



eriehack

Media Contacts
Bryan Stubbs
Cleveland Water Alliance
bstubbs@clewa.org
216.592.2490

Sue Valerian
Studiothink
svalerian@studiothink.net
216.262.1946

Four teams win \$100K in Cash & Prizes at Erie Hack Water Innovation Competition in CLE

CLEVELAND, Ohio (May 3, 2017) – [The Cleveland Water Alliance](#), in conjunction with numerous partners from throughout the Lake Erie basin, including NASA Glenn Research Center and the Great Lakes Observing System, presented \$100K in cash and prizes to four winning teams at the [Erie Hack Competition and Water Innovation Summit](#) today.

The \$40,000 cash grand-prize winner of the Erie Hack, a tech-driven international water innovation competition and accelerator program, was Mirco Buoy, a team out of Wayne State University in Detroit. Its creation is a nano-sensor, contained in a buoy, that can detect environmental contaminants in the water. In addition, the team receives \$10,000 in support services.

Other winners are:

- 4th: Purily, University of Michigan: \$5,000 cash + \$1,500 support services
- 3rd: Water Warriors, University of Akron: \$10,000 cash + \$5k support services
- 2nd: Extreme Comms Laboratory (University of Buffalo): \$15,000 cash + \$10K support services

The four teams, along with five others, including two from Akron and Cleveland, presented innovative solutions to [Challenge Statements](#) provided by CWA that solve problems around Lake Erie such as algal blooms and urban pollution.

“What an amazing demonstration of innovation and talent,” CWA executive director Bryan Stubbs said. “This shows that if a platform such as Erie Hack is provided, innovators will step forward. This is just the first step in helping to establish Cleveland as a global water innovation leader.”

The winners, which were selected by a panel of distinguished judges, including entrepreneur Jeff Hoffman, co-founder of priceline.com, and Brian Zimmerman, CEO, Cleveland Metroparks, survived a series of competitions to make it to the finals.

“Erie Hack has given us a very big platform to make this sensor,” said Micro Buoy team member Nirul Masurkar. “Now we’d like to implement this in the real world.”

The competition capped off a two-day Water Innovation Summit held at the Global Center for Health Innovation in downtown Cleveland. It featured well-known water and innovation experts, such as Jay Famiglietti, senior water scientist at NASA's jet propulsion laboratory, and IBM Global Water Leader Rebekah Eggers. WKYC-TV chief meteorologist Betsy Kling was the emcee for the finals competition.

A new innovation competition also was announced, co-presented by DigitalC and CWA, that will kick off in a meet-up on June 3. Again, cash and prizes will total \$100K. More info. here: <https://learningstudios.org/watersystems/>

The Erie Hack was an opportunity to drive innovation in the water technology sector and engage young people in the creation of the emerging "**Blue Economy.**" The event was hosted and sponsored by The Cleveland Water Alliance in collaboration with Digital C as well as local champions, startup incubators and accelerators, and funders from each of Lake Erie's major metropolitan areas [Buffalo, Cleveland, Detroit, Windsor, Erie, and Toledo]. Key partners include NASA GRC, the University at Buffalo, Kent State University, Case Western Reserve University, IBM, GE, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, Cleveland Metroparks, Wayne State University, the University of Toledo, TechTown Detroit, LaunchPad Incubation at the University of Toledo, Thinkbox, HIMSS, Great Lakes Science Center, WEtech Alliance, Innovation Collaborative in Erie and the Blackstone LaunchPad in Buffalo.

Key sponsors include the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, Cleveland Division of Water, AT&T, GLOS and HIMSS Innovation Center. Significant support also comes from The George Gund Foundation, The Joyce Foundation, The Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation, The Cleveland Foundation and the Burton D Morgan Foundation.

About Erie Hack: This is a tech-driven international water innovation competition and accelerator program that will bring together coders, developers, engineers, data experts, and water professionals to generate creative solutions to Lake Erie's biggest challenges. The competition, which will award more than \$100,000 in cash and accelerator services to up to four winning teams and one high school team, focuses on creating publicly accessible mobile apps, open data and new technology and solutions to elevate the value of clean water and leverage its potential to drive the economy of the Great Lakes Region.

About the Cleveland Water Alliance: Established in 2014, CWA is a non-profit organization that seeks to better utilize the economic and job-creating potential of Lake Erie while also urging greater care of this valuable, natural asset. We are working to bring together Northeast Ohio's water providers, business and political leaders, researchers and environmental organizations to establish Cleveland as a nationally recognized center for water innovation.