

# INCubatoredu students pitch inventions to local business panel

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Five teams of Union County High School entrepreneurship students came together recently to make their INCubatoredu MVP Pitches to a panel of local business people at the High School.

The Feb. 5 exercise focused on students showcasing their “Most Viable Product” in an attempt to convince real business people that their product is worth investing in. It’s all part of the Uncharted Learning entrepreneurship program.

UCHS partnered with Uncharted Learning a few years ago and adopted their entrepreneurship program called INCubatoredu. This is the third year UCHS has used the program.



UCHS students Sam Cockerham and Ian Clemmons presenting their medicated tourniquet under the company name Cara-Pax at a recent product pitch to local businesses.

Photo by Mark Smith

halfway through. Everyone is looking forward to their final pitch in May, where one of them might just walk away with a check to get their business off the ground.



Aaron Helton and Isabella Rosales showing off a skateboard tool to potential investors in their company known as Rei-Ki.

Photo by Mark Smith

“This program offers high school students an authentic entrepreneurship experience,” according to INCubatoredu.org. “In the year-long course, students have the opportunity to create and fully develop their own product or service.”

Josh Davis is the Career,

Technical and Agricultural Education director at the High School, and he says the program is a good way to “take the students through the lean start-up process, which is an entrepreneurship process, where they are trying to solve a problem in the world with a new product or service.”

Continued Davis, “So, it’s kind of an invention-type entrepreneurship program, and we have a lot of community support. All the community business people come in and help out and mentor the students, and they also teach portions of the curriculum to the students.

“And the students are on teams, for the most part, throughout the whole school year, and they work to create a product idea and they do a lot of extensive market research and financial projections to validate their business.

“Then they do this pitch today, kind of in the middle of the year, where they’re basically pitching the idea so far and getting feedback so that, now, they can implement it throughout the rest of the year.

“And they’ll do what’s called the ‘Final Pitch’ in May. They’re pitching to ‘sharks,’ kind of like the ‘Shark Tank.’ At the end of the year, they can actually win money to pursue their business. It’s a pretty good spin on entrepreneurship at the high school level.”

The “sharks” on the presentation panel were Cindy Odom of Moore Insurance Services and the Union County

School Board; Will Nelson of Nelson Tractor; David Hand of Orasi Software; Chris Wadle of Lamin-X; Joseph Goble of Advanced Digital Cable; and Ilke Lander of Paradise Hills Resort.

That’s a tough crew for anybody to stand in front of, but the students did a stellar job of demonstrating their products, presenting their research and standing their ground. And the students got a great deal of valuable feedback for their efforts.

Ian Clemmons and Sam Cockerham presented a medicated tourniquet and named their company Cara-Pax.

Aaron Helton and Isabella Rosales presented a skateboard tool and called their company Rei-Ki.

Hope Bright presented metal hurricane shutters on roller tracks and called her company Shutterlink.

Sky Martinez presented a portable miniature heating and cooling unit and called his company Peltair.

Ethan James, Justin Bryson and Zach Jackson presented a portable windshield defroster and called their company Frost-X.

And not only did the students present and demonstrate their prototypes, they also addressed sales projections, costs of materials and manufacturing, and net profits from operations.

At this point in the program, though, they’re only

## McKinney ...from Page 1A

Both Havard and Chamaty have cleared bond, which was set at \$50,000 apiece, according to Sheriff’s Office documents.

Also, four juveniles have been arrested in the case, starting with Blake Dickey, AKA Blake Dye, and Hunter Hill, who were taken into custody within hours of the murder of 33-year-old McKinney on Dec. 4, 2018, according to the GBI.

The other two juveniles – Dalton Levi Manuel and Lakota Ricky Cloer – were arrested in connection with the murder on Dec. 6, just two days after the crime, according to the GBI.

Dye, Hill, Manuel, Havard and Chamaty have all been charged with murder, and Cloer was charged with being a party to the crime of murder, according to the GBI.

Cloer has since pleaded guilty to two counts of aggravated assault and one count of criminal attempt to commit a felony, according to

court documents.

He was sentenced to 40 years, to serve 15 years behind bars, and he has agreed to serve as the state’s witness against his co-defendants in the case, according to court documents.

Details regarding the exact nature of the roles played by everyone charged in the McKinney murder are unclear at this time, though the GBI does not anticipate any further arrests in this case.

The original details of the case are as follows:

“On Tuesday, Dec. 4, 2018, at approximately 1:38 a.m., the Georgia Bureau of Investigation was requested to assist the Fannin County Sheriff’s Office with a murder investigation,” according to a GBI press release. “At approximately 12:50 a.m., the Fannin County Sheriff’s Office was dispatched to the area of Elrod Lane, Morganton, Fannin County, Georgia.

“Deputies were

dispatched to the area as a result of a 911 call in which the caller indicated she and a male subject were shot. When deputies arrived on scene, the male subject, McKinney, was deceased. The female, Anna Franklin, 35, of Morganton, was taken to the hospital for treatment.”

In mid-December, GBI agents and other state law enforcement officials went diving in Lake Nottely for evidence in the Dec. 4 murder case, according to the GBI.

Specifically, officials were searching an area of Lake Nottely known as The Cliffs, though Kim Williams, Special Agent in Charge of GBI Region 8, said she could not divulge any information about the evidence in question, including what it was or if they found it.

“We had a reason to be there, and we were out there looking for evidence as it relates to that case,” said Williams.

## Paris ...from Page 1A

welcome to come, it’s not just Seabees.”

Added Hunter, “It starts around 5:30 p.m. and last until around 11 p.m., so there’s plenty of stuff going on, a lot of prizes and giveaways. We have had a lot of donations from the community, but we are honored to receive this proclamation honoring the Seabees’ birthday.”

For more information or to inquire about tickets to the event, contact Hunter at 904-733-8698 or Ed Crenshaw at 706-379-3472.

Edd Frizzell of the VVA also spoke in the meeting.

“The reason I came here tonight is to talk about a mural project we have been working on and officially kick it off,” said Frizzell. “The reason I say officially kick it off is because we have been working on it for the last couple of years.

“We had a number of things that we needed to accomplish. One of them was to select an artist who would help us with the mural project. We selected Bob Dasher, a local artist here. We also had to determine what we were going to do and what we were going to represent on that mural.

“We decided that we would represent scenes from different wars that America has been involved in, but keep in mind that America has been involved with 79 wars, and we



Edd Frizzell of the Vietnam Veterans of America Blairsville Chapter 1101 detailing a plan to install a patriotic mural at Meeks Park.

Photo by Jarrett Whitener

can’t do all of them. So, we settled on the Revolutionary War, Civil War, World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and the current war going on in the Middle East.”

The mural will not depict the wars as battle scenes but will instead focus on the veterans of each war, according to Frizzell.

The organization plans to make the mural 200 feet long and 10 feet high, giving a large section for visitors to look at, as well as making room for other organizations that want to display their veteran monuments in the

same location.

“Thanks, Edd, and thanks to the group – they’ve worked long and hard on this project,” said Paris. “As with many projects, you always have a difference in ideas and solutions to those ideas and how it will all work out.

“I think in the end, everybody is going to be proud of this beautiful artwork that is going to be in our community, in our county for everybody to see, love and enjoy.”

County commission meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month starting at 6 p.m.