

43North contest narrowed to 113 entrants

Buffalo Armory Selected For Finals

By David Robinson | News Business Reporter – The Buffalo News
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The reduction of the 43North business plan competition to 113 semifinalists brought good news to local entrepreneurs Teo Balbach and John Batiste, who learned they had advanced to the next round.

Trimming the field down from the contest's more than 2,600 qualified entries brought bad news to almost 2,500 others, including East Aurora inventor Robert "Bud" Duthie, who learned that his venture to make emergency water treatment systems didn't make the cut.

For the surviving entrants, like Balbach, the chief executive of sports performance data tracker CoachMePlus, making the contest's semifinals keeps his hopes alive that the Buffalo startup could walk away with one of 11 prizes, ranging from \$250,000 to a top prize of \$1 million.

"I was exceedingly happy to be chosen," said Balbach, who would use the prize money to make a scaled-down version of his 11-employee company's software, now used by professional sports teams and major colleges, for use by smaller colleges and schools that don't require as much information as its pro clients. CoachMePlus, part of the Z80 Labs business incubator in Buffalo, already has raised \$1 million from investors.

Batiste, a retired U.S. Army general who now is president of Buffalo Armor, an eight-employee business that makes a more advanced type of armor for military and commercial use, also was pleased, especially since more than 6,900 entrepreneurs initially entered the contest. Making it to the final 113 companies was an accomplishment in itself.

"I think we've got a pretty special thing going, but there was a lot of competition," said Batiste, who would use the prize money to fund further development of his company's armor products and expand production.

Most of the competitors didn't make it to the semifinals. Duthie, whose water treatment system could be used to remove contaminants from water used in natural gas wells that are hydraulically fractured, said he wasn't surprised his venture didn't make the semifinals. He thinks the state's moratorium on fracking may have worked against his venture.

The \$5 million in prizes being dangled by the 43North competition is part of an effort to bring promising new businesses to the Buffalo Niagara region through Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo's Buffalo Billion economic development initiative.

The contest's goal is to bring more entrepreneurs to the region, where a lack of entrepreneurs and new business start-ups has been identified by local development officials as a major shortcoming.

The contest's 11 prizes will go to entrepreneurs who the contest's judges deem to have the most promising plans for a new business. Eligible are early-stage ideas and businesses just getting started. Winners are required to start and operate their businesses in the region for at least a year.

The grand prize winner will get \$1 million, but six others will come away with \$500,000 each, and an additional four entrepreneurs will get \$250,000 apiece. At least one of the winners must be local.

In exchange for the money, the winners have to hand over a 5 percent stake in their businesses.

Winners also will receive rent-free space in an incubator site that will be part of the state's Start-Up NY tax-free zone, meaning that those businesses won't be subject to most state taxes and that employees won't have to pay state income taxes for 10 years. The winning firms also will be provided access to other resources and mentoring services to help them turn their ideas into viable businesses.

Three of every 10 businesses that made it to the semifinals – 34 in all – came from Western New York, contest organizers said.

Now that the semifinalists have been named, those businesses will be required to submit more-detailed information by mid-August about their business plan and financial projections.

Once that's done, organizers will evaluate them more intensely during 10-minute online presentations that will be held beginning in mid-August or September. Those sessions, which will not be available for viewing by the public but may be released later, also will include 10 minutes of questions by a panel of three judges selected for their expertise in the semifinalist's field, said Peter Burakowski, 43North's senior marketing manager.

After those presentations, the pool will be narrowed to a field of 11 finalists who will be guaranteed of receiving a prize, although the size of the award won't be determined until the final stage of the competition, which will take place from Oct. 27 to 31.

The 113 semifinalists:

AccuTheranostics – Buffalo	Adiabatic Solutions LLC – Tonawanda
Analytical Informatics – Baltimore	Artwork Evolution – Rochester
Asana Medical – Hialeah, Fla.	Asarasi, Inc. – Woodland Hills, Calif.
Attend LLC – Cazenovia	AudioStreamTV – New York
BioBots – Miami	BioNET Sonar – Buffalo
Boss Vaccination Medicine, Ltd. – Buffalo	Braverman Consulting – Rochester
Buffalo Armory LLC – Buffalo	CHAR Technologies – Mississauga, Ont.
Clerisy Corp – Pittsford	CoachMePlus – Buffalo
Codagenix – Blauvelt	COMAND Center, LLC – Buffalo
Contap – Boston, Mass.	Continuous Technology – Havertown, Pa.
CrowdBouncer – Buffalo	Cytocybernetics – Buffalo
Dhama Innovations Pvt Ltd – Jubilee Hills, India	Dimien LLC – Lancaster
Docugen – Buffalo	EcoBreeze – Taiwan
Empire Genomics, LLC – Rochester	Energy Harvesters LLC – Rochester
Energy Intelligence – Boston, Mass.	Eulysis UK Limited
EZCoaching LLC	FlowMed – Haifa, Israel
Genetesis LLC – Mason, Ohio	GoRightIn Corp – Toronto
Graphenix Development – Buffalo	Graphmasters AG – Switzerland
Green Machine Inc. – Buffalo	HarkerBIO – Buffalo
Health Care Originals – Rochester	HemoGenyx, LLC. – New York
HEVO Power – New York	HugHeart – Haifa, Israel

Hydrobee SPC – Seattle
Illuminating Diagnostics – Youngstown
Integral Information Systems, LLC. – Buffalo
iRemitt – Queens
KeepUp – New York
LifeGlo – New York
MagnePath – Perth, Australia
Medical Spotlight, LLC – Bryn Mawr, Pa.
Mindful Scientific – Halifax, Nova Scotia
MOG National LLC – Grand Island
MySky Aircraft – Port Orange, Fla.
Niagara Nuclear Frontier – Buffalo
Notabina – San Mateo, Calif.
Ogmenti – Israel
Our Ability–GlenmontOvitz Corp.–W.Henrietta
Precision Scientific Instruments (PSI™) – Buffalo
Project Alberta – Hamburg
QuaDPharma, LLC – Clarence
Refulgent Software LLC – Buffalo
Riddle Institute for Regenerative Medicine – Tomball, Texas
RMT-Epigenomex – Buffalo
Second Look Radiology – Charlottesville, Va.
Sensorcon – Buffalo
SmartDialysis – Rochester
Solstice Power – Manlius
SponsorPitch – New York
StealthForce – New York
syr.indi.care – Clarence
TeraPore Technologies, Inc. – Rochester
The Worldwide App, Inc. – Buffalo
TheraPeptides – Niagara Falls
Todos Medical – Israel
triMirror – Toronto
VetNOx LLC – Buffalo
WhateverComesNext – Lockport
Z Lens LLC – Slingerlands
iClinical – India
InfraSonic Monitoring – Vestal
Intugine Technologies Private Limited – Bangalore, India
Jammster – Latham
Laboratory Analytics, Inc. – Chicago
Lionano – Ithaca
Medical Conservation Devices, LLC – Batavia
Mezmeriz – Ithaca
Miranor – Haifa, Israel
MycroNews – Los Angeles
New York Protein Biologics – New York
Niche Video Media LLC – Cumming, Ga.
Novel Material Technologies – East Amherst
OnCore Golf Technology – Buffalo
Perception Analytics & Robotics LLC (Pearl)-AnnArbor, MI
Programmable Equipment Company LLC – Buffalo
Qidni Labs
Raland Therapeutics – Fairport
RIDAR Technologies – Israel
SavvyDox – Ottawa
SemanticMD – Pittsburgh
sluce.io – Mountain View, Calif.
SmarterPills – Buffalo
SoundBetter – New York
STC Architectural Products LLC – Buffalo
StylePuzzle – Champaign, Ill.
Talking Pictures – Stone Ridge
The Fourth Branch – Brooklyn
theBIKEproject – Toronto
TimberFish LLC – Buffalo
Track2Quit – Burlington, N.C.
Undercover Colors – Raleigh, N.C.
WeeeApp – Calistoga, Calif.
WhiteBox – New York