

## Northwestern Mutual and the Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin health network announce Reverse Pitch MKE winners

Ease, Inc. and LENA each receive cash prizes and seed investments up to \$90,000

MILWAUKEE, March 16, 2021 – Northwestern Mutual and the Froedtert and the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) health network today announced the winners of Reverse Pitch MKE, a virtual pitch competition. With the support of the Milwaukee Tech Hub Coalition, the Reverse Pitch MKE event held last November during Startup Milwaukee Week had more than 100 innovators participate. Following the Pitch Back Event on February 24, Northwestern Mutual selected [Ease, Inc.](#) and the Froedtert & MCW health network selected [LENA](#). Ease and LENA will each receive a seed investment up to \$90,000, a \$10,000 cash prize, co-locating space, access to corporate mentors and networks, and up to \$2,000 in legal services provided by Godfrey & Kahn, S.C. Additionally, the Froedtert & MCW health network selected [TimeSlips](#) as a winner of a \$10,000 cash prize and access to corporate mentors and networks.

One of the business challenges Northwestern Mutual presented at the Reverse Pitch MKE event was focused on using an innovative approach to attract diverse talent. Ease's solution addresses this challenge by connecting diverse and highly qualified candidates with organizations looking to hire. The startup's technology and processes reduce hiring bias by providing companies with an AI-enabled way to attract, vet and upskill often-overlooked talent.

"We're excited to partner with Nathan Harris, Saul Sutton and their team to leverage Ease's technology to increase the diversity of our prospective talent pool for our employees and financial advisors," said Craig Schedler, Cream City Venture Capital managing director, Northwestern Mutual. "They have developed a very innovative platform that can help companies across all industries create a more diverse and inclusive workforce. We look forward to working with them and helping their company grow."

The Froedtert & MCW health network presented two challenges as part of Reverse Pitch MKE. One focused on addressing the impact of social isolation and loneliness on health and the second on supporting individuals with challenges that inhibit engagement with digital health services. Both challenges focused on the senior population which has been particularly impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Innovation at the Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin health network is everywhere. It can also come from anywhere. Today, we're excited to partner with LENA and founder Alex Harb, who are tackling improved access to health navigation and the promise of increased digital health engagement for seniors, and Timeslips and founder Anne Basting, who are taking on loneliness in the senior population," said Mike Anderes, chief digital officer for Froedtert Health and the president of Inception Health. "We believe that the innovative ideas of these companies combined with the strength of the health network will be able to impact both of these challenges for our community."

One of the goals of Reverse Pitch MKE was to increase the number of diverse entrepreneur participants to provide access to capital and mentors to help them grow their businesses. Eleven teams were selected as finalists to pitch to judging panels from Northwestern Mutual and the Froedtert & MCW health network. The finalists included:

Northwestern Mutual finalists:

[Ease, Inc.](#) from founders Nathan Harris and Saul Sutton  
[Inclivity](#) from founders [Deepak Babu](#), [Inder Narang](#), and [Sukhvinder Sihra](#)  
[Investii, Inc.](#) from founders Nishant Deshpande and Bryan Stave  
[The P5 Project](#) from founders Jenna Atkinson and Tom Krueger  
[VestedIn](#) from founders Erin Magennis and Jackie Magennis

Froedtert & MCW finalists:

[Healthiby](#) from co-founders Mary Beth Snodgrass and Dr Tristan Harzell  
[LENA](#) from founder Alex Harb  
[Like | Minded](#) from co-founders Jeremy Fojut, Ben Juarez, Vinny Moloney and Serene Mireles  
[Loopwell's doLoop](#) from co-founders [Dr Ingrid Hicks](#) and [Nikhil Zaveri](#)  
[TimeSlips](#) from founder Anne Basting  
[Upside Health](#) from co-founders Rachel Trobman and Jason Trobman

Northwestern Mutual and the Froedtert & MCW health network are committed to growing a diverse and inclusive startup community in the region and connecting entrepreneurs with the resources they need to grow their businesses in Wisconsin. To learn more about Reverse Pitch MKE, please visit [www.mketech.org/reversepitchmke](http://www.mketech.org/reversepitchmke).

## About Northwestern Mutual

**Northwestern Mutual** has been helping people and businesses achieve financial security for more than 160 years. Through a holistic planning approach, Northwestern Mutual combines the expertise of its financial professionals with a personalized digital experience and industry-leading products to help its clients plan for what's most important. With \$308.8 billion in total assets, \$31.1 billion in revenues, and over \$2 trillion worth of life insurance protection in force, Northwestern Mutual delivers financial security to more than 4.75 million people with life, disability income and long-term care insurance, annuities, and brokerage and advisory services. The company has more than \$200 billion of investments owned by its clients and held or managed through its wealth management and investment services businesses. Northwestern Mutual ranks 102 on the 2020 FORTUNE 500 and is recognized by FORTUNE® as one of the "World's Most Admired" life insurance companies in 2021.

Northwestern Mutual is the marketing name for The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company (NM)(life and disability insurance, annuities, and life insurance with long-term care benefits) and its subsidiaries in Milwaukee, WI. Subsidiaries include **Northwestern Mutual Investment Services, LLC** (investment brokerage services), broker-dealer, registered investment adviser, member FINRA and SIPC; the Northwestern Mutual Wealth Management Company® (investment advisory and trust services), a federal savings bank; and Northwestern Long Term Care Insurance Company (long-term care insurance).

## About Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin

The Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin regional health network is a partnership between Froedtert Health and the Medical College of Wisconsin supporting a shared mission of patient care, innovation, medical research and education. Our health network operates eastern Wisconsin's only academic medical center and adult Level I Trauma Center at Froedtert Hospital, Milwaukee, an internationally recognized training and research center engaged in thousands of clinical trials and studies. The Froedtert & MCW health network, which includes eight hospital locations, nearly 2,000 physicians and more than 45 health centers and clinics, draws patients from throughout the Midwest and the nation. In our most recent fiscal year, outpatient visits exceeded 1.2 million, inpatient admissions to our hospitals were 52,807 and visits to our network physicians totaled 947,136. For more information, visit [froedtert.com](https://froedtert.com).

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