

GRIT

FT. THE NEXT LEADERS

Chip McCrimmon ▶

Lauren DeSouza ▼



MEET THE CLASS of 2020



THE 2020 VALEDICTORIANS

◀ *Katrina Albert*

Zach McMahon ▶

Aileen Agada ▼



ED.03
OCT. 2020



MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED

◀ *Jesse Abrams*

& MORE!

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

You made it! One pandemic, a lot of economic uncertainty, a global movement for much needed social change; through the last 6 months, our 80+ entrepreneurs kept going, kept building, kept fighting for change. Despite a rapid move to virtual program delivery, our class of 2020 is resoundingly one of our strongest yet and they've maintained momentum behind solutions that will help us accelerate our road to recovery. Thank you to all of you for your resilience, grit, creativity and for setting the stage for many more intrepid entrepreneurs to come.

So, in this issue, we celebrate YOU, the class of 2020. We'll take a look into the ventures being built by our most promising leaders; leaders like Aileen Agada and Chip McCrimmon, who both took a brave stand to bring action in support of Black Lives Matter and Indigenous rights. We'll talk to our founders who are shooting for the moon, with solutions to huge, global challenges; founders like Natasha Dhayagude, who is working to eliminate food waste using the hidden power of mushrooms. We'll get technical with some of our founders who are using tech to make a positive impact on society or the world; like Amir Hoss and Mojtaba Hajjhasani who are working hard to improve detection of COVID-19 and minimize its spread. We'll talk to friends and colleagues, turned co-founders; partners like Pape Wade and Amanda Arciero who found a common pain point that they knew they could solve together. Last but not least, like any good yearbook, we'll introduce you to our ventures voted

most likely to succeed; ventures like Homewise, co-founded by Jesse Abrams, winner of The W. Galen Weston Top Entrepreneur Award for 2020.

Most of all, we'll be celebrating the entire class of 2020, the many milestones you've achieved throughout your NEXT experience and the powerful community you've built. We've been blown away by your ability to build meaningful connections and a strong sense of community - not to be downplayed in a virtual world. As Lauren DeSouza, Next 36, puts it "part of being a great founder is having the support of your peers. I am so thankful for and inspired by the friends and connections I've made throughout all our experiences in the program and know they will be lifelong friends". To Lauren and the rest of the class of 2020, we're so thrilled that you'll be able to lean on each other as you continue to scale your ventures.

Each and every one of you has made us proud, provided motivation during a very challenging 6 months and you are leaving big shoes to fill for the class of 2021 (applications open!). While many things are uncertain, we are certain that you will see much success in the years to come. As John Stackhouse, SVP at RBC (NEXT Transformational partner), so eloquently put it "get behind this generation or get out of the way. It's these entrepreneurs who will be leading us through the 2020s and 2030. If we can all get behind them, then I am sure it will lead us to be a place far better than where we are today."

Well, we're behind you all the way.



JENN PATTERSON

*Chief Marketing Officer,
NEXT Canada*

NEXT

GRIT, Edition 03; October 2020 **PUBLISHER:** NEXT Canada **EDITOR IN CHIEF:** Jenn Patterson
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Steph Hancock, Emily Gilmour **GRAPHIC DESIGNER:** Olivia Tomic
NEXT Canada, 175 Bloor Street East, South Tower Suite 1800, Toronto, ON, M4W 3R8
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NEXT CANADA'S CLASS OF 2020



The Class of 2020 is chock a block full of impressive, creative and ambitious entrepreneurs. They're one of our strongest cohorts to date (and certainly the most Zoom savvy).

In the pages that follow, we've profiled 25 of our most promising founders and ventures across 5 categories; a group nominated by their peers and the team at NEXT. In our humble opinion, these founders hold the key to unlocking all kinds of potential for Canada...and the world.

NEXT LEADERS

Meet the founders who embody the spirit of entrepreneurship and who are setting a positive example for generations to come. They are driven, passionate, empathic, self-aware, humble and committed to their craft. Oh the places they will go.

[JENNIFER ARNOLD](#) ▶

[CHIP MCCRIMMON](#) ▶

[LAUREN DESOUZA](#) ▶

[ELISE TASTET](#) ▶

[AILEEN AGADA](#) ▶

MOST AMBITIOUS



All entrepreneurs need a certain level of ambition, but these fearless founders are brave enough to tackle problems that may seem unsolvable. Where there is a will, there is a way and these folks are proof that moonshots can be an earthly reality.

[CHINOVA BIOWORKS](#) ▶

[RIBBIT](#) ▶

[NOLEAK DEFENCE](#) ▶

[LUX](#) ▶

BEST USE OF TECH



We all know that technology is powerful and transformative. But, these founders have harnessed next level tech to make a positive impact on society. With all that brain power, they could have solved just about anything, but we're happy they've committed themselves to changing the world, for better.

[LUCID](#) ▶

[EAIGLE](#) ▶

[ELITE NEUROKINETIX](#) ▶

[ALT TEX](#) ▶

[STEADIWEAR](#) ▶

STRONGEST TEAM



Some say it's love at first sight, some say it's more like dating. Whatever their journey, these co-founders have found someone to share their passions, complement their skill sets and build something amazing with. So yeah, a pretty perfect marriage.

[INTELLICULTURE](#) ▶

[AIRUDI](#) ▶

[ASCEND](#) ▶

[B2B QUOTES](#) ▶

[ORIGAMI XR](#) ▶

MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED



When you ask 80 overachievers to help pick a peer who is most likely to succeed, well then, you know the odds are in their favour. These founders are building ventures destined to scale, make a huge impact on our country and will have many of us saying "I knew them when".

[HOMEWISER](#) ▶

[MOMENT ENERGY](#) ▶

[PRIVATE AI](#) ▶


[HOOKMOTION](#) ▶

[SUMMATTI](#) ▶

MENTORSHIP IS THE SPARK FOR GREAT LEADERSHIP AND GROWTH

*By: Jennifer Arnold, Co-founder & CEO,
MinervaAI; Next AI - Toronto*

Jennifer is a veteran of the Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Anti-Terrorist Financing industry, working at two of Canada's largest banks before setting out on her own to build MinervaAI alongside co-founder Damian Tran.



MinervaAI predicts who poses money laundering and terrorist financing risks to banks. They provide automated, accurate and audit-proof anti-money laundering investigations at a fraction of the cost of compliance.





fter meeting Laura Curtis Ferrara, Scotiabank’s Global Chief Marketing Officer, through NEXT’s mentor matching program, I have gained wisdom and skills that will totally help my venture succeed in the long run. I now appreciate that finding the perfect mentor is a bit of an art, so here I’ll share some advice when it comes to finding a great mentor and getting the most out of this relationship:

1. Find a mentor who fills gaps in your skillset

For me, meeting Laura was kind of love at first sight. We had our initial phone call and spoke for about an hour, maybe an hour and a half. From an entrepreneur’s perspective, it was everything that I needed because she filled a gap in my skill set – marketing. Even though she came in with some trepidation around our relationship because she recognized the complexities and nuance within the anti-money laundering (AML) space, Laura was absolutely the perfect person. Her talent and belief in the richness of storytelling really was an eye opener for me – I still have tons of work to do there. We’ve already gotten into the richness of the name of my venture, MinervaAI, and the opportunities for storytelling there.

2. Find someone who “gets you” and can help tell your story

My primary learning from Laura revolves around this notion of storytelling and knowing who you are. If you know who you are, the problem that you’re solving and the greater calling of what you’re serving, you deliver as a founder. The AML community is divided into two camps: true believers, of which I’m a part of, and those who treat it as a “tick box” exercise. There’s a lot to be leveraged in the storytelling and value creation around being a true believer, keeping bad money

out of the system and safeguarding our financial system. Ultimately, everything comes back to your story and knowing in your heart of hearts who you are and who you serve as an organization.

3. Just ASK

Your mentor is not psychic. You have to ask the question if there’s something you’d like to know. I think people often get frightened and intimidated. Admittedly, I started out that way. But, you really do just have to be candid with your mentor and they’ll tell you if they can help you or not.

EXTRA CREDIT

[Learn more about Jennifer and Laura’s story on LaunchPod ▶](#)



Once I realized that Jen had built a very specific solution to a very clear problem, then our conversations really focused on storytelling. It was very clear to me that Jen is her own best marketing - she crystallizes the issue and is able to quickly move from problem to solution-set. Jen goes beyond the value-proposition and tells wonderful human stories about how many people MinervaAI can help.”

- LAURA CURTIS FERRERA

Global Chief Marketing Officer, Scotiabank

Scotiabank.

is a proud supporter of NEXT

2020

NEXT LEADERS
.....
CLASS OF 2020

MY INDIGENOUS CULTURE IS THE BEDROCK OF MY SUCCESS

By: Chipewyan “Chip” McCrimmon; Co-founder & CEO, FalcOn-X; Next 36

Chip holds a Bachelor’s degree in Political Science from Brock University, and recently completed the Masters of Management, Innovation & Entrepreneurship program from The Smith School of Business at Queen’s University.

Chip is Dené and a Treaty 8 band member of Deninu K’ue First Nation, with his home community located in Fort Resolution, Northwest Territories on the Eastern shore of the Great Slave Lake.



FalcOn-x helps local landfills reduce their carbon emissions by providing an add on technology that captures, separates and purifies greenhouse gas emission.



My Dené culture is my superpower. I'll admit, I'm still learning about it, but right now I've come to know three pillars that ultimately make me a stronger founder:

1. Helping others, without expecting anything in return

From a young age, my Indigenous culture has taught me the importance of sharing and caring for others. It has helped me to understand the value of helping others with no expectation of getting anything in return. I have come to realize over the years that this pillar of my culture can help make a huge difference in terms of success, both personally and professionally. Selfless acts will help bring your peers up, especially when they are in need. It's important to note that you should not expect anything in return, as that is how a true leader acts. However, through a lifetime of experiences I have come to realize that a helping hand will eventually find itself back to you one way or another.

2. Valuing wisdom and staying humble

In entrepreneurship, mentorship and guidance are crucial keys to growth. I'm humble in the sense that I'm aware that I don't know everything and there's always more to learn. Since childhood, it has been ingrained in me to learn from my elders and respect their wisdom. I was raised to be curious about life, to always have a willingness to learn from those wiser than me, and to be humble in my pursuit of this valuable knowledge. This pillar of Indigenous culture has given

me a coachable mindset, which is vital as an entrepreneur - This mindset has allowed me to not only form better connections with my peers, but has advanced my growth trajectory tenfold.

3. Respecting Mother Earth

Respecting Mother Earth is one of the most important pillars of Indigenous culture. When I was growing up, I frequently went hunting, fishing, and trapping throughout Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories. When I had a successful hunt for moose or white tail deer, we used all of the animal and did not waste any of it. I learned that Mother Earth will provide for me and I should not take this for granted. I was taught to be grateful and respectful of all she gave - knowing not to be greedy and not to take more than I need. This is analogous with business and the growing importance of sustainability in all business practices. This value has also led me to work to solve climate change. Every year, it seems to be getting worse and worse. If my founder-market fit can help us find a solution, you better believe I am going to try. I want to have a massive impact on the world, and to me, this is the best way I can do that.

EXTRA CREDIT

Learn more about Chip in an interview with him and his "mother bear", AJ Bird, on [LaunchPod](#) ▶

LAUREN DESOUZA

Founder of Ace; Next 36

Co-founder and CEO of Ace, Lauren is a recent graduate of Wilfred Laurier University where she completed her Honours Bachelor of Business Administration.

Ace's interview preparation platform allows users to complete mock interviews and provides personalized, automated feedback on their content, communication, and confidence.

ELISE TASTET

Co-founder of Tastet; Next AI - Montreal

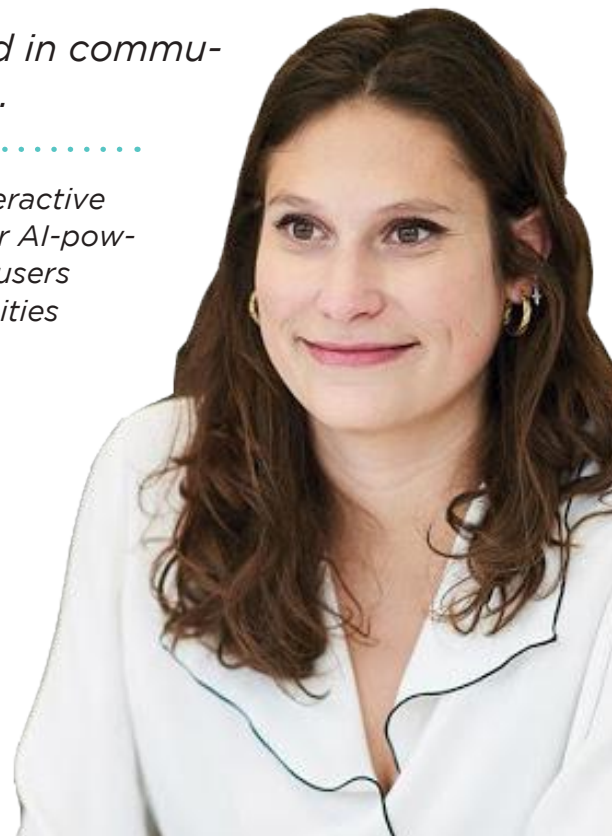
Co-founder and CEO Elise has a background in communications and a passion for food and people.

Founded by Elise and Olivier Tastet, Tastet is the #1 interactive guide of the best local eats and drinks in Montreal. Their AI-powered recommendation engine matches over 2M annual users with their ideal establishment in one of the top foodie cities of the world.

WHY ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

Being an entrepreneur allows you to have a real impact on societal, environmental and economic issues. It gives you a voice and the power to enact change whilst allowing you to decide the course and the way in which you work on a daily basis.

IN FIVE YEARS... We would like to see Tastet in all major cities and hope to continue to have a positive impact on the local economy and small businesses.





WHY ENTREPRENEURSHIP? To create opportunities for others that aren't otherwise there. Creating something out of nothing is extremely intriguing; what's even better is creating something that will have a real, global impact and knowing you possess the ability to do so.

IN FIVE YEARS... I envision Ace to be a widely-adopted communication skills training platform that has expanded beyond interview preparation and is making a real impact on people's lives.

WHAT MAKES A GREAT FOUNDER? Part of being a great founder is having the support of your peers. I am so thankful for and inspired by the friends and connections I've made throughout all our experiences in the program and know they will be lifelong friends - cheers!

AILEEN AGADA

Founder of BeBlended; Next 36

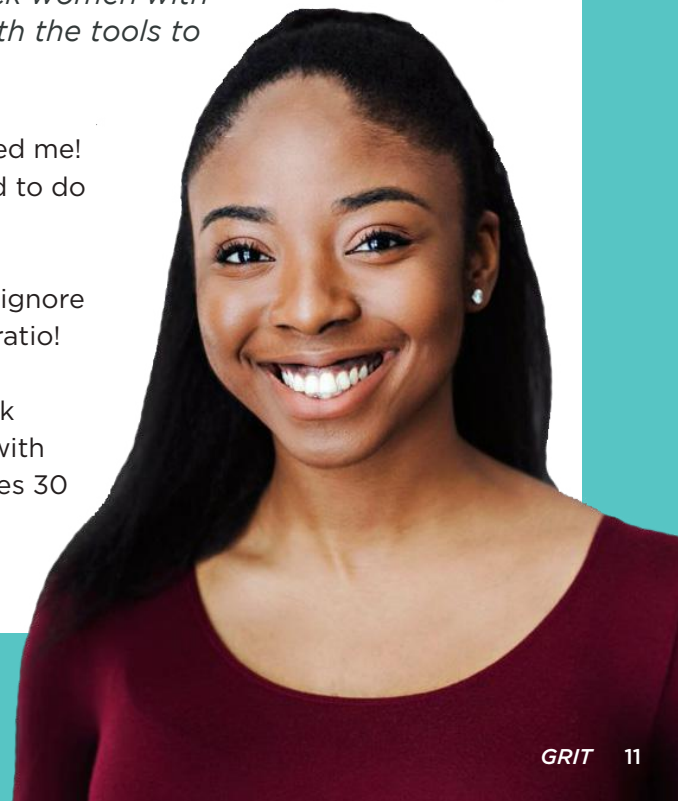
Aileen is currently studying Environmental Engineering at the University of Waterloo. She has a passion for engineering, solving systemic problems, and inspiring women to be their best selves.

Black women in North America are constantly turned away from hair salons because hairstylists don't know how to work on their hair texture. BeBlended is a SaaS enabled marketplace that connects Black women with tailored hairstylists while providing hairstylists with the tools to efficiently run their businesses.

WHY ENTREPRENEURSHIP? Entrepreneurship pursued me! I found a personal problem worth solving and decided to do something about it.

ANY ADVICE FOR OTHER ENTREPRENEURS? Never ignore the numbers. Always try to calculate the LTV to CAC ratio!

IN FIVE YEARS... I see myself revolutionizing the Black haircare industry by working full-time on BeBlended with an amazing team! Perhaps you might see me on Forbes 30 Under 30 too ;)



AILEEN AGADA
HEPBURN VALEDICTORIAN AWARD

2020

MOST AMBITIOUS
.....
CLASS OF 2020

MORE MUSHROOMS, LESS FOOD WASTE

*By: Natasha Dhayagude; Co-founder,
Chinova Bioworks; Next Founders*

Chinova Bioworks has developed a natural preservative extracted from white button mushrooms for use in food and beverage products.

lelelelelele

Natasha was named Startup Canada's Young Entrepreneur of the Year in 2017 and Startup Canada's Woman Entrepreneur of the Year in 2019 for her work with Chinova. She holds a Bachelor of Science, Biochemistry, from University of New Brunswick.

WHAT PROBLEM ARE YOU SOLVING?

At Chinova, we're working to eliminate food waste. Did you know that \$49.5B worth of food is lost or wasted in Canada alone? This staggering loss shows that there is no lack or shortage of food, but that the culprit is spoilage. As co-founders, David Brown and I challenged ourselves to work with nature to find the ultimate solution. The answer came in the form of an extract from white button mushrooms. At Chinova, we are pioneering



the use of this mushroom fiber to provide consumers and brands with a clean-label solution. This technology helps to improve the quality, freshness and shelf-life of food and beverage products while reducing food waste and ensuring an abundant food supply for the future generations.

As responsible consumers with backgrounds in biochemistry and microbiology, David and I felt compelled to start Chinova Bioworks with the aim to deliver clean-label ingredients and reduce food waste. Preservation is essential for almost all consumer products, but natural and effective solutions have been hard to find. This is where Chinova fills the gap. Using a fiber extracted from the stems of white button mushrooms, under the trade name “Chiber™” is the healthy, clean-label solution to improve the quality, freshness and shelf-life of a variety of products. Unlike other preservatives on the market, Chiber is natural, transparent and, effective at inhibiting spoilage against bacteria, yeast, mold and does not affect any sensory characteristics like taste, smell, texture or appearance of any of your favorite food and beverage brands.

WHAT WAS YOUR INSPIRATION?

For most consumers, the clean label movement becomes relevant when they are at the grocery store checking out product labels and questioning the ingredients. It is more than a product’s ingredient label and evolves as consumers become more and more engaged in the farm to fork process. As responsible consumers with backgrounds in biochemistry and microbiology, my Co-founder and I felt compelled to start Chinova Bioworks with the aim to deliver clean-label ingredients and reduce food waste.

Looking to nature, the founders came across a natural and sustainable alternative to artificials in a fiber extracted from white button mushrooms. Since then, we have been working tirelessly to tap into the amazing protective qualities of this mushroom extract to maintain product quality, freshness, and shelf life in a sustainable way resulting in increased consumer satisfaction and reduced food waste.

PRESERVATIVES HAVE BEEN AROUND FOR YEARS AND ARE DEEPLY ROOTED IN THE FOOD AND BEVERAGE MARKET. HOW ARE YOU BREAKING INTO THE MARKET AND THEN SCALING?

The key to commercializing and launching Chinova really stems from the relationship Dave and I have as founders of the company. We both have different skill sets that complement one another really well, this really helped us move through any barriers that came our way. The first couple years of the company were heavily focused on research and development which is very time consuming and requires a lot of patience. We were able to get through that process by relying on each other’s skills and adding to our team along the way. Now at our current stage, we have commercialized the technology into the market, gained traction and launched products. The next stage is continuing to scale the operations of the company and raise funding. Though this process is tough for any entrepreneur, we as founders have developed the ability to focus on “good conflict”, which focuses on the problem at hand and coming together to find a resolution. This is what helps drive the company forward to enable us to reach the next level.

ANY ADVICE FOR ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS?

Ducks have webbed feet which allows them to paddle and swim in water more smoothly. When ducks swim, they push their feet back in a kicking motion so that the webbing catches the water and they are able to swim forward. Be like a duck, calm and controlled above water but furiously kicking underwater to continue innovating and propelling forward.

EXTRA CREDIT

Learn more about Natasha and Chinova on the latest episode of **[RBC Disruptors](#)** ▶





RIBBIT

Co-founded by Carl Pigeon; Next Founders

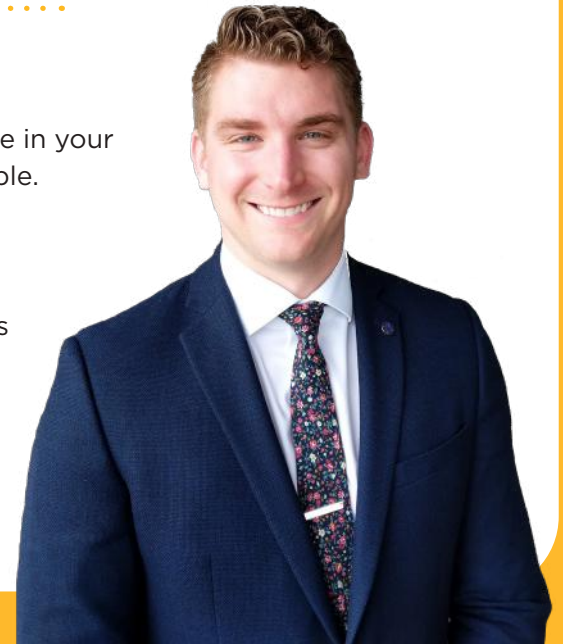
Pilots take up valuable resources and impose operational limits on airlines. Ribbit is building autonomous software to replace commercial pilots and starting an cargo airline.

.....

Co-founder Carl is an Aerospace Engineer and pilot.

ANY ADVICE FOR ENTREPRENEURS? The quality of people in your network are much more important than the number of people. So, choose wisely and surround yourself with great people! One day when you're in a position to help, give back.

IN FIVE YEARS... Ribbit will be operating 15 autonomous Cessna 206 cargo aircrafts in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. We'll be generating 10 million in ARR and developing the hardware and software for the next larger autonomous aircraft to serve customers like FedEx, DHL, and UPS.



NOLEAK DEFENCE

Co-founded by Rafael Libardi & Vinicius Santos; Next AI - Toronto

NoLeak helps detect and prevent crimes, and identify suspects. They transform security cameras by applying AI to detect risky, suspicious and unsafe behaviours, and decrease up to 60% of organization's security cost.

.....

Founder and Executive Director, Rafael (right) has security experience across corporations and defence organizations in Latin America. He holds a Master's degree in Information Security and has a B.S. Degree in Information Systems. Chief Research Officer, Vinicius (left) received a Master's Degree in Computer Science and also has a B.S. Degree in Computer Engineering.



LUX

Co-founded by Katrina Albert & Vincent Lachance; Next AI - Montreal

Lux creates atmospheric satellites for Earth observation. Today, in the context of bushfire management, Lux's proprietary aerial images acquired by high-altitude balloons helps inform authorities on where the fires are in real-time and how to allocate resources.



.....
Executive Director and Co-founder, Katrina is an experienced sales and partnerships professional. Co-founder and CEO Vincent is a serial entrepreneur and recieved the Quebec Young Entrepreneur of the Year award.

ANY ADVICE FOR ENTREPRENEURS?

What you focus on expands.

IN FIVE YEARS... We'll be supporting governments, research institutions and companies in making more informed and responsible decisions through our product line.



KATRINA ALBERT
NEXT AI - MONTREAL
VALEDICTORIAN



WHY ENTREPRENEURSHIP? I come from a country with over 300.000 homicides in the last five years, of which less than 10% were solved. After I was introduced to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, I decided to devote my life to create a safe and fair society.

IN FIVE YEARS... Every person in the world will be able to transform their street camera into a 24/7 security officer protecting their loved ones, and the police will have multiple AI security officers per square to detect and prevent crimes.

2020

BEST USE OF TECH
.....
CLASS OF 2020



EAIGLE

EAIGLE is a computer vision and AI solution for data-driven facility operations through real-time occupancy monitoring. EAIGLE utilized its AI platform to measure body temperature non-intrusively to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Amir Hoss, Founder & CEO, EAIGLE and Mojtaba Hajjhasani, Research Engineer, EAIGLE; Next AI - Toronto

Founder and CEO Amir (left) holds a MASc degree in Mechanical engineering and has 8+ years of professional experience in energy and sustainability management in Ontario, Canada. Amir received the 2019 Canada's Young Energy Professional of the Year Award by the International Association of Energy Engineers.

Research Engineer Mojtaba (right) holds a Ph.D. in electrical and computer science with 12+ years professional experience in computer vision, image processing, machine learning and artificial intelligence with a focus on facial recognition.





MEASURING BODY TEMPERATURE TO SLOW THE SPREAD OF COVID



HOW IS YOUR TECHNOLOGY HELPING STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19?

EAIGLE's core expertise is crowd monitoring and what really differentiates us is the capability of monitoring large crowds at a high degree of accuracy. Our solution is a computer vision and AI-powered software that is camera brand agnostic. It connects to 3rd party security and thermal cameras or leverages an existing camera network to monitor large crowds without any interruption in the crowd's traffic flow. When the novel coronavirus began to spread in North America, EAIGLE introduced a new AI solution built upon its existing crowd monitoring AI platform that helps organizations prevent COVID-19 outbreaks in their facilities. Once someone is detected to have an elevated body temperature, an alarm is issued in real-time, a notification also is sent out to security personnel for further action. This feature can also be applied for social distancing and mask compliance scenarios.

We help all kinds of industries; from government and public admin to commercial retail and real estate, from manufacturing

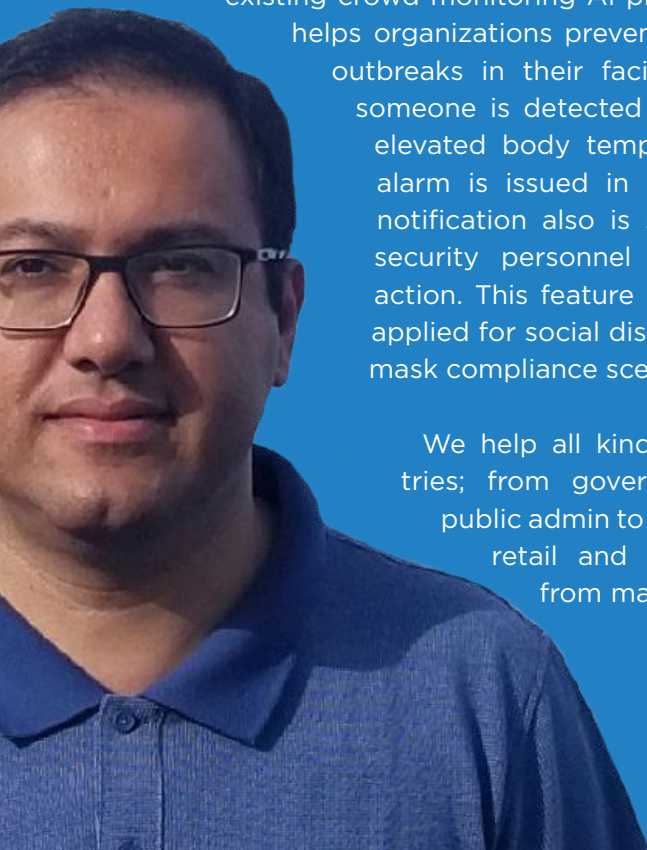
and warehouses to healthcare and pharmaceuticals, our solution is applicable to any operation to optimize their COVID-19 prevention and safe back-to-work strategy.

WHY SHOULD OTHER ENTREPRENEURS CONSIDER USING TECH FOR GOOD, ESPECIALLY NOW?

Innovation is crucial during times of need, and right now is no exception. In fact, now more than ever in our modern history, entrepreneurs and inventors are relied upon to help guide the world through this global health crisis. If there are potential ideas, solutions, and technologies that can go towards helping society reopen safely, entrepreneurs should jump to seize every single opportunity to apply them.

WHERE DO YOU PLAN TO TAKE EAIGLE IN THE NEXT 5-10 YEARS?

EAIGLE technology was built to be expandable to a range of industries and businesses and scalable to a variety of vision-based solutions. Our progress during COVID-19 of introducing a new AI solution that is applicable to all verticals and industries, is a testament to this. We have a solid product development roadmap with a market expansion plan for the next 5 years and are focusing on following our short and long-term plans to become the world's frontier of occupancy data analytics.



2020

BEST USE OF TECH
.....
CLASS OF 2020

LUCID

LUCID is an AI-music therapy company building products that increase access to effective and safe methods for improving mental health and wellness. Their first product VIBE is for those suffering from moderate to severe stress and anxiety who want a fun and personalized alternative for maintaining their mental health.

Co-founded by Zach McMahon & Aaron Labbé; Next AI - Toronto

CTO Aaron (right) has 8+ years of professional experience as an audio engineer and psychoacoustics researcher. During his studies at Ryerson University, Aaron began to experiment with ways of using sound and music to offset the symptoms he was dealing with and ultimately discovered the foundation for what LUCID has become today.

CEO Zach (left) is a graduate of the Rotman School of Business and holds a BSBA in Management Information Systems from Kansas State University. Previously, he has worked in strategy and BD across quantum, biotech and oil and gas.



ZACH MCMAHON
NEXT AI - TORONTO
VALEDICTORIAN



TURNING MUSIC INTO A TOOL FOR GOOD WITH AI



WHAT ARE YOU BUILDING WITH LUCID?

Currently, LUCID has 3 patent-pending technologies. The first is LUCID's groundbreaking affective music recommendation system, a deep reinforcement learning system that learns from one's emotional state to recommend outcome-driven music. Secondly is our novel method for integrating auditory beat stimulation into music. This powerful sound-based stimulus is scientifically validated to help with indications of anxiety, panic, and cognitive performance. Lastly, our generative music methodology leverages the data we generate in VIBE to create fit-for-purpose functional music, with the help of generative deep learning algorithms such as GANS.

WHAT TRACTION HAVE YOU SEEN TO DATE?

LUCID has partnered with organizations such as Steelcase and the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies to launch numerous employee wellness programs. Additionally, VIBE is available on numerous corporate benefits platforms and marketplaces - including US-based Fringe Benefits, League, and Honeybee. Moving forward, we're also collaborating with key music industry players to produce music for functional outcomes. Our recent partnership with Toron-

to local Grayson Music provided Grayson musicians with musical features correlated to desired emotional outcomes, as analyzed from VIBE's entertainment data.

HOW IS LUCID HELPING PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD?

During the trying months of lockdown, the LUCID team spoke with users around the world who were using the app to maintain their mental balance. A user located in Italy proclaimed to listen to VIBE daily to cope with the nation's strenuous extended lockdown. Another user struggling with PTSD and panic attacks relied on the app for their chronic sleep issues.

After a thorough analysis of the aggregated user cohort, LUCID found overwhelmingly positive data with reports of lower anxiety, increased valence (positive emotions), and moods moving closer to their cognitive targets. After a single VIBE session, users were averaging an outstanding 20% percent reduction in anxiety levels, across all modes.

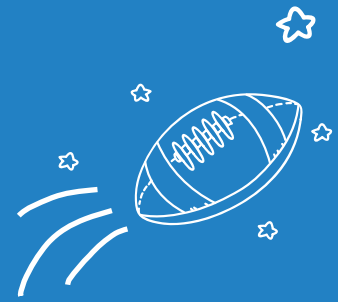
EXTRA CREDIT

Learn more about Zach and LUCID on [RBC Disruptors](#) ▶



2020

BEST USE OF TECH
.....
CLASS OF 2020



ELITE NEUROKINETIX

Co-founded by Michael Tola Denis, Pamela Champagne, Vincent DiStefano; Next AI - Montreal

Sports participation is in decline among North American youth, particularly in sports deemed higher risk, such as football. This trend is mostly due to the increasing rates of sports-related concussions. Elite Neurokinetix (ENK) offers a data-driven approach to football safety by combining neuroscience, movement analysis, and AI.

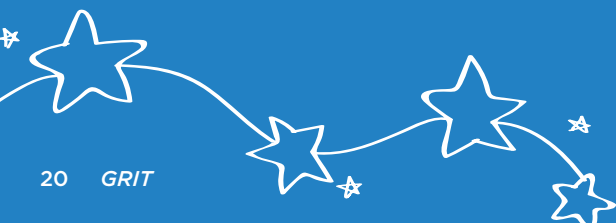


HOW ARE YOU WORKING TO MINIMIZE THE INCIDENCE OF SPORTS-RELATED CONCUSSIONS?

ENK offers evidence-based tools, powered by AI, that help coaches (1) evaluate their players' biomechanical risks for injury, (2) track performance and improvements based on behavioral interventions, and (3) monitor players' mental health for optimal development of the athletes.

WHY ENTREPRENEURSHIP? We believe in business as a force for good and want to develop innovative solutions that benefit society.

IN FIVE YEARS... ENK's athlete-centered tools, powered by AI, will improve the training experience of football, rugby, hockey and soccer players around the world.





THE ENK LINEUP

CEO Pamela believes in business as a force for good and wants to develop innovative solutions that benefit society. She has a bachelor's degree in Business administration specialized in entrepreneurship from HEC Montréal.

CTO Michael started programming at a very young age, coding video games, first in Flash, then in Java. Now he's using his coding abilities and his curious mind to have a positive impact on the life of young athletes.

Lead Co-Researcher Vincent is currently completing his Master's degree in School/Applied Child Psychology at McGill with a focus on increasing mental and physical well-being among at-risk youths through the use of sport.

STEADIWEAR

Co-founded by Mark Elias; Next Founders



Essential tremor and Parkinson's disease cause debilitating tremors that make the simplest daily activities such as eating, writing and drinking a challenge. Steadewear's flagship product, the Steadi-One, is the world's first smart glove that stabilizes the wrist, restoring independence and quality of life.

Mark has a background in vibration damping and entrepreneurship with a Bachelor of Applied Science (B.A.Sc), Civil Engineering, from The University of Toronto.

WHY ENTREPRENEURSHIP? Simple - I am passionate about solving this problem.

IN FIVE YEARS... I see Steadiwear successfully scaled at an international level



2020

BEST USE OF TECH
.....
CLASS OF 2020



ALT TEX

Did you know, fashion is one of the most polluting industries on the planet? ALT TEX is tackling fashion's ecological footprint by engineering planet-friendly, carbon neutral and biodegradable fabrics.

Their goal is to become the leading source of synthetic fabrics, replacing the environmentally harmful oil-dependent fabrics that take up 65% of our wardrobes today.

Founded by Myra Arshad; Next 36



Myra is a recent graduate from the Schulich School of Business with a BBA specialized in strategy and entrepreneurship. After graduating, Myra spent ten months at Procter & Gamble as an Account Executive, managing a \$50M business, before leaving to pursue entrepreneurship full time. Her goal? To flip the \$25 trillion fashion industry on its head.



HOW THE NEXT GENERATION CAN CHANGE THE WORLD



Ft. John Stackhouse

At a time of economic, social and environmental uncertainty, we all have a part to play in rebuilding. Yet, there is a special opportunity amongst value-driven millennials who are stepping up to tackle new, systemic challenges, head on. Recently, John Stackhouse, SVP at RBC, joined three up and coming entrepreneurs who each embody the ethos of a modern day founder. Myra Arshad (Co-founder, ALT TEX), Zach McMahon (Co-founder, LUCID) and Natasha Dhayagude (Co-founder, Chinova Bioworks) are shaking up their respective industries and, in some cases, creating new ones. Listen in to the full episode [here](#).

Myra has been nominated as one of our best uses of tech for the work she is doing to upend the fashion industry; to bring “new systems, products and processes that challenge old paradigms for the better”. Here, we share an excerpt where John and Myra discuss why it’s so important that more young entrepreneurs tackle big challenges, today.

JOHN: First, let me ask you about your journey in becoming an entrepreneur - do you feel you were born an entrepreneur?

MYRA: I always knew I was going to take a bit of a non-traditional path and I think it really goes back to how I got to Canada. We emigrated here when I was one, with only a couple hundred dollars in our pockets and I knew early on that I wanted to create something bigger for my family. When I came here, I think I saw things through a very different lens than people who have grown up here. I saw the problems with the systems and infrastructure - climate, economic, social. Because of the hardships that I saw as a kid growing up, I think I was just a lot more aware of these issues, so that awareness drove me to get into entrepreneurship and change those systems for the better.

JOHN: I’m curious to learn what this commitment to changing the world might say about your generation and what it can do for Canada in the 2020s?

MYRA: Our generation is so acutely aware of everything that’s going on in the world and we’ve realized that the systems which have been operating so far are broken - this is what motivates us to do something different.

JOHN: You’re tackling a global challenge through your company. While entrepreneurs often want to take their idea to a global level before someone else does - what do you need most to succeed in scaling to this extent?

MYRA: I think that we need to have connections in a range of ecosystems to succeed globally. One upside to us all being virtual is that I have spent time attending international conferences and events and connecting with incubators and accelerators from different countries, things we wouldn’t be able to do normally. It’s brought to light the importance of facilitating a movement of talent and funding across different communities so that we can truly make a global impact.

JOHN: I think you’ve just illustrated perfectly what an entrepreneur is: When others see obstacles, you see opportunities. Thank you and I wish you nothing but the best as you continue to build a sustainable business.

 **[Listen to the full conversation on the RBC Disruptors podcast](#)** ▶



As one of NEXT’s Transformational partners, RBC is a champion of supporting Canada’s next generation of entrepreneurs. Learn more about our partnership and recent renewal [here](#).

2020

STRONGEST TEAM
.....
CLASS OF 2020

AIRUDI

Airudi's virtual HR assistant, Pam, helps companies make better (and faster) decisions by applying AI that learns from HR best practices, laws and past data to provide efficient, automated and improved HR management.

Co-founded by Amanda Arciero & Pape Wade; Next AI - Montreal

VP of Operations Amanda (right) holds both a BAsC and Masters in Labor and Industrial Relations from the University of Montreal. She brings deep professional experience in HR and sales to scaling Airudi. CEO Pape (left) also brings an education and experience in HR to their partnership.

**THE
DREAM
TEAM**
↔



TURNING AN INDUSTRY PAIN POINT INTO AN OPPORTUNITY



HOW DID YOU BECOME CO-FOUNDERS?

We have known each other for 5 years and used to be colleagues. As HR professionals, we often discussed our shared passion for helping people and organizations to achieve their full potential everyday. HR is about helping organizations, improving professional development plans, and focusing on people. However, we quickly realized that the reality was different: HR is admin-oriented. Unfortunately, many companies still rely on manual methods or outdated information to draw insights from data. This creates a bottleneck when trying to make timely and effective decisions. We connected on the realization that this needed to change, which resulted in the creation of Airudi.

WHAT PROBLEM ARE YOU SOLVING AND WHAT'S YOUR SOLUTION?

We believe automation provides reliability, consistency, speed and cost benefits that are unmatched. HR professionals who don't use automation for tasks such as payroll, applicant tracking, training, compli-

ance, analytics reporting, job postings and more say they lose an average of 32 hours a week completing these tasks manually.

Through our virtual assistant Pam, Airudi has helped do away with unnecessary bureaucracies, management tasks and labor relations' complex research that stalls effective personnel management. By enabling HR professionals and managers with instant access to HR expertise, it frees up time to manage employees as people and subsequently enhance their productivity.

HOW DO YOU MAINTAIN A HEALTHY CO-FOUNDER RELATIONSHIP?

We are honest with each other and keep it real. We are aligned in terms of our personal values, and always prioritize effective communication within the team. Entrepreneurs who are looking for co-founders should seek out those with similar values and a common passion, ideally, complementary to each other.



READY FOR TAKEOFF

We have all been impacted by this unprecedented crisis. As proud builders, we'll rise up again and move forward in solidarity. The time has come to look to the future.

We are ready to spread our wings.

PRÊTS POUR LE DÉCOLLAGE

Nous sommes tous touchés par cette crise sans précédent. En fiers bâtisseurs, portés par un grand élan de solidarité, nous saurons nous relever et aller de l'avant. Le moment est venu de nous tourner vers l'avenir.

Tous ensemble, déployons nos ailes.



2020

STRONGEST TEAM
.....
CLASS OF 2020



INTELLICULTURE

IntelliCulture helps farms manage their equipment fleet with data analytics captured through IoT data loggers, enabling them to grow their farm into a sustainable and scalable business.

Co-founded by Cole Powers & Ramin Shaikhi; Next 36

Cole (left) recently graduated from The University of Waterloo with a degree in Mechanical Engineering, with an Option in Entrepreneurship. He has practical experience in the automotive and the solar industries.

Ramin (right) holds both a Bachelor of Applied Science and Masters in Mechanical and Mechatronics Engineering from The University of Waterloo.



FROM STUDENTS, TO FRIENDS, TO TRUSTED CO-FOUNDERS

HOW DID YOU BECOME CO-FOUNDERS?

We have known each other and worked closely together for many years. We all met through the University of Waterloo Alternative Fuels Team student design team, where we were all various team leads. The premise of the team was essentially a startup sandbox, and the goal was to convert a Chevy Camaro to a hybrid electric vehicle. From there, we didn't want to give up the freedom and liberty of working on our own project, and we got chatting more and more about the agriculture space. After enough chats at the pub, IntelliCutlure was born and we haven't looked back.

TELL US ABOUT INTELLICULTURE!

Farms are facing more pressure than ever to produce sufficient food for the world, and they lack data and visibility into their equipment management to optimize their operation. This lack of visibility leads to costly mistakes and increased cost to the farm.

IntelliCulture's core technology is equipment management software for farms. We provide a small GPS and logging device into farm machinery that enables our software system that provides visibility into crop coverage, equipment health and maintenance planning for farms. Our monitoring system identifies and notifies farms of costly mistakes, saving the farm up to \$28,000 in a single season. We prevent mis-spraying events through our easy-to-digest reports that allow the operations manager to

have a quick and clear understanding of what fields have been sprayed, and they can set their cycles accordingly.

In addition to preventing spraying mistakes, we automate maintenance procedures for farms. By simply plugging in our logger to machines, we instantly begin tracking all required maintenance events and provide farms visibility into these maintenance schedules. This helps encourage preventative maintenance, rather than reactive maintenance preventing downtime and costly breakdowns.

HOW DO YOU MAINTAIN A HEALTHY CO-FOUNDER RELATIONSHIP?

Our co-founding team holds a level of vulnerable trust as paramount. We are all incredibly open with one another, making us not just co-founders but best friends. This level of communication and trust truly bonds our team and helps us get through the tough times.

WHAT SHOULD YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS LOOK FOR IN A CO-FOUNDER?

Young entrepreneurs should look for a similar value system in their co-founders. Having alignment on the items that are intrinsically motivating amongst the founding team is incredibly valuable for the dynamic. Beyond that, I would encourage they look for folks that they have a solid foundation of communication and trust with.



ORIGAMI XR

Co-founded by Alannah O'Neill & Erik Peterson; Next AI - Toronto

Origami is a cloud computing tool that makes it easy to create and share volumetric augmented and virtual reality experiences. As the first truly scalable spatial computing workflow, they enable the future of remote work for 3D professionals.

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Co-founder Alannah previously worked as an editor at ELLE Canada magazine and as a strategic communications and marketing consultant for media companies. Co-founder Erik first started working in spatial computing in 2003 at Columbia University's AR/VR lab using military grade equipment. He was also IndieGogo's first employee and worked at Goldman Sachs.

WHAT MAKES YOU GREAT CO-FOUNDERS? We have very different and complementary skill sets and experience. While Erik's background is mainly in technology development and management, Alannah has focused on communications and operations.

DESCRIBE EACH OTHER IN A FEW WORDS:

Alannah: Erik is a natural leader and his technical skills constantly amaze me. His trend forecasting and analysis in the field of spatial computing has continually given us a head start.

Erik: Alannah has an innate ability to manage and juggle multiple threads making sure nothing gets dropped. On top of that, she can translate a complex technical space into concise and easily digestible language. Her secret weapon, that gives us a huge cultural advantage, is her ability to judge character quickly.

WHY ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

Alannah: I saw an opportunity to build a big Canadian company, and it was too good to pass up.

Erik: I like to tackle big problems.





B2B QUOTES

Co-founded by Mathieu Plante & Alexandre Vanier; Next AI - Montreal

B2B Quotes is a web platform helping businesses get in touch with the most relevant providers for their business needs such as web and marketing.

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Head of tech and product, Alex (right), is a serial entrepreneur, business advisor, product manager and experienced web developer. Alex was the first investor and interim CTO at Planned and co-founded Poches & Fils. CEO Mathieu (left) is an established entrepreneur and successful real estate investor with over 15 years of experience in sales and marketing in both B2C and B2B.

WHAT MAKES YOU A STRONG CO-FOUNDING TEAM? We are very different but with very complementary skill sets. Mathieu is a serial founder with a strong sales background and Alex has experience as a founder, product leader, and investor across e-commerce, marketplace, and SaaS.

Beyond our different backgrounds, we both have industry and team management expertise, so we are well positioned to scale. Plus, we're both parents so we have a similar approach to problem solving compared to other entrepreneurs at different life stages. Going through (personal and professional) high and lows together reinforces that we can all count on each other no matter the situation.

WHAT IMPRESSES YOU MOST ABOUT EACH OTHER?

Alex: Mathieu is one of the most impressive go-getters that I've met since I started doing business over 10 years ago. There is nothing he can't sell and almost no one he can't convince.

Mathieu: Alex's extensive background and vision have allowed B2B to evolve and gain momentum at a speed that I really didn't expect. I partnered with him for his tech experience and startup mindset, but he adapted to the company's needs and was able to positively impact almost every team unit at B2B.





ASCEND

Co-founded by Monty Ngan & Hannah Le; Next 36

As more people move into crowded city centres, rent/housing prices go up while plots of land continue to be underutilized. Ascend helps real estate developers, brokers and city planners discover undervalued development opportunities in less time.

.....



Monty is a senior in the Huntsman Program at the University of Pennsylvania, anticipating a double major in Economics and International Studies with concentrations in Business Analytics and Operations, Information and Decisions. He co-founded TalkED, an indigenous language preservation platform with the Philippine government, which won the 2015 Harvard Igniting Innovation Competition. Hannah is currently an Engineering Science student and among the top 20 International Scholar at the University of Toronto. She's also a graduate of The Knowledge Society and a medical physics researcher at Princess Margaret Hospital.

WHAT MAKES YOU A STRONG CO-FOUNDING TEAM? We have very different personalities but share the same set of values: honesty, work ethic, and fast iteration. Our respective work streams are complementary - Hannah leads the product development, while Monty leads sales and customer development. One of our greatest strengths is we can take customer feedback and respond to it very fast. Every two weeks or so, we ship things that improve both customer satisfaction, and, hence, retention!

DESCRIBE EACH OTHER IN A FEW WORDS

Monty: Hannah's one of the most thoughtful and self-aware people I know. She's constantly working to improve herself and really takes the time to learn from the people we meet.

Hannah: Monty is wonderful at connecting and helping people in an authentic way. He's the extroverted half that I need.

WHY ENTREPRENEURSHIP? I (Monty) grew up in the Philippines, on the same lot where my grandfather ran a small textile factory. He used to take me through the factory and explain how the business was run. His work was so impactful to the people who worked with him. I knew from then I wanted to start my own company.

We see a Future in your Future



Skills Development

Networking

Work Experience

Mental Well-Being

The future of work may be changing, but we know you have the potential, the ambition and the power to impact the world around you. That's why we created RBC® Future Launch, a program that increases your access to skill development, networking, work experience, mental well-being supports and services.

Empowering you for the jobs of tomorrow.

[rbc.com/futurelaunch](https://www.rbc.com/futurelaunch)

RBC Future Launch

Empowering the youth of today for the jobs of tomorrow.



HOW TO MAKE A GREAT IDEA STICK AND SCALE

By: Jesse Abrams, Founder & CEO, Homewise; Next Founders



Homewise automates the mortgage process online, enabling clients to apply in minutes to get the best mortgage from over 30 banks and lenders. Homewise's data intelligence technologies power a tailored experience that is a faster, easier and more transparent process, saving Canadians time and money when securing their home financing.

.....

Jesse spent the first part of his career focused on the digital marketing and advertising world. He later went on to lead, build and sell a data-driven ad agency. During this time, Jesse was distinguished by Marketing Magazine as a "Top 30 Under 30" marketer. On the side, Jesse founded two charitable fundraisers that have raised close to \$2 million over the last 10 years.



JESSE ABRAMS
THE W. GALEN WESTON TOP
ENTREPRENEUR AWARD



When I was running a digital advertising agency, one of our biggest clients was one of Canada's largest banks and I worked on their mortgage business. We were a data agency and they said, "when it comes to first time homebuyers or millennials, it's just not a demographic that we understand." So, my company conducted a data study and uncovered two really obvious things:

First, **there's a lack of transparency in the mortgage industry.** Yes, digitization and automations are amazing - that's where the market's going. In fact, that's the whole idea around our technology. However, even though banks are adopting this, you only get their one solution and don't know if you're getting the best product at the best rate, without risks of penalties. All of this is muddled through complicated processes and no transparency into the various options that are out there.

Second, **first-time homebuyers really don't understand mortgages and the way banks are talking to them makes them even more confused.** I got a good look under the hood about their mortgage process and how their main goal was to make as much money off their clients as possible. So, when I actually bought my first house about a year later, I knew I wasn't going to a big bank because I knew it wasn't a process that was in the best interest of a first-time homebuyer.

This sparked a **"there's got to be a better way"** moment. I realized what a great opportunity there was to help Canadian homebuyers find a better way to get a mortgage.

So far, along my "entrepreneurial path" there were a few things I look back on as drivers of Homewise' success:

1. Trial and error

I'm 33. When I was 26, I had a great idea that I tried to turn into a business. It didn't get anywhere because the idea might have been good, but the execution and timing wasn't there. When I was 29, I tried another business. Again, execution lacked. At 30, I decided this is the time to really do it and I jumped in. It took a lot of trial and error.

2. Validate your idea

I pulled together some of my favourite people I've worked with throughout my career, looked at the international market, saw there's some growth there and said, how do we build this in Canada? After testing the idea with different people, we developed the basic business plan and strategy.

3. Ask for help and leverage your network

I have a lot of people within my network that I asked for advice and they were amazing enough to provide a lot of support. A crucial piece of advice I got from a friend of mine was to build a version of our website in PDF form, send it out to 50 people and see what they think. The first draft got completely torn apart. Some people had major issues, while others said it was great. This process was very helpful as it allowed us to quickly take their suggestions, iterate and improve before we launched. It also validated that this was something people were hungry to be a part of. So, with this in our back pocket, we decided it was time to quit our jobs and do this full time.

4. Build a strong team

Luckily, I found an amazing co-founder, Carlos Meideiros, who has 25+ years of experience in the banking industry. He also has a plethora of degrees, including a PhD in Information Systems focused on neural networks. Since I'm more of a front-end, marketing guy, he's really the yin to my yang. He's focused on the back end, data and our machine learning technology, while I'm focused on the consumer.

5. Develop your proof of concept

Our first year we were working in my basement and putting our own money into the business. We generated as much revenue as we put in after about five months. That was a good initial proof of concept to set us on our way to raising our first round of financing and continuing to push our growth.

EXTRA CREDIT

[Learn more about Jesse's journey building Homewise on LaunchPod](#) ▶

2020

MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED
.....
CLASS OF 2020

MOMENT ENERGY

Moment is replacing diesel generators for remote communities by repurposing electric vehicle batteries into sustainable energy storage. Moment repurposes the battery life of discarded electric car batteries to create more reliable, renewable energy for different purposes like powering homes and renewables. They also hope to solve for the lack of safe and reliable energy in remote communities

Co-founded by Edward Chiang & Sumreen Rattan; Next 36

Edward and Sumreen both have a Bachelor of Mechatronics Systems Engineering from SFU. Edward (right) has worked in a variety of technical roles including hardware manufacturing logistics optimization and nuclear research.

During her undergraduate degree, Sumreen (left) landed a highly coveted 8-month internship at Apple in California and has worked at several technology companies in Vancouver. With their passion for electric vehicles and pushing boundaries, they co-founded SFU's first SAE Electric Race Team, building an electric race car from scratch.



MOMENT ENERGY
**THE SCOTIABANK OUTSTANDING
CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY AWARD**



MOMENT ENERGY
**RBC PEOPLE'S
CHOICE AWARD**



POWERING REMOTE COMMUNITIES WITH SUSTAINABLE ENERGY



HOW ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING WITH REMOTE COMMUNITIES TO CREATE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY STORAGE?

Right now, within Indigenous communities, our main focus is developing honest, trusting relationships and understanding what they truly need. We're really tired of seeing companies go in and use them for grants and leave them hanging after they realize that the return on investment is not 100 percent. As an entrepreneur, you really need to focus on building these kinds of relationships and truly understanding your customer. It's crucial for real success and impact.

In terms of the opportunity to solve for the lack of safe and reliable energy for these communities, I think we're in a position to help in a way that the government or large corporations can't. These communities will often go without power for weeks following a powerful storm. I experienced this first hand when I was living in a remote community near Ottawa. So, I started digging and it turns out that these communities are really diesel dependent. Meaning the reliability of their power is extremely low. They're begging the government for a solution. They're begging for renewables. But when they're trying to install solar or wind or hydro they learn that it's very intermittent, especially with solar power. They could have three to six days without solar or enough solar. This is where our batteries come in and we see a huge opportunity here.

HAVE YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO BE AN ENTREPRENEUR?

Growing up, I (Edward) watched in awe as my mom raised me as a single parent. She moved here when she was twenty five

from China with no money in her pockets. Her days consisted of working as a waitress in dim sum shops, working as a driver, putting herself through school and all the while inspiring us to be the best version of ourselves (like forcing me to join the Air Cadets, which you can hear more about in our LaunchPod episode [here](#)). All of this hustle led into her starting her own business, a restaurant she could call her own.

As entrepreneurs, we're often faced with the sentiment that the pursuit of opportunity is possible regardless of a lack of resources. This really strikes home with me. My mother embodied this and she is the main reason I've embarked on my entrepreneurial journey.

LOOKING FORWARD, WHAT DOES MOMENT HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH?

Diesel generators have been so normalized in our life. If you look to the right of a bouncy castle at any kids birthday's party, you'll see one of these diesel generators. Obviously this is a hazard to parents but it's also a pollutant that has toxic fumes. They're hot, super noisy and dangerous. And sometimes, they power whole communities. For about 50 to 100 years, there hasn't been any innovation in a more sustainable, clean, and safe solution. We really want to change that. If a kid touches our generator, nothing happens. It's totally fine. It's totally safe. That's why our long-term goal at Moment is to normalize safe, reliable and renewable energy.

EXTRA CREDIT

Learn more about Moment and Edward Chiang on [LaunchPod](#) ▶



PRIVATE AI

Co-founded by Pieter Luitjens & Patricia Thaine; Next AI - Toronto

There is no easy way for organizations to integrate privacy into their software to gain customer trust and comply with the GDPR and other data protection regulations. Private AI simplifies privacy regulation compliance through on device text, image, and video anonymization. Making it easy to maintain customer trust through seamless private data storage and cloud processing.

CEO Patricia (right) is a Computer Science PhD Candidate at the University of Toronto and is a recipient of the NSERC Postgraduate Scholarship, the RBC Graduate Fellowship, the Beatrice "Trixie" Worsley Graduate Scholarship in Computer Science, and the Ontario Graduate Scholarship. CTO Pieter (left) has a Bachelor of Science in Physics and Mathematics and a Bachelor of Engineering from the University of Western Australia, as well as a Masters from the University of Toronto. He has over 10 years of engineering experience, with code deployed in multi-billion-dollar industrial projects.

WHY ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

Patricia: For the same reason that I became a computer scientist: I love problem-solving and building. *Pieter:* To work on the cutting edge of technology and solve real problems.

IN FIVE YEARS... Our goal is to create the go-to product suite for easy privacy compliance.



**PATRICIA THAINE
 KEY WOMEN IN TECH AWARD**



**PATRICIA THAINE
 SATCHU PRIZE**



HOOKMOTION

Co-founded by Dominic Morin-Proulx, Samy Zarour & Matthieu Clas; Next AI - Montreal

HookMotion automates fraud and error detection for casinos. Using computer vision and existing security cameras, they can track table games and make casinos safer and more equitable.

.....

COO Dominic (right) has an electrical engineering and computer vision background. CEO Matthieu (left) holds a Bachelor in Mechanical Engineering at ÉTS was previously an inventor and project manager in product development in the toy field. CTO Samy (center) studied Computer Science at McGill University with a focus on Machine Learning and has worked at IBM's prestigious Watson Machine Learning Core team.

WE ARE: Resilient

IN FIVE YEARS... Our goal is to make every camera smart. We'll be tackling new markets and new challenges to make that mission a reality.



SUMMATTI

Co-founded by Rashmi Bhambhani & Sid Bhambhani; Next AI - Toronto

Summatti, a B2B AI-powered platform, analyzes 100% of customer interactions and gives you unique consumer insights while saving time and money.

.....

COO Rashmi (right) brings 12+ years of experience in developing sales funnels, marketing strategies and running business development. CEO Sid (left) brings over 15 years of experience in Customer Support, building telemetry, self-diagnostics tools and managing globally distributed enterprise technical support teams.



IN FIVE YEARS... We see Summatti as the standard measure for service organizations to measure their customer experience; the successor to NPS and CSAT scores that do not take into account the meaningful conversations customers are having on a daily basis.

CLASS OF 2020

*Congratulations to each and every one of our
Class of 2020 entrepreneurs, you have made us proud!*

NEXT FOUNDERS

ALAN SMITHSON
MetaVRse

ANIK SETH
HUEX

ASHKAN BEIGI
Coherent

CARL PIGEON
Ribbit

CHANDDEEP MADAAN
Aya Payments Inc.

DANIEL MOLL
EarthSuds

EFFIE ANOLIK
Epilog

JAMES ROCKWOOD
CapIntel

JAYIESH SINGH
Able Innovations

JESSE ABRAMS
Homewise

W. GALEN WESTON
**TOP ENTREPRENEUR
AWARD**

JOSEPH CUMMINS
CybernetIQ

KAREN WONG
TakuLabs Ltd.

KRISTI SOOMER
Encircled

KRISTY EHMAN
Hyon

MARISSA VETTORETTI
EarthSuds

MARK ELIAS
Stediwear

MICHAEL VAN
Furnishr

MIKAYLA WUJEC
alder apparel

MOHAMAD SAWWAF
Manzil

NATASHA DHAYAGUDE
Chinova Bioworks

PAVEL BORDIOUG
NXT Farm

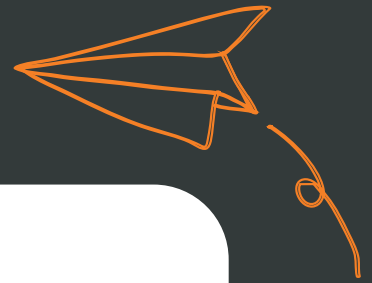
POOYA SABERI
Sensoreal

ROOZBEH SAFAVIEH
Sensoreal

TRUNG PHAM
AXIS LABS

VILER LIKA
SingleKey

VINO JEYAPALAN
Kabo



NEXT36

AARON WANJALA
Monolog

AILEEN AGADA
BeBlended
**THE HEPBURN
VALEDICTORIAN**

ALYKHAN KARA
Shomigo

CHIPEWYAN MCCRIMMON
FalcOn-X

COLE POWERS
IntelliCulture

CONNOR WILSON
Pilot

COOPER MIDRONI
Dubly

DAVID LIN
Lunavoy Inc.

DISHA NAYAK
Feedmĭ

EDWARD CHIANG
Moment Energy
**THE SCOTIABANK
OUTSTANDING
CONTRIBUTION TO
SOCIETY AWARD &
THE RBC PEOPLE'S
CHOICE AWARD**

EVE STASZCZYSHYN
WellnessWorld

HAMAYAL CHOUDHRY
smartARM

HANNAH LE
Ascend

HARRISON HANDLEY

IAN SAUNDERS
Socialab

JASON WONG

JOSE DAVID GOMEZ ZEA
Arkangel Ai

JUSTIN LAROCQUE-
VILLIERS
OutLaunch

KYLE HANDFIELD
OutLaunch

LAUREN ADOLPHE
LifeLuxe

LAUREN DESOUZA
ACE

LOGAN UNDERWOOD
Ad Auris

MATTHEW FERREIRA
smartARM

MOHAMMAD KAMLA
Kamla Designs

MONTGOMERY NGAN
Ascend

MYRA ARSHAD
ALT TEX

RAMIN SHAIKHI
IntelliCulture

RIYAZ KHAIR
OutLaunch

SANCHIT GUPTA

SASHA IVANOV
HandJam

SUMREEN RATTAN
Moment Energy
**THE SCOTIABANK
OUTSTANDING
CONTRIBUTION TO
SOCIETY AWARD &
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CHOICE AWARD**

ZAINAB JANGDA
Playcoco

DID YOU KNOW

Applications for the 2021 cohort of Next 36 are OPEN! Apply by October 14th at midnight

Apply today ▶

NEXTAI

TORONTO COHORT



AARON LABBÉ
LUCID

ALANNAH O'NEILL
Origami XR

AMIR HOSS
EAIGLE

BOLIS IBRAHIM
Argentum Electronics

DAMIAN TRAN
MinervaAI

DAVID HURLEY
Conversify

ERIK PERTERSON
Origami XR

GORDON LESLIE
Conversify

JASON DEGLINT
Blue Lion Labs

JENNIFER ARNOLD
MinervaAi

KATHLEEN CHAN
Benchwork

KATIE THOMAS
Blue Lion Labs

LOUIS VAINQUEUR
Credib.AI

MIN ZOU
Credib.AI

MOJTABA HAJIHASANI
EAIGLE

MOSTAFA NATEGH
Deep Biologics Inc.

NATHAN TRAN TRINH
Benchwork

PATRICE DAVID SAHA
Credib.AI

PATRICIA THAINE
Private AI
**SATCHU PRIZE &
EY WOMEN IN
TECH AWARD**

PIETER LUITJENS
Private AI

RAFAEL LIBARDI
NoLeak Defence

RASHMI BHAMBHANI
Summatti

SAGAR JAISWAL
Argentum Electronics

SHRADDHA DUBEY
Deep Biologics Inc.

SIDDHARTH BHAMBHANI
Summatti

VINICIUS SANTOS
NoLeak Defence

ZACH MCMAHON
LUCID
VALEDICTORIAN

STAY TUNED...

Applications for the 2021 cohorts of Next AI will open October 19th.

[Get notified](#) ▶

MONTREAL COHORT

AAKARSH SHEKHAR
7Square

ABDELHAMID EL BABLY
Altius Analytics Labs Inc.

ALEXANDRE VANIER
B2B Quotes

AMANDA ARCIERO
Airudi

AMIN ZAVIEH
DEFINITECHS

AMIR SHARIF
ExtergyAI

ARMSTRONG MURIRA
Simmunome

AZADEH DASTMALCHI
VitalTracer

BENJAMIN LEE
Altius Analytics Labs Inc.

BENJAMIN MARQUIS
Tote

BORIS BUT
Mixonset

CHARLES LESIEUR
BMO AWARD
iagree AI

DOMINIC MORIN-PROULX
HookMotion

EDWARD KO
Mely.ai

ELISE TASTET
Tastet

FARSHAD MIRSHAFIEI
Sensequake

FELIX BELISLE
GRAD4

HISHAM HAWARA
7Square

HOANG NGO
Mely.ai

JEAN-CHRISTOPHE ROY
Sparkbay

JULIEN ROY
Sparkbay

KASHIF KHAN
PLAKK

KATRINA ALBERT
VALEDICTORIAN
Lux

MATHIEU GRATTON
LECLAIRE
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MATHIEU PLANTE
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MATTHIEU CLAS
HookMotion

MATTHIEU DARRACQ
Brainalytics

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Sensequake

MICHAEL TOLA DENIS
Élite Neurokinetix Inc.

MUHAMMAD SOHAIL
BioBenchAI

NARDIN NAKHLA
Simmunome

OLIVIER BRASSARD
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HookMotion

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LinguAI

STÉPHANIE BOUCHARD
Stockholm Syndrome.AI

STEVEN FANDROANA
Sparkbay

VINCENT DISTEFANO
Élite Neurokinetix Inc.

VINCENT LACHANCE
Lux

YACINE MAHDID
GRAD4

ZAHRA YOUSEFLI
ExtergyAI

ZAHRA ZANGENEHMADAR
VitalTracer

ZEYU LI
Mixonset



CLASS NOTES



Over the past eight months, our Class of 2020 have been busily building their ventures, hitting milestones, and learning from some of the top academics and entrepreneurs in the game. Here are some of their wins, advice and key takeaways.

COLLABORATION COMMUNITY: The Key To Reopening Our Economy

BDC's Michelle Scarborough joins NEXT CEO, Joe Canavan, to discuss the surprising upsides of COVID-19 disruption and new opportunities for startups.

[WATCH ▶](#)



**Reflect on
your passions &
find a problem
within them.
Then, solve it.**

- AILEEN AGADA
Founder, BeBlended; Next 36

RAISING IN CRISIS

TIPS FROM JORDAN JACOBS
(Co-founder & Managing Partner,
Radical Ventures)

1. Your **biggest mistake** would be to stop doing anything.
2. If you need money right now, **go raise**. Start with people you know. VCs are open and doing business so if you do have access, you should go pursue it.
3. If raising isn't essential, continue to **build on key metrics** that increase your value. If you can afford to wait, wait 6 months.



Tune into the Ask AI podcast to learn how Next AI founder Patricia Thaine balances life as an academic, researcher, co-founder and CEO.

[LISTEN IN ▶](#)



**We have to step out of our
comfort zones. We have to do
more. We're not going back to
where we were before.**

- WES HALL
Chair of the **Black North Initiative**; Executive
Chairman, KSS Group of Companies

“

Entrepreneurship is a vector for symbolic immortality.

- STEVE JURVETSON

Managing Director & Founder, Future Ventures

“

Build trust with your customers. Hustle, surprise & delight, and find your first reliable distribution channel.

- MICHAEL KATCHEN

Co-founder & CEO, Wealthsimple

WHAT VCS LOOK FOR

Via EY's workshop on tax incentives, SR&ED, valuations and cyber security

- ✓ Exceptional team
- ✓ Growing market
- ✓ Compelling value
- ✓ Go-to market strategy



UNLOCKING FUTURE GROWTH AND NURTURING TALENT

RBC's Sid Paquette discusses growth, responding to crisis, and building companies for future sustainable growth.

[WATCH ▶](#)

#TBT: Magna's R&D team joined the Class of 2020 for pitches and insights on how founders can work with large companies like Magna.

[LEARN MORE ▶](#)



PITCH TIPS

FROM PROF. AJAY AGRAWAL
(Co-founder & Academic Director, NEXT)



1. **Listen** to people's input, but don't compromise the integrity of what you're doing.
2. Once you have **clarity** in your vision, the right people will come to you.
3. Focus on driving home only your 1-2 most memorable **BIG points**.



MEET KRISTI SOOMER

Founder, Encircled

[WATCH ▶](#)

"Entrepreneurship is a great way to grow because it's about learning how to fail."

- Tim Price
NEXT Visionary Supporter

"Remember, obstacles can be remarkably valuable - you learn a lot about yourself."

- REZA SATCHU

Co-founder & Co-Chair, NEXT Canada



SIGNATURES & SHOUTOUTS



I am so thankful for and inspired by the friends & connections I've made throughout all our experiences in the program and know they will be lifelong friends - cheers!
-Lauren DeSouza, Next 36

Shoutout to the Next AI team in Montreal who swiftly turned around in March 2020 and put forward a completely new virtual program in a single week. Thank you for your commitment and care!
- Katrina and Albert, Next AI

COVID was intense for my business, but being part of Next AI helped us optimize and improve everything we had built during a pandemic. We have worked harder than ever and with more focus and it has paid off!
- Elise Tastet, Next AI

This year, I see so many impact-oriented businesses being built and I love that. I see this generation completely revolutionizing the world we live in for a better tomorrow and that thought is just the most motivating thing ever. - Myra Arshad, Next 36

We will forever remember the baby duck that made an appearance during one of Ajay's classes.
- Private AI, Next AI

Participating in NEXT over Zoom has been a-- different-- experience. Like the time my Internet connection dropped thirty seconds before I was set to pitch the Director of R&D at Magna. That got my heart rate up!
- Erik, Next AI

Thanks to COVID, my 3 year old daughter has audited so many Next AI classes that she should probably get an honorary diploma. Who needs preschool when you can listen to a lecture on Strategy and Innovation?
- Alannah, Next AI

Even with the remote situation we had a lot of fun exchanging with the other companies in the cohort. We learned a lot about the different possibilities and stages of AI implementation within pre-seed / seed-stage startups.
- BZB Quotes, Next AI

I'll miss the visionary friends I made during this program.
- Rafael Libardi, Next AI

Shoutout to Hoang and Edward from @Mely.ai and Katrina from @Lux Aerobot for their positive energy and help with applying for funding. Shoutout to Jean-Sebastien Chouinard, our mentor that we met every Thursday morning at 8am and who is a true MVP. We asked Jean-Sebastien to be on our advisor board :). Shoutout to Elise from @Tastet who shared her office space, positivism and coffee with the ENK team even during this crisis. Shoutout to George who helped us stay focus and improve collaboration between ENK's team members. Thank you so much!
- Elite Neurokinetics, Next AI

This being the first year the whole program was delivered over Zoom sessions, it was great to see some of the quirky things people have in their houses/apartments! I remember on one call, one of the participants had a parrot that would make a cameo every few minutes!
- Summati, Next AI

I would like to give a shoutout to George Korkejian for being an amazing Venture Manager and thank him for all his help since we joined Next AI.
- Hookmotion, Next AI

On my birthday, my co-founder Hannah set up a client call with a land acquisition analyst from a target company...Chip, David, Disha, Lauren, Hannah and Eve come on video and wish me "HAPPY BIRTHDAY!". I didn't see it coming, and love them for it. (Shout out to my amazing co-founder, Hannah, for planning the surprise). None of us in the group had hung out in person, but the fact they took the time speaks volumes to their thoughtfulness and the strength of the community we've found through NEXT. - Monty, Next 36

2020 has been a crazy year and the Next 36 program has been a huge highlight amongst all the craziness going on. Shoutout to the 2020 team and the 2020 cohort - can't wait to see what's NEXT!
- Riyaz Khair, Next 36

PSST...

Class of 2020 - do you want to add your shoutout to the yearbook?

[Pass us a note ▶](#)

NEXT

GRIT is a quarterly publication by NEXT Canada.

NEXT's mission is to build a more prosperous and competitive Canada. We offer funding, mentorship, education and community to aspiring entrepreneurs across three accelerator programs (Next 36, Next Founders and Next AI) and two cities.

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