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Silicon Oasis

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Silicon Oasis Magazine

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR EDITOR

Kyle Macdonald
Editor-in-Chief,
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Silicon Oasis is at an inflection point. What started as a simple idea bringing **Arizona's** founders, investors, and builders into the same conversation has quickly become a statewide platform with real momentum. This month's issue reflects that shift.

Inside, you'll find a deep look at the companies shaping **Arizona's** next decade, from frontier tech and AI to consumer brands and clean energy. We highlight rising founders, new capital entering the market, and the ecosystem partners expanding the Valley's innovation footprint.

You'll also see updates from our Pillars, insights from our ambassadors, and features on the events that are pulling this community together—pitch nights, meetups, collaborations, and the growing lineup leading into the Silicon Oasis Summit.

Our aim is simple: to document what's happening, amplify the people driving it, and accelerate Arizona's emergence as a world-class tech ecosystem.

Thank you for building the Oasis with us. We're just getting started.

Kyle MacDonald
Co-Founder, Silicon Oasis

VISION & IMPACT

Transforming Arizona into a global tech hub led by local founders, built for the future.

Silicon Oasis is a nonprofit dedicated to uniting Arizona's tech ecosystem. Our mission is to strengthen the local innovation economy by bringing together founders, investors, and entrepreneurs—and by creating spaces where collaboration can thrive.

We do this in three key ways:

- Centralizing the Ecosystem through startup-focused events and practical workshops led by experienced builders and funders.
- Cultivating Community by fostering authentic, expectation-free connections that go beyond traditional networking.
- Spotlighting Talent with dynamic video podcasts and media that highlight Arizona's most promising innovators.

ONE YEAR IN — ALREADY BECOMING THE SIGNAL

How Arizona founders turned conviction into momentum.
By Josue Romero, Managing Editor

One year ago, before **partnerships, announcements,** and **newsletters** before there was even a clear structure—we began with belief. Not belief in strategy or funding, but belief in people. In Arizona. In the idea that our state could become a place where builders don't just arrive to launch something. They come here to build legacies.

Josué Romero, Co-Founder of Silicon Oasis leading Arizona's tech movement from belief to execution.

I write this over Thanksgiving weekend already in a state of gratitude for all the highs and lows that shaped this past year but the truth is, I didn't want to just reflect. I wanted to pause and name what this community has actually done. Because in twelve months, something shifted. We didn't just gain momentum. We built proof.

How It Started

Silicon Oasis began not with money, but with a handful of founders, a camera, and a conviction that something was changing. Arizona didn't need another organization. It needed a signal a rallying point for those building with grit, not gloss.

In the early days, we launched Arizona's first-ever hacker house in collaboration with **Devlabs**, with support from **Loloft** and **Unblockchainunmasked.** It wasn't just a housing initiative it was our first field signal that **founders were ready to build differently.**

From there, momentum accelerated. We formed pillar-level partnerships with trailblazing organizations across the state—**PHX FWD, AZ CleanTech, AI Venture Network, Phoenix Rising Fintech, and the Southwest Mission Acceleration Center.** These weren't transactional agreements. They were alignment commitments.

Silicon Oasis Community

We helped birth movements: **AZ PropTech Collective**. **The AI Collective Phoenix**. **Wipp AI. VC Village.** More forming every month.

We launched weekly news video segments on location, straight from founders and ecosystem players to give the community direct access to real-time narrative from those creating it. No filters. Just voice to camera, speaking from the front lines of Arizona tech.

An incredible magazine partnership with Arizona Ascent emerged, giving founders a platform to tell their stories every single month with integrity.

We've supported hackathons. We've hosted founders on our podcast before they even raised a dime. We built a coalition of ambassadors, all Arizona founders, all committed to creating real revenue and companies with future billion-dollar outcomes.

And the best part?

We did it all without taking a single penny, dime, or dollar from any event or media we've produced.

Not because money isn't important, but because we wanted to prove a point first: **Movement begins with belief, not funding.**

What Makes This Different

If any of this sounds like bragging it is, a little. But not from ego. From gratitude.

Because without a community in Arizona that believes, none of this happens. From hacker houses to partnerships, to founders stepping up before funding arrived, to events where people showed up not to network but to build every step worked because of you.

I grew up in Arizona. My two kids are being raised here. When I think about what was built this year not by me, but by all of us "thank you" doesn't feel big enough.

What Comes Next

If year one was about proving conviction, year two is about building infrastructure—turning belief into impact at scale. We're not asking for charity. We're asking for aligned momentum.

If you're reading this and you're:

- **A founder:** come build with us, now—not later.
- **In tech:** show up. Bring others.
- **Providing services to startups:** partner with us with intention.
- **Invested in Arizona's future:** this is your signal.

We want to make sure those who support Arizona tech have their names amplified—not as sponsors, but as co-architects of the future we're creating.

We built this year like the desert grows things—quietly, with resilience, using whatever we had. Now, it's no longer enough to believe. It's time to build like we've already been chosen.

Onward.

Josué Romero

SILICON OASIS APPOINTS JORDAN FOURCHER

His impact has been felt for years—now it has a title.

By Jennifer Conrad, Contributing Editor

Before Arizona's startup surge gained attention, **Jordan Fourcher** was already showing up. Not to be seen, but to support. He listened, connected founders, and remained present through early-stage uncertainty. Over time, he became part of the ecosystem's quiet infrastructure—someone founders trusted without needing an introduction.

Silicon Oasis now formalizes that role, naming **Fourcher, CEO of Cryo X Co,** as Community Development Manager.
A founder himself, Jordan leads Cryo X Co, a company using Passive Daytime Radiative Cooling (PDRC) technology to cool surfaces up to 15°F below air temperature, outperforming shade—even in direct sunlight.

His work helps businesses manage thermals for infrastructure and project development. An Arizona resident of eight years, he also serves as a **Silicon Oasis Ambassador** and was selected for **LACI Cohort 9.** His leadership has always been grounded in experience rather than position—supporting others before opportunity arrives.

Jordan Fourcher, CEO of Cryo X Co and newly appointed Community Development Manager at Silicon Oasis.

What He'll Lead

In his new role, Jordan will support Silicon Oasis by:

- Expanding the Ambassador Program
- Leading sponsorship and ecosystem partnerships
- Assisting with statewide event strategy

Why It Matters

Jordan's appointment represents a shift: those who have quietly supported Arizona's growth are now stepping into positions that reflect their influence. His consistency becomes strategy; his presence, leadership.

Silicon Oasis was built on this ethos—that the future of Arizona's tech landscape will be shaped by people who have already been building it.

NOVEMBER: THE WEEK ARIZONA LEVELED UP

Inside the second week of November, when fintech leaders, student builders, and Web3 founders surged Arizona's tech momentum forward.

By Jennifer Conrad, Contributing Editor

The second week of November didn't just feel busy in Arizona tech — it felt alive. From Phoenix to Tempe, you could sense the current running through founders, students, and investors as the Valley's innovation engine kicked into another gear.

It started at Kiln Biltmore, where the room filled long before the program began. There's a particular kind of buzz that happens when the right people gather at the right time, and that's exactly what set the tone as **Silicon Oasis and Phoenix Rising Fintech** welcomed industry veteran **George Gresham.**

He spoke with the certainty of someone who's seen enough cycles to recognize a turning point when it arrives. Fintech, he said, is no longer Arizona's side project. It's becoming one of its defining strengths.

Later that weekend, the scene shifted to **Arizona State University** and the energy intensified. **HackASU 2025** sprawled across hallways and classrooms, humming with caffeine, code, and the kind of ideas that only come from building through the night.

George Gresham shares insights on Arizona's fintech momentum during a live conversation hosted by Phoenix Rising Fintech at Kiln Biltmore.

Volunteer **Joana Chong** watched as teams poured into the judging rooms, sleep-deprived but electric. One team stood out **EVO,** who built a blockchain options layer for **Ether.fi** in a single stretch. It was rough, bold, and exactly the kind of solution that signals a new generation of technical talent rising in Arizona.

A few miles away, the final day of **AI Film 3** and **BitAngels** carried the narrative forward. Founders pitched **Web3 projects** to a packed room — some polished, some scrappy, all driven by conviction. When Silicon Oasis ambassador **Jonathan Chambless** stepped up to present **Micropay Technologies,** you could feel the room lock in. Not because the pitch was loud — but because it was clear, disciplined, and rooted in a real problem the market feels every day.

Founders, operators, and community leaders packed the room at Kiln Biltmore for Phoenix Rising Fintech's November session with George Gresham.

And in the middle of all this intensity, **Arizona** got a storyline that was pure delight. **Triptimize**, the AI-driven travel startup, launched its **$10,000** vacation giveaway.

the timing couldn't have been better. Founders joked about entering between pitch decks; students at **HackASU** checked the prize list between judging rounds.

Weekly giveaways of travel gear, headphones, and gift cards kept the momentum rolling, but the grand New Year's Eve prize created something even more valuable: attention.

Triptimize didn't just launch a promotion they introduced themselves to the broader community with flair, signaling that **Arizona's** consumer-tech scene can play big, too.

By the end of the second week of November, the pattern was impossible to ignore. Arizona's tech ecosystem isn't just expanding — it's syncing. Fintech veterans are sharing playbooks. Students are shipping projects overnight.

Web3 founders are pitching to full rooms. And consumer startups are capturing imagination with campaigns that spark statewide curiosity.

Momentum isn't coming someday; it's already here, spreading across coworking spaces, campuses, and pitch nights.

The desert used to be a backdrop for innovation happening elsewhere. This week made it clear: **Arizona** is now one of the places where the future is being built, and the people building it are finding each other.

SILICON OASIS PITCH NIGHT: PROPTECH

Where Arizona's builders move from vision to execution

By Jennifer Conrad, Contributing Editor

Let's speak plainly. You've probably been to pitch nights before. You've seen the decks, heard the excitement, watched people talk around problems they haven't actually had to solve yet. This one's different.

On December 11th, Silicon Oasis is hosting a **PropTech and Construction Tech Pitch Night** — and it's built for operators and founders who aren't talking theory anymore. The people presenting didn't build from comfort. They built because they had to.

If you've ever been the one trying to move a project forward while waiting on permitting, negotiating material delays, reversing a stalled transaction, or watching time, cost, and pressure stack against you — then you already understand the reason this event exists.

These founders do too. That's why their solutions don't sound like product features. They sound like workarounds that became businesses.

Another built a platform that speeds up investor and agent decision cycles because by the time approvals land, deals often lose momentum. Others are tackling infrastructure challenges by designing for resilience instead of reaction. These products weren't created to someday be useful. They were created because there was no other option.

When the **AZ PropTech Collective** signed on, they said, "This is the kind of energy we want to keep building." And honestly, if you've been in enough rooms lately, you can feel that's true.

Silicon Oasis followed by saying, "This is where real community meets real opportunity." That's not marketing. That's timing. Pitch Night is less of a competition. A moment for people working inside Arizona's build, tech, and development landscape.

VILLAGE HACKS: WHERE BUILDERS BEGIN

Hands-on engineering challenge draws 150+ participants, engages active founders, and showcases Arizona's next wave of tech talent

By Jennifer Conrad, Contributing Editor

On a crisp Saturday at Arizona State University's Memorial Union, **Village Hacks** arrived at a pivotal moment for Arizona's tech landscape—one where the region is shifting from observing momentum to activating builders.

Hosted by **Startup Village** in collaboration with **Silicon Oasis**, the hackathon became the organization's largest to date, drawing over **300 signups and more than 150 confirmed participants.**

"This is not your typical hackathon," said **Krishna Oza,** secretary of **Startup Village.** "We'll have founders giving real-world scenarios. It's a real challenge. It's a r**eal skill set that comes in."**

Startup Village functions as a live entrepreneurial network, leveraging a private WhatsApp group to facilitate co-founder matching, idea feedback, and rapid troubleshooting. "People come here to push forward," noted **Raghav Bansal, president.**

Treasurer **Manan Gulati added, "Village Hacks** is a way to get people hired who have the ability to be cracked engineers." Rather than showcasing theoretical capability, teams built under constraints that mirror early-stage startup conditions.

Aryash Dubey of Binsr Inspect, who recently secured **$1.1 million i**n funding to modernize home inspection using AI, reinforced the event's relevance. "Startups can judge if engineers are capable of solving real challenges."

From this vantage point, **Village Hacks** represents more than activation—it marks a shift in how industry evaluates emerging talent: through execution, not aspiration.

WHEN AI STOPPED BEING THEORY

How a live workshop in Arizona transformed innovation from conversation into execution.

By Jennifer Conrad, Contributing Editor

They didn't arrive as attendees. They arrived already building. Before any welcome, the glow of laptop screens filled the room. No one waited for instruction or scanned the agenda. People sat down, leaned in, and powered up not out of curiosity, but preparation. It wasn't anticipation. It was activation.

What followed wasn't a traditional AI event. It was a redesign of how innovation happens in Arizona. The format was simple: don't talk about AI. Use it.

At the center of this pivot were four individuals whose combined presence rewired the room—from ideation into execution.

Activation Over Observation

Anisia Corona, founder and CEO of DxTx, has spent her career designing AI that strengthens real-time interactions between providers and patients.

The team that transformed an AI event into a working lab activating innovation in real time.

With one foot in San Francisco's iterative tech culture and the other rooted in Arizona's emerging ecosystem, she recognized a friction in how local innovation was being practiced: **inspiration without implementation.** She structured this workshop differently. No panels. No passive engagement. Participants would leave with working systems—not theoretical knowledge. Through her approach, learning became output.

Making AI Operational

Next to her was **Rob Andersen, founder of Grape ID,** a software engineer and serial entrepreneur who specializes in solving identity and data fragmentation.

During the live build session, attendees kept their laptops open and actively constructed AI workflows in real time—marking a shift from passive learning to hands-on implementation.

His work focuses on making AI implementation trustworthy and technically sustainable. In the session, he shifted the room's focus from possibility to application integrity—ensuring what was being built wasn't just impressive, but secure. While **Anisia** initiated momentum, **Rob** reinforced its stability.

Scaling Before Trending

Watching with practiced clarity was **Mahesh Vinayagam, founder and CEO of qBotica, Inc.** Nearly a decade ago, he began advancing automation and AI across Arizona enterprises long before it entered mainstream dialogue. His commitment to education and enterprise deployment positioned him not as an early adopter, but as a long-term steward. He understood this gathering not as a breakthrough, but as the moment Arizona began working at the speed it had already earned.

Returning Innovation To The Human Level

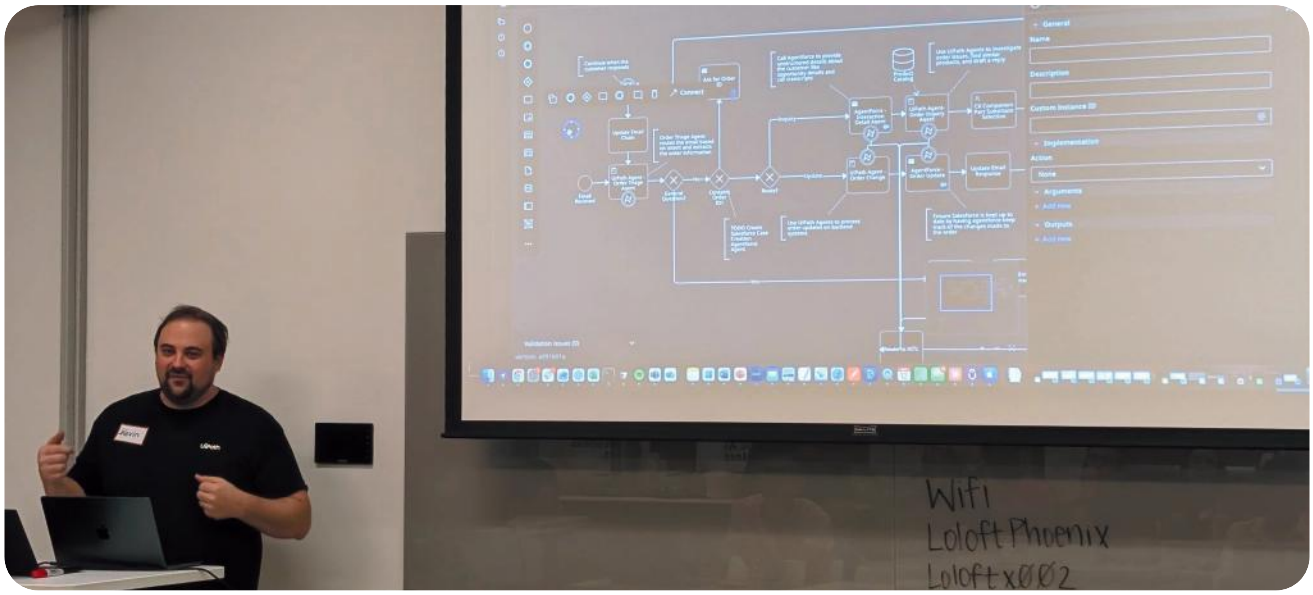
Completing the sequence was Caia Taback, a health tech and wellness strategist with nearly twenty years of experience scaling digital transformation.

Through her lens, AI was framed not as acceleration, but as relief—technology that reduces strain rather than adds to it. She grounded the evening, ensuring implementation stayed aligned with real workflow conditions.

When Action Replaced Expectation

There was no applause cue or formal transition. As soon as introductions ended, attendees returned to their screens.

Workflows were built live using **UiPath.** Code was tested across tables. People asked immediate implementation questions—not "what could this do?" but "here's where it fits tomorrow."



Rather than observe passively, attendees followed along live, building and testing workflows directly on their laptops as the training progressed on the main screen.

And silently, without ceremony, someone adjusted a process they already planned to change Monday morning. No announcement. No conclusion. Just adoption.

What This Event Solved

For years, many AI events in Arizona have followed a similar pattern: compelling speakers, strong forecasting, abundant connections—followed by little immediate operational change. This workshop inverted that model. It shifted the region from conversation to capability. Don't talk about AI adoption. Practice it.

Don't strategize future readiness. Build for Monday. It didn't generate excitement. It delivered execution.

Where The Trajectory Now Leads

This was not a one-off experiment. The workshop format is already influencing how future AI sessions are being planned—with emphasis on hands-on construction, cross-functional build teams, and direct deployment into existing business systems.

If scaled across corporate and startup sectors, it could accelerate Arizona's transition from emerging innovation hub to national AI operator. The next evolution won't be led by the loudest stage. It will be driven by the quiet rooms where laptops open and systems turn on.

Where the Shift Was Carried Forward

As the session progressed, the transition from observation to execution wasn't marked by a single announcement or visible shift—it was defined by the individuals who shaped it from the inside.

The real inflection point will be remembered not for what was spoken, but for who moved the room forward: **Anisia Corona,** who initiated action before it was requested; **Rob Andersen,** who ensured what was created could be trusted and applied; **Mahesh Vinayagam**, who grounded momentum in long-term vision and capability; and **Caia Taback**, who preserved human integrity at the center of implementation. They weren't simply panelists.

HELPANY'S MOVE SIGNALS ARIZONA'S MOMENTUM

As Helpany lands in Phoenix, Arizona cements its position as a destination for founders building high-impact, real-world technologies.

By Jennifer Conrad, Contributing Editor

Arizona has notched another important win in its growing tech landscape. **Helpany Inc**., a leading AI senior-care company, has officially moved its U.S. headquarters from **San Francisco to Phoenix** a relocation that underscores both the company's rapid growth and Arizona's emergence as a center of high-impact innovation.

Helpany's technology is already deeply rooted in the state. Its AI-enabled platform supports more than **2,500 residents across senior living communities,** delivering measurable improvements that redefine what modern care can look like. Communities using **Helpany** have seen up to **72%** fewer falls, **21%** more time available for personalized care, and in some cases up to **$200,000** in added annual value. One community achieved an **80%** reduction in fall-related **911** calls, demonstrating the platform's ability not just to streamline operations but to meaningfully improve resident safety

The Paul® device uses AI sensing to cut falls and speed response fitting naturally into senior living spaces.

Relocating to **Phoenix** places the company closer to the communities where its technology has taken hold —and where demand for AI-driven care continues to expand. **Helpany** is also strengthening its U.S. footprint by shifting production of its **Paul® devices** to domestic manufacturing, with operations launching in **Texas** later this year. The move enhances supply chain reliability and supports faster national deployment.

Helpany's decision reflects a trend that has been steadily building: founders creating applied, real-world technologies are choosing **Arizona** for its supportive business climate, and growing reputation as a proving ground for AI. The state's momentum is no longer theoretical—it's visible in the companies choosing to plant roots here.

NVIDIA PICKS ARIZONA FOR BLACKWELL

The world's most advanced AI chips now have a U.S. home base — and Arizona is suddenly at the center of global compute.

By Jennifer Conrad, Contributing Editor

NVIDIA changed the trajectory of the country's AI landscape with a single announcement at GTC: **Blackwell GPUs** — the company's fastest, most powerful chips — are now being produced in Arizona. For years, **NVIDIA's** top-tier hardware came exclusively out of **Taiwan.** Today, **Phoenix** is officially part of that supply chain.

The move didn't happen quietly. Earlier this month, **NVIDIA and TSMC** confirmed that the first **Blackwell wafers** were produced in **Phoenix,** marking a watershed moment not just for the state, but for the United States' broader mission to secure high-end chip manufacturing. **NVIDIA** added that full **Blackwell** systems will now be assembled domestically as well, pulling **Arizona** into the core of America's AI infrastructure.

This is a shift with weight behind it. As the federal government pushes for semiconductor independence and reshoring of critical technology, **Arizona** has emerged as one of the few places capable of carrying the load,

Jensen Huang onstage at GTC announcing that NVIDIA's Blackwell chips will now be manufactured in Arizona.

NVIDIA layered on another headline: **a $1 billion partnership with Nokia to rebuild U.S. telecom infrastructure using NVIDIA chips.** Combined with new quantum-computing integrations through **NVQLink**, the company is signaling that the future of compute won't be siloed — it will be interconnected, distributed, and built in places that can scale quickly.

For Arizona founders, the implications are immediate. **Blackwell chips** aren't abstract hardware — they are the engines behind frontier **AI models, robotics, simulation, and next-gen compute.** Having them produced in P**hoenix** means startups here will build closer to the source than ever before.

WHEN THE DESERT DECIDED TO BUILD

Where Arizona's builders move beyond theory and forge the future in steel, circuitry, and sleepless ambition.

By Jennifer Conrad, Contributing Editor

If you drive past it too quickly, you might mistake it for just another industrial complex tucked between Tempe's railroad lines and the arterial roads that run east of campus. A faded sign. A concrete wall. A parking lot that looks like it's waiting for something.

But step inside after dark — when most office buildings are quiet — and you hear it: the metallic grind of steel under a CNC mill. The hum of industrial 3D printers running through the night. A single desk lamp illuminating blueprints, sticky notes, and a half-drink can of Arizona Green Tea.

This is **Startup Central**. This is how Arizona enters its hard-tech era.
For decades, the Valley has told stories of SaaS launches, fintech disruptors, AI platforms, pitch nights and founder talks.

Inside Startup Central's 20,000 sq. ft. prototyping floor with 24/7 access to CNC mills, lathes, and industrial 3D printers.

By Builders, For Builders

Startup Central isn't a coworking space. It's a statement. Launching this fall, the **Tempe-based facility** spans **75,000 sq. ft.,** weaving together a **prototyping workshop, private industrial suites, and technical VC accelerator** under one roof. Membership starts at **$299/month**, but the real cost is belief — that you're the kind of founder who builds what others only map.

Tools include **cnc mills, lathes, welding stations, industrial 3D printers**, and high-performance design software. For teams ready to scale, there are 35,000+ sq. ft. of customizable spaces, ranging from 1,000 to 10,000 sq. ft., built for those moments when prototype turns production.

"Innovation's gotten too soft," says CTO Clay Richardson. "We don't want more pitch decks. We want proof of concept. Bring us something with torque."

The First Signs of Acceleration

Inside **Startup Central's** recently launched **6,300 sq. ft. Product Development (NPD)** Center, engineers are already working on projects that read like schematics for the future: **autonomous robotics, machining automation, industrial AI, RF technologies**, and **UAS defense systems.**

One of the earliest companies to emerge from the hub — **Defense Company One** — is developing AI-powered electronic warfare pods. Selected for an international drone-warfare challenge, their tech is designed to sense, react, counter. It's being built in a zip code where people still assume startups write code more often than they cut metal. They don't anymore.

The Story Behind the Story

Startup Central exists because one truth finally landed: hardware founders don't fail due to lack of vision — they fail due to lack of access.

Manufacturing equipment is expensive. Facilities require permitting, safety compliance, and capital. Most builders start in garages until scale forces them into industrial parks that treat inventors like short-term tenants, not creators of long-term infrastructure.

Founders can prototype using full-scale manufacturing tools from $299 per month.

This building was designed differently. Not to be leased — but lived in by those building things no one has seen yet.

The Desert, Re-Industrialized

If the Silicon Desert has spent the last decade telling software stories, Startup Central opens the next chapter. Not code, but circuitry. Not campaigns, but components.

Over the next year, the facility will complete buildout, onboard scale-stage startups, and expand engineering personnel. The goal isn't volume. It's velocity. By 2026, **Tempe** could become the Southwest's central manufacturing launch point for the kind of next-generation products most founders have had to leave the state to build.

But now? Someone's already building them here.
Under a desk lamp. With a torque wrench.
And for the first time in a long time, they don't have to do it alone.

DEVLABS HEADS TO SAN FRANCISCO

One week. One hundred builders. A direct corridor from Arizona's innovation pipeline to the Bay Area's startup arena.

By Jennifer Conrad, Contributing Editor

Arizona is producing a generation of builders who refuse to wait for permission and this winter, **100** of them will be tested on the biggest stage they've ever stepped onto.

Devlabs, a long-standing catalyst for early technical talent across the Southwest, is sending a **handpicked cohort of the most high-agency student builders to San Francisco for DevHouse, a 7-day immersion** where speed, pressure, and possibility converge. It's part hacker house, part accelerator, part recruiting pipeline but more than anything, it's a proving ground.

For one week, students will live and work in the heart of **San Francisco,** building without distraction or ceiling. Days are structured around founder sessions and night talks from operators who've scaled companies under real-world constraints. Between those sessions, participants will tackle problem statements sourced directly from fast-growing startups not hypothetical exercises, but challenges designed to mirror the urgency and complexity of actual product teams.

Inside a Devlabs build session: where high-agency students learn to operate at the pace they'll face in San Francisco's DevHouse.

What makes **DevHouse** distinct is not the curriculum, but the proximity. Students won't just meet founders they'll build beside them. They'll debug code next to hiring managers.

They'll pitch insights to operators who've shipped products at scale. In an environment like this, a sharp idea or a moment of clarity can turn into an internship, a job offer, or the first spark of a company.

The week culminates in a competition with **$22,000 in prizes**, but the real reward is visibility. **DevHouse** collapses the distance between student ambition and industry opportunity.

Applications are now open through Devlabs.

WEARTECH ACCELERATES HEALTH INNOVATION

$700K investment fast-tracks wearable health solutions from development to deployment.

By Jennifer Conrad, Contributing Editor

Something shifted this fall inside Arizona's health innovation ecosystem. Rather than financing emerging concepts still searching for validation, the **Partnership for Economic Innovation's WearTech Applied Research Center** awarded **$700,000** to three startups already proving they're ready to make impact. The funding was not structured to push projects forward—it was timed to meet technologies already moving.

This marks a decisive evolution in the state's acceleration strategy: support arrives when momentum is already in motion.

Where Intervention Begins Earlier

At the center of this shift are **HemaSense**, **Senphonix,** and **Hydrawav3**—three companies working at different points in the care continuum, but all asking the same question: Can intervention happen sooner?

Senphonix received $200,000 to accelerate a 12-month initiative bringing its SleeveSense wearable vitals monitoring system to market.

For **HemaSense**, **funded at $250,000**, "sooner" means before complications are visually detectable. Their bleeding detection patch identifies internal bleeding during post-surgical recovery before symptoms escalate. In trials, this shift from reactive to proactive monitoring proved the difference between observation and intervention. The technology doesn't adjust to the path of care—it anticipates it

Reclaiming Time in Clinical Workflow

Senphonix, which received **$200,000,** approached the problem from within the hospital cycle. Today, nurses spend nearly 20% of their shift manually capturing vital signs, with significant risk accumulating between those checks.

Funding Rounds

Senphonix built **SleeveSense,** an adhesive-free wearable that continuously monitors vitals and transmits them to clinical systems through **Microsoft Azure.**

"Automating vital sign collection gives nurses more time for direct patient care," said **Mike Haldane, co-founder and co-CEO of Senphonix**, "while surfacing signals earlier. The funding supports acceleration that aligns with clinical need—not future projections." **Senphonix** is now advancing toward commercialization through design optimization at the **University of Arizona** and manufacturing preparation with **Remedy Medical Manufacturing.**

Recovery Without Delay

Meanwhile, **Hydrawav3**, awarded **$250,000 in WearTech funding plus $200,000 in private investment**, targets recovery at the moment the body begins to tighten. Their wearable device uses proprietary **Polar Water Resonance**™ to improve mobility and reduce discomfort without medication or adhesives.

Already in use among wellness centers and performance recovery providers, it is scaling production through Phoenix-based manufacturing. It's technology doesn't respond to pain after it arrives—it helps prevent deeper strain from forming.

Innovation Meets Timing

Since 2020, **WearTech's** purpose has been clear: reduce the time between validated technology and its real-world use.

Portable and practitioner-ready — Hydrawav3's recovery device is already being used in real therapeutic environments.

The center connects founders with engineering resources at institutions such as the **University of Arizona and ASU**, supports prototype refinement, and prepares companies for regulatory and manufacturing integration.

The Trend Emerging

Across these three companies, a pattern exists:

- Intervention sooner than standard cycles permit
- Continuous awareness replacing scheduled diagnostics
- Recovery beginning before pain defines limitation

All **three startups** are now on **12-month** commercialization trajectories. Their technologies aren't responding to change—they're altering how quickly change is recognized. Arizona didn't invest in what might be possible. It invested in what is already moving.

THE MOMENT INNOVATION STOPPED WAITING

What happened at ASU Demo Day wasn't a pitch — it was ignition.

By Jennifer Conrad, Contributing Editor

It didn't feel like a competition. It felt like a turning point. When the doors opened at ASU **Venture Devils Demo Day,** the people in the room weren't there to decide if the next generation of innovators would be ready. They were there to witness the moment innovation stopped waiting for graduation.

Historically, entrepreneurship had followed a predictable chronology: graduate, gain experience, then innovate. But at this Demo Day, four student-led ventures took the stage not as future founders but as active builders already shaping what would come next.

Over **$200,000 in funding and support was awarded**, but the most significant shift wasn't financial — it was foundational.
Innovation no longer waited for degrees. It was already being built from within the university.

A Competition Designed for Activation

Venture Devils Demo Day was held twice annually during the fall and spring semesters, challenging student ventures to deliver investor-style boardroom pitches.

Student founders take the stage with Sparky at ASU Venture Devils Demo Day after more than $200,000 in funding was awarded to early-stage ventures.

Friends, families, mentors, judges, and community supporters were invited to attend both the open pitch sessions and the Funding + Awards Ceremony.

Eligibility required that ventures be led by currently enrolled **ASU or Maricopa Community Colleges** students who had received less than **$50,000** in cumulative prior funding, preserving the focus on early-stage growth.

Events were offered both in-person and via live stream, expanding accessibility. The event was held on **Saturday, November 22, 2025.** Demo Day wasn't where their stories began it was where their trajectories became visible.

Pitch Competitions

HANDS — Turning Need Into Momentum

Years earlier, **Preston Roser and Esteban Gardea** had been students in classrooms where STEM learning was theoretical but not tactile. Rather than accept the limitation, they developed HANDS, an assembly-based learning kit system that later entered pilot testing in regional schools.

Their Demo Day award through the **eSeed Challenge** supported scaling production and advancing new kit designs. “We started because classrooms lacked what we needed,” Preston said. “We built so future students wouldn’t face that barrier.”

Retractability — Reimagining Fixed Systems

In an ASU engineering lab, **Lucas Somoshegyi-Szokol** and his team questioned why aerospace structures stayed static when adaptability could improve performance.

Retractability emerged from that question. The team received **$15,000** in **GoDaddy-sponsored funding**, moving them toward prototype validation. “We didn’t secure funding,” Lucas noted. “We confirmed direction.”

SimpliSent — Fixing the Human Bottleneck

Cam Dressler and **Niko Whitaker** didn’t encounter technical failure — they encountered communication friction. Their venture, **SimpliSent,** was created to improve feedback delivery within team environments.

With an additional **$2,000** awarded, total seed funding increased to **$8,050**, moving them closer to launch. “We stayed heads down building,” Cam reflected. “Every day brought us closer.”

A student founder pitched at Demo Day, demonstrating innovation rising from within the university.

UnityFlow — Built for the Future from Day One

At the **Thunderbird VC/PE Club** pitch competition, **UnityFlow,** led by **Lokesh Ashok Borade,** was named **“the most investable venture.”** While other ventures emerged from constraint, **UnityFlow** had been architected from inception for scalability. “This was just the beginning,” Lokesh said — and the room believed him.

What Demo Day Proved

HANDS had been built out of necessity, **Retractability** from technical possibility, **SimpliSent** from communication friction, and **UnityFlow** from strategic foresight. Each emerged from a different origin point, yet they all reached the same conclusion: innovation was no longer something students waited to pursue after graduation. It had already begun the moment they felt the problem deeply enough to build the solution. And during this **Demo Day,** it stepped into the spotlight—not as potential, but as proof.

MOMENTUM FOUND ITS VOICE AT VENTURE CAFÉ

The moment Phoenix stopped aspiring and began positioning for the world.

By Jennifer Conrad, Contributing Editor

Before It Landed

Before the judges spoke—before the applause—those in the room say it became clear that what came next wouldn't be about the competition. It would be about what followed it. As the final pitch faded from the screen, one attendee recalled hearing a chair adjust—not out of discomfort, but a quiet shift that happens when something lands before there are words for it. Not tense. Curious. Several founders later said it felt as though whatever was about to be announced… they already knew.

It Didn't Feel Like a Win

When **Gravitrex,** led by CEO **Kira Burns,** was named as the company that would represent Phoenix at the **Venture Café Global Gathering** in Tokyo this February, observers noted the response didn't surge—it settled. Slow, intentional. Not surprise. Certainty. According to multiple attendees, it didn't feel like victory. It felt like arrival. **Gravitrex's walking-assist technology** wasn't received as innovation in search of validation—it landed like something that should have already existed.

Gravitrex presenting during the Pitch2Tokyo Finals a moment the room felt before it was spoken

Created for patients recovering mobility after hospitalization or injury, it wasn't positioned as possibility. It felt like overdue truth. One person reportedly murmured, "That one's going somewhere," and based on reactions afterward, most agreed before fully processing the moment. The energy wasn't louder than the others. It was simply aligned.

What Led Us Here

That moment didn't begin in October. It has been building Thursday by Thursday inside **Venture Café Phoenix,** in conversations unguarded enough to be honest. Ideas voiced in early form. Assumptions challenged without defensiveness.

Pitch Competitions

At some point, the question shifted from “Can this work here?” to “Where does this need to exist?” That transition started long before anyone stepped onto the stage.

The Strength in the Field

Six companies presented: **Carbon Utility, Devour, Unity Flow, MyScribe, Global Cooling Technology Group, and Gravitrex. Carbon Utility** addressed decarbonization. **Devour** explored AI through consumption experiences. Unity Flow reimagined operational clarity. **MyScribe** enhanced communication access. **Global Cooling Technology** engineered against heat. And **Gravitrex**—not bigger or louder—just unmistakably ready.

Those there said the decision wasn’t made because others lacked strength. Rather, one company appeared to already be moving in the direction the rest were preparing for.

The Morning After

What registered most clearly didn’t occur during the announcement, but the following day. Founders revisited their strategies—not out of disappointment, but recalibration.

Reflections from attendees indicated the shift wasn’t “How do we reach that stage next time?” but “Which global market have we been designing for without realizing it?”

One founder shared that they had barely captured pitch notes—only the words we’re ready. That sentiment echoed repeatedly. The conclusion was clear: this ecosystem isn’t competing anymore. It’s positioning.

Devour presenting during the Pitch2Tokyo Finals advancing how engagement is experienced in digital communities.

What Tokyo Will Hear

When Kira steps onto the Tokyo stage in February, she’ll speak on behalf of **Gravitrex.** But those who witnessed the moment believe she will also carry the stillness from **Venture Café**—the pause before everything moved forward. And she won’t step into that room alone. Phoenix won’t be asking to be seen. It will speak as though it already is. Tokyo may not be ready. Phoenix is.

Want to witness it live? Scan here to register.

SCAN HERE

THE NIGHT ARIZONA'S TECH COMMUNITY GREW UP

From momentum to execution — signaling a new standard for how founders are supported, funded, and believed in.

By Jennifer Conrad, Contributing Editor

Momentum used to be the story in Arizona. Now, it's something we expect. Founders are building. Communities are connecting. Rooms like the **Fall Tech Talent Summit** are filled with people who are shaping what comes next. What stood out this time wasn't energy—it was readiness.

The shift happening now isn't about doing more. It's about doing it differently. If we expect founders here to compete nationally and globally, our support system has to evolve with them. That means believing sooner, investing earlier, and building the structure around companies before they reach the point of proof. This summit didn't just show what's emerging it showed what we're now being called to step into.

When Someone Gets the Mic Before They're "Ready"

When organizer **Daniela Santangelo** asked **Isabelle Cutuli**—once a Freeway intern, now a Director at Canyon Angels to co-host the pitch competition alongside longtime facilitator **Forbes Shannon**, it wasn't just a programming choice. It was a statement.

Isabelle Cutuli co-hosted beside veteran facilitator Forbes Shannon an intentional pairing.

Isabelle wasn't selected because she was polished. She was selected because she was rising. The pairing of an established leader with emerging talent wasn't accidental—it showed what happens when we choose to spotlight people in their becoming, not only once they've arrived. Growth accelerates when opportunity meets potential.

Innovation Happens Where People Live, Not Just Where They Code

One founder who made this point clear was **Crissy Saint** of **Rad Dog.** Her company isn't building tech—it's building an experience: a modern dog park as a community hub and scalable business model.

Her observation raised an important question: Are we only betting on what has worked before, or are we willing to invest in what could expand what Arizona is known for? Sometimes innovation looks like software. Sometimes it looks like people gathering around something that connects them.

A Local Event with Global Eyes on It

Another clear sign of change: people didn't just come from around Arizona. They came from London. Representatives from **London & Partners**, including **Persephone Godwin** and **James Cummings,** attended the summit and awarded VIP access to **London Tech Week 2026**. Their involvement showed that Arizona is no longer just gaining internal traction it's being watched as a growing hub of innovation.

The launch of **Tech Arizona Advocates** reinforced this momentum. We're moving from building something for ourselves to building something that interacts with the world.

Structure Creates Scalability

Legal and operational readiness came forward as another key theme. National law firm **Buchalter,** represented by attorney **Jonathan Talcott**, supported the summit. Their involvement signaled that protecting ideas, brands, and business models early—not waiting until after growth starts is becoming part of the process.

Innovation may be sparked by inspiration, but it can only scale if the foundation is already in place.

The summit featured international investment dialogue and marked the launch of Tech Arizona Advocates ahead of London Tech Week 2026.

Pitch Competition Results

The pitch competition reflected where early momentum is turning into forward movement.

Prizes awarded included:

- CES 2026 or London Tech Week access
- Advisory sessions with Ian Peterman
- All-expense-paid trip to Startup Grind San Francisco (Mat Capital)

Placement	Company	Founder(s)
1st	Alu AI	Donatela Bellone
2nd	ProPlaintiff.ai	Jason Turnquist
3rd	MiiHealth AI	John Wall & Jacob Lester

Alu AI, ProPlaintiff.ai, and MiiHealth AI were named top winners, earning prizes focused on accelerating growth rather than recognition.

Judges included**: Glenn Lurie, Tim Holladay, Seema Phull, and Mat Sherman.** These prizes weren't designed to celebrate the moment. They were designed to move companies forward.

Capital Is Here

A major insight from the summit was that access to funding is improving in Arizona. What still lags is the willingness to invest earlier in the journey.

Institutions like **ASU** and **Banner Health** are backing innovation, and seed networks such as Spark Angeles are emerging. As **Dr. Adrijana Kekic**, Founder and CEO of **Futurome,** shared after the event, "The momentum is real. Our Arizona story is being rewritten."

What comes next depends on whether conviction meets founders at the pace they are building.

Final Perspective

This summit confirmed something important: our strength is no longer in energy it's in our ability to act on it. Momentum got us this far. What will carry us forward is accountability.

Silicon Oasis is here not just to document what's happening now, but to help name what's coming. The **Fall Tech Talent Summit** didn't validate Arizona's potential it activated it.

Arizona didn't wait to be told it's ready. It started moving like it already is.

EASY STREET OFFERS: WHERE DEALS MOVE FASTER

How a Scottsdale-built proptech is redefining how investors, agents, and sellers move in Arizona's fastest-growing market.

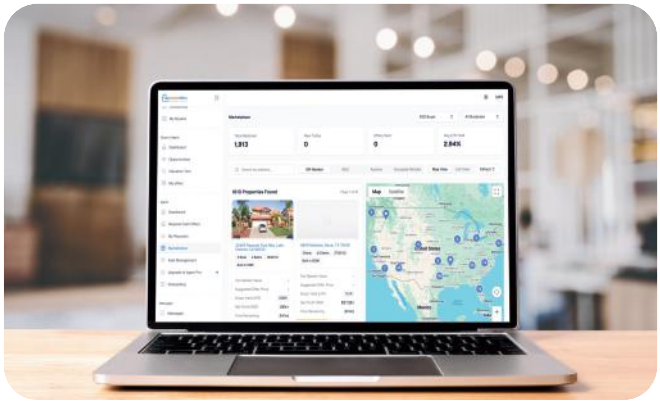
By Kayla Johnson, Contributing Editor

When an investor's offer lands before a listing ever hits the market, the deal is often decided before most agents even enter the conversation. In Arizona, where population growth and investor capital continue to surge that moment is no longer an exception. It's becoming standard. Yet many agents still operate with tools built for a slower, less competitive era.

Offer cycles lag. Investor pipelines fluctuate. Critical data lives in disconnected systems. A **Scottsdale-based proptech startup**, **Easy Street Offers (ESO)**, emerged in response — built not simply to upgrade existing workflows, but to rewire how modern transactions move when speed and precision determine competitive edge.

A Platform Built to Bridge the Divide

The platform began with one pivotal realization: investors now drive more than one-third of U.S. home sales, yet most agents lack access to the infrastructure required to serve them effectively.



Easy Street Offers' marketplace dashboard, where agents upload properties once and match them to investor demand .

Easy Street Offers solves that by creating a two-way marketplace that connects verified investor demand directly with agents in real time. Investors receive properties aligned to their exact "buy box," while agents access pre-qualified acquisition opportunities without chasing fragmented leads.

Behind the scenes, **ESO** automates valuation modeling, return forecasting, offer generation, communication, and transaction coordination, turning what once took hours or days into a clear, streamlined process that moves at market pace. "We built **Easy Street Offers** so deals could move at the speed decisions are actually being made," says **founder and CEO Dan Noma. "If agents can't match that pace, they're not even in the running."**

Startup Spotlight

A Founder Who Has Lived the Disconnect

Noma's conviction comes from lived experience. Raised in a developer and builder family, he purchased his first investment property at just 18. Since then, he has flipped more than **3,000 homes** and assisted in the acquisition of over **50,000 single-family rentals** for institutional investors worldwide.

Before ESO, he launched **iReal Estate Pro**, the first national certification program for agents working with investors and **iBuyers — now active in 35 markets.** He was also the designated broker and owner of **Venture REI, one of Arizona's most prominent investment-focused brokerage**s. After decades of watching capable agents lose deals not because of lack of skill, but lack of systems, he designed **Easy Street Offers** to level the field, empowering everyday professionals with institutional-grade capability.

What the Platform Actually Does

Functioning as both an underwriting engine and full deal-flow platform, **Easy Street Offers** enables agents to upload a property once and instantly distribute it to matching investors. AI-powered tools project returns, model valuations, generate offers, and automate communication across each phase of the transaction.

Agents gain speed, new revenue streams, and competitive positioning without having to build internal infrastructure. Investors receive a curated pipeline of opportunities aligned with their strategy. Sellers benefit from clarity, certainty, and faster closings.

Founder and CEO Dan Noma Jr., whose hands-on InvestmenT experience shaped the vision behind ESO.

Traction Signaling National Expansion

In the past year, **ESO** has:

- Partnered with **Fidelity National Financial (FNF)** to scale nationally — **now in 40 states with 35,000+ users.**
- Built private-label investor platforms for major brokerages including **KW, eXp, and Realty of America.**
- Expanded intelligence capabilities through integrations with **Spatial Laser, Abidemine, and Local Logic.**
- Launched **ESO Pro Access,** a subscription-based SaaS suite delivering advanced automation, underwriting, and buyer matching.
- Earned recognition as one of **Arizona's fastest-growing proptech ventures.**

Why Arizona and Why Now

Arizona has evolved into a national proving ground for proptech innovation, where industry challenges are solved by people experiencing them firsthand. **Easy Street Offers** is a product of that context, uniting institutional-grade technology with ground-level execution to redefine how real estate moves.

THE STARTUP TEACHING ARIZONA TO COUNT WATER

Tributary is translating Arizona's forest restoration work into measurable water, risk and return.

By Jennifer Conrad, Contributing Editor

Drive north from Phoenix toward Payson and you can watch two futures on opposite sides of the highway. On one side: crowded, overgrown forest — trees packed so tight they look anxious. On the other: newly thinned acres near Baker Butte, more light, more space, a landscape that might actually survive the next fire.

Everyone agrees which side feels better. But utilities, investors and policymakers are stuck with a harder question: What is that difference worth in water, in risk reduction, in real dollars? For years, forest restoration has been sold on a simple narrative: healthier forests mean fewer megafires and more stable watersheds. When it's time to write checks, though, "should" doesn't cut it.

That's the gap **Tributary,** an Arizona-based water tech startup, is built to fill. Founded by Arizona State University Professor **Enrique Vivoni, Tributary** uses AI, lidar and decades of hydrologic modeling to turn forest projects into numbers utilities and governments can actually budget around.

Thinned forest near Baker Butte, showing how restoration opens space and helps protect water supplies.

"Clients don't want to wade through equations," Vivoni says. "They want to know: How much water will this project save each year?"

The Money Question in the Trees

When a stand near Baker Butte gets thinned, the benefits sound obvious: **less fuel for catastrophic wildfire, better odds that snowmelt and rain make it into streams and reservoirs, a healthier watershed supporting the Central Arizona economy**. But inside the boardroom, the questions are blunt:

- How many acre-feet of water does this treatment likely keep in the system over the next decade?
- Is the next dollar better spent on thinning, pipes, wells or demand management?

Turning Forests into Decisions

Under the hood, **Tributary** is a hydrologic intelligence engine that pulls three worlds together: **high-resolution forest data, watershed physics and outcome-focused output** — all grounded in **Vivoni's** long-term research on water in arid landscapes.

Lidar and satellite-based maps show how dense a stand really is tree spacing, canopy height, structure. Those maps are layered with topography, soils and precipitation to model how water moves through a specific landscape, building on hydrologic modeling refined over more than 20 years. The output is not a wall of equations, but a small set of metrics a CFO or planner can use, like:

- How will thinning here shift runoff timing and volume?
- What is the expected net gain in water availability over time?

For SRP and other utilities, **Tributary's** work turns **"forest stewardship"** into watershed metrics they can share with partners, funders and regulators. It gives them a way to explain and justify why a particular ridge, canyon or basin should be treated next.

Arizona as Test Bed, the West as Market

Arizona is an ideal proving ground: **forests on the Mogollon Rim and in the Tonto National Forest** sit upstream of major population centers, while longer, hotter wildfire seasons threaten both forests and reservoirs. The region's growth bets semiconductor fabs, data centers, housing all rest on water.

Smoke from the 2019 Woodbury Fire over Roosevelt Lake, where wildfire becomes a water problem.

By validating its tools here, **Tributary** is effectively using Arizona as a live lab for climate-intelligent forest and water management — the kind of approach that can travel to other fire-prone, water-stressed regions across the West and beyond.

Why the Water Dollar Matters Here

For founders and investors watching Arizona's tech story unfold, **Tributary** is more than a forest or hydrology play. It's a template: start with an existential regional constraint, anchor in deep science, add modern sensing and AI, and deliver outputs that can sit in a budget, not just a research paper.

As Arizona leans into advanced manufacturing and other high-growth industries, one reality sits underneath all of it: water will decide what's possible. Following the water dollar upstream is no longer a niche concern it's strategy. **Tributary** is one of the first companies giving Arizona a way to do that with precision, turning restoration from a hopeful line in a climate plan into something you can model, fund and defend.

ARIZONA'S ADVANTAGE IN THE AI SHIFT

Why Arizona's builders are positioned to outlast the cycle

By Ogdn Ames, CEO, Ames Investments

AI is showing all the hallmarks of a market crest — soaring valuations, race-to-build infrastructure, uneven user trust, and capital pushing simultaneously forward and away. On the surface, it reads as instability. But from inside the build cycle — where strategy, energy, and execution meet — what's happening isn't a signal of collapse. It's the compression sequence that precedes acceleration.

Pressure doesn't signal weakness. It signals inevitability. Across key markets, AI data centers are expanding faster than regulatory and operational infrastructure can keep pace. Land bids are escalating, power contracts are being pushed to historic levels, and project layers run 8–10 subcontractors deep resulting in strategic execution errors.

Yet, no one's slowing down. Those building the physical backbone including semiconductor strategists and energy operators remain long-term bullish.

Ogdn Ames, CEO of Ames Investment Systems writing from market proximity where pressure signals acceleration.

This mirrors the early 2000s infrastructure sprint: speed before clarity, correction, then scale. **Founder Takeaway: *If you're waiting for the market to stabilize before moving, you're already behind.***

Skepticism lives in language. Dependency lives in behavior.

While concerns around AI adoption remain prevalent, application usage continues to rise. Compute costs often exceed subscription pricing most free or low-cost access is subsidized.

Investor Insights

Users may question adoption publicly. But privately, they're becoming reliant. **Founder Insight:** Build for operational necessity, not emotional acceptance.

The market is filtering who's designed for the long arc. The era of "AI wrappers" moves is ending. Rising GPU and technical talent costs, longer enterprise acquisition cycles, and strategic discipline requirements are eliminating hype-based players.

Larger firms are quietly divesting from product lines not tied to infrastructure or defensible IP. **Founder Takeaway:** Velocity is no longer the differentiator. Structural clarity is.

Invest in the enablers, not the implementers. The most sophisticated capital is shifting from front-end AI applications to critical infrastructure needed to sustain AI growth.

Current investment focus:

- Semiconductor supply optimization
- Thermal engineering & precision cooling
- Rare materials
- Energy systems — particularly small modular nuclear, viewed strategically for future power demands (3–15 year horizon)

Founder Insight: If your AI strategy doesn't align with infrastructure, power, or enterprise value — you're vulnerable.

Ames' market outlook — pressure precedes consolidation, followed by acceleration once foundations solidify.

Why Arizona

Arizona is positioned uniquely — free from legacy systems, grounded in rapid-scale thinking, and increasingly drawing founders who operate beyond conventional corporate models. This state understands resilience. It innovates under constraint.

And it builds for desert conditions — where clarity matters more than excess. We're not reacting to the AI wave. We're shaping the conditions it will land in.

Final Line

The so-called AI bubble isn't deflating. It's recalibrating. This next era won't reward the fastest.

It will reward the most architected. We don't design for the present moment. We build for what's already coming.

WHEN QUIET BECOMES POWER

How an Arizona founder built without urgency—until his work became impossible to ignore

By Jennifer Conrad, Contributing Editor

He walked in not with a deck, but with a folded engineering schematic, its edges softened from handling. While most founders lead with projections, he led with something that had already taken flight.

Long before the first investor conversation, **Desert Rotor's** technology had flown through wildfire smoke, stabilizing communication when infrastructure on the ground had failed. It wasn't demonstrated in theory. It was deployed under pressure.

What he built wasn't rushed. It was rehearsed. For more than five years, **Debin Ray**, **CEO of Desert Rotor,** worked outside the conventional speed metrics tech culture often celebrates. He kept a full-time finance career. His co-founders remained in aerospace.

Progress happened between responsibilities—after hours, on weekends, while others waited for funding. Without external urgency forcing pace, precision was given room to lead.

For over five years, Debin Ray built beyond tech's speed culture—choosing precision over pace."

There were months we weren't sure we'd be fast enough. He doesn't speak of those months with doubt, but clarity. "There were months we weren't sure we'd get it right fast enough," **Debin** says. "But we kept showing up." It says more than a motivational quote ever could. It reveals a team building not toward early attention, but toward eventual responsibility.

The world builds drones. Desert Rotor builds what directs them. Their flagship platforms—**MIRA X** and **COMMAND XD**—are advanced Ground Control Stations for unmanned vehicles across land, air, and sea.

Powered by their proprietary **SmartView™** interface, operators can reassign over **60 control functions** in real time. Most systems allow eight. **Desert Rotor** didn't improve control. They redefined it. "Think universal remote," **Debin** explains, "except instead of changing channels—you're commanding robotic fleets."

They treated Arizona as a supply ecosystem —not just a location. Instead of raising capital to build an internal lab, they partnered with local manufacturers. CNC machining in North Phoenix. Cable assembly downtown. PCB work done a short drive away. More than **60% of each Desert Rotor** system is built through **Arizona** sourcing, a strategy rooted in resource intelligence, not compromise.

Their first major contract came not from an investor warm intro, but from a connection made within a remote-control aircraft club in **Cave Creek.**

When precision met pressure, engineering became obligation. During the California wildfires, AT&T deployed **Desert Rotor**–controlled drones equipped with temporary cell towers, restoring connectivity for up to **7,000 residents per aircraft.** Some called for help. Others called to say they were safe. None of them knew the controller in operation had been developed in silence, long before any formal capital raise.

"Lives depend on our tech," **Debin** said. "So we engineered it like that before anyone was watching."

Tested under real-world conditions, these control platforms were engineered to direct unmanned systems with the same precision once studied up close.

Only now—not before—is capital being raised After five years of profitable operations, Desert Rotor is raising its first round: $3M at a $12M pre-money valuation. Not to determine whether the idea works—but to scale what already does.

"We didn't stay in Arizona because it was easy. We stayed because it was enough." Many advised relocating to pursue faster funding. **Debin s**aw no reason to abandon what was working. "We're building this for Arizona—and for the world," he says.

"Founders should see what's possible here before assuming they need to leave." Maybe startup culture got it backward. Perhaps moving fast isn't a sign of conviction. Perhaps staying steady is. The engineering schematic he carried into the room was not a prop—it was evidence of a system shaped through patience, calibrated in silence, now ready to accelerate without compromise.

He didn't build slowly because he was hesitant. He built slowly because the technology deserved to mature before it was asked to scale. The desert was never empty. It was calculating.

MEET OUR AMBASSADORS

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Binsr Inspect

Jonathon Chambless
MicroPay Technologies

Debin Ray
Desert Rotor

Emini Offutt
Grangou App

Dhanush Vardhan
Devize

Heather Tugaoen
Watergenics

Jordan Fourcher
Cryo X CO

Jay Foster
Carbon Utility

Leah Walczak
Gemhaus

MEET OUR TEAM

Get to know the builders, storytellers, and connectors powering the Silicon Oasis movement behind the scenes.

Kyle Macdonald
Editor-in-Chief

Josue Romero
Managing Editor

Sean Bair
Board Member

Jordan Fourcher
Community Lead

> *"We're not just building stories — we're building the community behind them. Every event, every article, every founder feature is powered by people who believe in Arizona's future."*

Happy Thanksgiving from the Silicon Oasis Team

This season, we're grateful for the founders, builders, creators, students, operators, and dreamers who power Arizona's innovation ecosystem. Every story you've shared, every risk you've taken, every idea you've pushed from concept to reality — it all shapes the momentum we celebrate today.

Thank you for being part of a community that refuses to wait for the future and instead chooses to build it here in the desert. From all of us at Silicon Oasis, we're wishing you a Thanksgiving filled with rest, warmth, connection, and the kind of inspiration that fuels the next breakthrough.

Here's to gratitude, growth, and the next chapter of Arizona innovation.

— The Silicon Oasis Team

Pillar Partners

AIVN
AI VENTURE NETWORK

Driving Arizona's AI future by connecting founders to mentorship, talent, and capital.

PHX FWD

Founder-led software community uniting Arizona builders through events, peer groups, and startup-focused resources.

AZ PROPTECH COLLECTIVE

A community uniting real estate, construction, and tech innovators to shape Arizona's built environment.

MAC
MISSION ACCELERATION CENTER SOUTHWEST

Accelerating defense and aerospace innovation through founder support, workforce development, and mission-aligned industry partnerships.

AZ CLEANTECH

Uniting Arizona's climate innovators across energy, water, and mobility to accelerate clean tech collaboration.

PHOENIX Rising FINTECH

A community of fintech and payments professionals driving innovation while supporting each other's growth.

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