

# Opportunity

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The half dozen individuals run the gambit in terms of professional services and products. They include James Pritchett, founder and chief executive of Morebots, who has created books for children that use an app to make reading more interactive.

A father of children who love to read, Pritchett says he wanted to help his children enjoy reading in a way they might find more interactive. His books allow readers to find more behind the books he writes and illustrates through an app that scans the images. Children can learn about anatomy and health, for example, in a book he designed for Providence Health called "Much, Much Better," about an aging family member who suffers chest pains. Students and their parents can come to their own conclusions about health, diet, exercise, sleeping patterns by answering questions about their own habits.

Other ideas coming forward include Daunte Paschal Sr. and Brian Rhone's new network called ShopHopn that connects professionals who are traveling with higher-end barbers in town. A black barber himself, Paschal has worked as a hair stylist with Nike for events like the National Basketball Association's All Star weekend and other large media events where athletes want to look their best.

Other exciting and different start ups include Poda Foods – started by a pair of Yale graduates who breed and raise crickets for human consumption (think protein shakes and powders), and other luxury goods. There's the bespoke suits designed by couple Jeremy Roberts and Mihal Freinque, who are innovating the process of fitting suits by designing something called a "fit bod" where clients can be quickly and precisely measured in less than 30 minutes.

Chaunci King, another PDX Challenge winner, brings her pear-infused vodka called Royalty Spirits to the table, as she works her way up from bartending to brand making. Brian Carter, a young man who is hard of hearing and wears two hearing aids, one in each ear, comes to the commission with an idea to mold earbuds to individual ears to improve the way people hear, everything from music to speech and everyday sounds. He is hoping to work through the giving strategy, donating one pair of earbuds for every one sold.

To learn more about this year's winners, or to think up what your application might be next year, visit [pdc.us/for-businesses/business-programs/startuppxchallenge.aspx](http://pdc.us/for-businesses/business-programs/startuppxchallenge.aspx).



James Pritchett, chief executive officer of a new company called Morebots, demonstrates his creation of books for children that use an app to make reading more interactive. He is one of the half dozen startup companies receiving help from the Portland Development Commission in an effort to increase minority wealth.

PHOTO BY OLIVIA OLIVIA/  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

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