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Technology

Local entrepreneurs seeking funds to create reusable water bottle



Kyle Vaughan, one of the co-founders of Greatest Possible Good Technologies, pitched his company's reusable water bottle concept at MICA's Up/Start Venture Competition.

COLBY WARE



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Baltimore Business Journal

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IN THIS ARTICLE

Kenneth Wayman

Person

Kyle Vaughan

Person

Startups

Topic

Technology

Industry

A pair of local entrepreneurs just won \$35,000 in a pitch competition, and are looking to raise thousands more from crowd supporters to launch their business idea based around a water bottle that is reusable and easy to clean.

McDonogh School and University of Maryland alumni, [Kyle Vaughan](#) and [Kenneth Wayman](#), won funding to support production of a new kind of

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reusable water bottle, after pitching their idea in the Maryland Institute College of Art's recent IP/Start



market.

The Saqua bottle will be a reusable water bottle made of silicone, which can be turned inside out to enable full cleaning. Vaughan said the goal is to create a sustainable water bottle that is easier to keep clean than standard reusable bottles which can get "gunky" overtime and are often thrown out, "which defeats the purpose."

The bottle will be the first product to launch out of the startup company Greatest Possible Good Technologies. Vaughan said the co-founders plan to grow GPG into an operation that can support and incubate other business and product ideas aimed at "helping people and the planet."

"It was great to get a kind of vote of confidence from the Up/Start judges, it was really validating," Vaughan said. "With Saqua, we really want to create something that can be built for Baltimore, by Baltimore, that could bring jobs to the city and also really have a focus on sustainability."

Vaughan said ultimately he "would love to give Saqua to Baltimore," to spin off the bottle production operation and recruit a team of

Baltimoreans to own and run it. But first, he and Wayman have to get through the prototyping and production phases.

The company is talking with Pigtown's Harbor Designs and Manufacturing, Vaughan said, about partnering to produce the Saqua bottle prototypes. Harbor Designs has worked with other Up/Start competition winners in the past, including Danae Prosthetics, a firm that manufactures customized 3-D printed prosthetic covers.

Wayman and Vaughan plan to launch a Kickstarter campaign this summer to raise the rest of the funding needed to cover early expenses and production, which Vaughan said they estimate will be about \$170,000.

Crowdfunding campaigns, like through Kickstarter, are a common avenue for entrepreneurs to raise funds to support a consumer product. It allows firms to gauge potential market interest, and allows consumers to support a company or product they believe in and would like to see on the market. Vaughan said it also allows GPG to move forward with ideas, without having to give away equity in the company yet.

Other Baltimore-made consumer products that have garnered support through crowdfunded campaigns include MoJoe Brewing Co.'s portable coffee-making mug, and Barttron Inc.'s smart pet-training collar.

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