

# Sac State, Velocity Venture Capital Mark Completion of First Joint Effort on Executive MBA Program

## *Awards Given to Students by Velocity Venture Capital*

**FOLSOM** – The Executive MBA program at SacState promises to deliver the business acumen to advance careers into leadership positions, but the latest group of students got that and a full blast of life in the fast lane.

California State University Sacramento teamed up with Velocity Venture Capital to offer students a rare opportunity to work directly with the executive teams of local startup technology companies for their year-end projects.

Velocity facilitated the introductions of the students to their portfolio companies and managed the program. The students selected the company they wanted to work with earlier in the year, and then hit the ground running in May.

“Velocity understands the importance of talent in the equation that leads to successful companies and communities,” said Jack Crawford, Jr., general partner at Velocity Venture Capital and adjunct Faculty member for the Executive MBA program. “We are proud to support programs like these where students benefit from real world hands-on experience -- and the companies benefit from the research projects produced.”

“I don’t know of another program like this in the state,” said Sanjay Varshney, Dean of the Business School. “Offering students a chance to resolve the challenges that new companies face takes their learning well beyond the common case study level.”

The program concluded Friday with an awards presentation for the students. Three \$500 awards were given for Best Overall Performance, Best Final Report and Best Presentation. The Jadoo Power student team of Kristi Kinkle and Maurice Velandia won Best Overall and Best Final Report, and the Fundability student team Beejahn Afsari and Nilesh Shah won Best presentation. An honorable mention was provided to emTRaiN’s student team of Dan Exon and Sanjay Srivastava.

The idea for the program was sparked a year ago by Crawford and Dean Varshney over lunch.

“Dean Varshney was looking for a culminating experience for the students and an opportunity to bridge the Executive MBA program into the business community. We architected a program that is a win, win, win –a win for the students, the university, and 9 of the 14 locally-headquartered Velocity portfolio companies,” Crawford said.

MBA programs that unite students and local companies on specific projects are nothing new, but plugging students into the executive teams of young startup technology companies is unique.

“After 13 months of non-stop classes and studying, we ended with a bang,” said EMBA student Dan Exon, who worked with emTRAiN, an online training company for his final report. “We put the tools we learned in the program to use in ways that could directly impact the success of company. That was really satisfying after so much work.”

Twenty-three students participated in the year-end program, working in teams of two or three with nine portfolio companies. Each project was tied to a strategic initiative or marketplace challenge for the startup, the topics ranged from helping companies select the most promising markets to launch their companies worldwide, to detailed competitive analysis, to coming up with the next set of product features that will yield the highest return with existing customers.

“This program provided direct, tangible benefits to our companies as it enhanced the overall pool of management talent in our region,” Crawford said. “We appreciate the opportunity to add value to the Executive MBA program and we look forward to working with SacState and other universities to develop similar programs that deliver the same caliber of experience for the students and our portfolio companies.”

For more information on Velocity Venture Capital, please visit [www.velocityvc.com](http://www.velocityvc.com). For more information on Sac State’s Executive MBA program, please visit [www.cba.csus.edu/EMBA/](http://www.cba.csus.edu/EMBA/)

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