



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 4, 2021

Media Contact: Sam Workman

757-926-3785; workmansj@nnva.gov

Winners Announced for Start Peninsula 2021

Following four virtual micro pitch competitions and a final pitch competition, Start Peninsula is pleased to announce its three winners for 2021: Bonilla Pet Studio, EWedded and Pocket Properties App.

- **Bonilla Pet Studio** is a photo studio for pets. Now there is something better than just cell phone images or normal photography studios that are not comfortable for most pets and their families.
- **EWedded** is an e-commerce platform for wedding industry businesses. EWedded aims to cut down on the waste of wedding dress inventory by allowing retailers to easily sell excess wares.
- **Pocket Properties App** allows users to buy and sell fractional shares of real estate as a way to remove barriers to investing and building wealth in the industry.

Each winner will receive \$5,000 to fuel their business growth, a one year seat at [Growth University](#), a six month community membership to [Launchpad](#), the Greater Williamsburg Business Incubator, one year memberships to the Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce, The Greater Williamsburg Business Alliance, the York County Chamber of Commerce and a one year membership to Retail Alliance. The virtual pitch competition included 12 participants, who had participated in previous events in April, May, September and October. All other participants will receive a small cash prize for their efforts. All contestants will continue to have access to and gain guidance from local economic development departments.

Pitches were five minutes with a two minute question-and-answer session with the judges. The final event included a keynote from Craig Zingerline, the CEO and founder of Growth University.

Judges included:

- Rachel Frazier, William & Mary
- Evans McMillion, 757 Accelerate
- Steve duBois, Patent Portfolio Builders
- Jeff Johnson, Tech Center at Newport News
- Marty Kaszubowski, ODU

Start Peninsula builds entrepreneurship on the Peninsula and celebrates our local entrepreneurial ecosystem. The event helps develop early stage businesses – those with a product or service that is still being brought to fruition and connects those entrepreneurs with opportunities to validate their business ideas and earn capital. The event is backed by six regional Economic Development Authorities, who are eager to support entrepreneurship. Start Peninsula began in 2012.

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Start Peninsula 2021 was hosted by the City of Newport News, in partnership with the Cities of Hampton, Williamsburg and Poquoson and the Counties of James City and York. Start Peninsula has been held annually in different Peninsula localities since 2012. For more information about Start Peninsula please visit its [website](#), [Facebook page](#) or the [FAQ page](#).