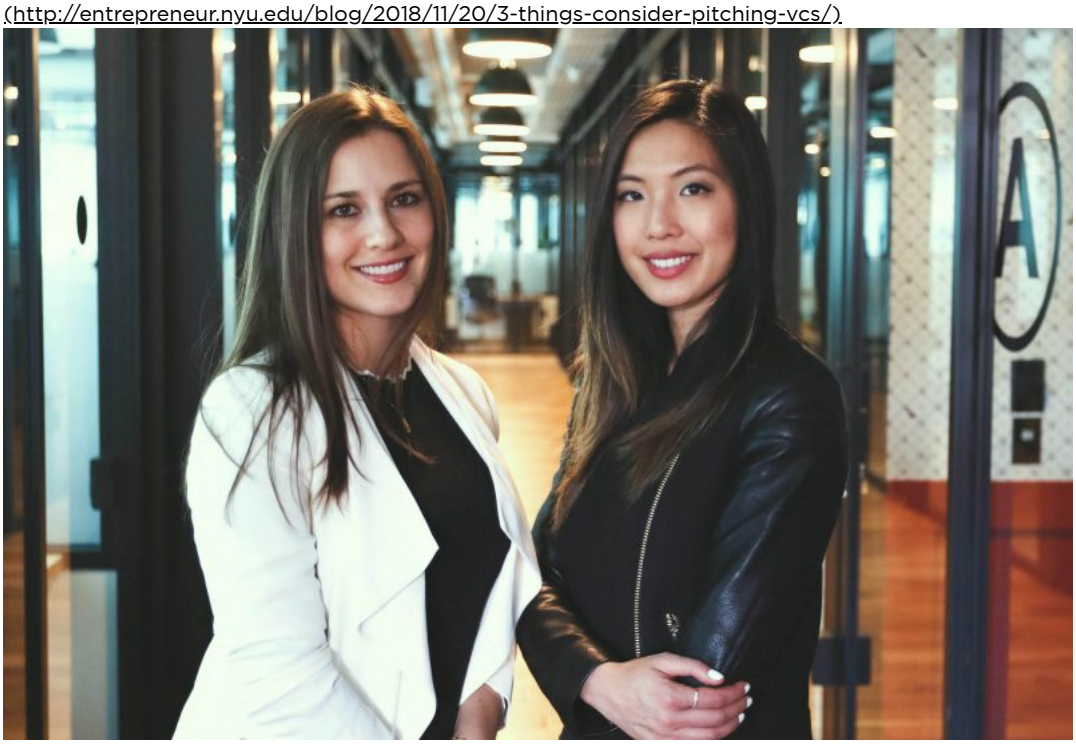

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