

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Dominique Ellis Falcon

[Dellisfalcon2@washcoll.edu](mailto:Dellisfalcon2@washcoll.edu)



**Witness Innovation in Action: Upper Shore STRT1UP Roadshow Open to the Public at Washington College**

*Entrepreneurs from Cecil, Kent, and Queen Anne's counties will compete for start-up investments; competition, panels, and business discussions open to the public.*



**Chestertown, MD - (March 27, 2025)** - Business minded residents of the Eastern Shore are invited to an exciting showcase of regional entrepreneurship at the [2025 Upper Shore STRT1UP Roadshow](#). Join the Upper Shore Regional Council, and Washington College's Department of Business Management on Tuesday, **April 15 at 2:30 - 6 p.m.** on Washington College's campus as aspiring entrepreneurs from Cecil, Kent, and Queen Anne's counties pitch their innovative business ideas for a chance to win significant cash prizes.

This dynamic event, which is free to attend, offers a unique opportunity to witness the energy and creativity of local startups. Selected entrepreneurs will present their 5-minute pitches, vying for a **\$4,000 grand prize** and a **\$1,500 runner-up prize**.

Come and support your local innovators as they present their visions and compete for these valuable resources. The pitches will be judged on:

- Clarity of idea and solution
- Viability of their business idea
- How well the identified problem or opportunity is addressed by their plan
- Impact — either socially or the community
- Innovation

The StartUp Maryland bus, equipped with a recording studio, will also be on-site in Martha Washington Square ([campus map](#)), offering participants the chance to record their pitches for the Pitch Across Maryland competition.

The event organizers are pleased to host TEDCO CEO [Troy LeMaile-Stoval](#) and Carl Anderton, Director of Rural Economic Strategy at the Maryland Department of Commerce as welcome speakers. Washington College President Mike Sosulski and Susan O'Neill, Executive Director of the Upper Shore Regional Council, will preside over the award presentations and offer closing remarks.

Other events open to the public that day include:

- ***Speed Connections – Breaking the Ice with Lenders***, a speed lending segment open to any Maryland business and offered by the [Maryland Small Business Development Center \(SBDC\)](#) and [Maryland Small Business Administration \(SBA\)](#), is a low-pressure, high-impact opportunity to deliver a quick pitch to multiple lenders. It's designed to build your confidence, provide real-time feedback, and help establish valuable financial partnerships.
- Attendees will gain valuable insights from two dynamic panel discussions. ***“Where Are They Now?”*** will showcase past pitch competition participants, sharing their journeys, lessons learned, and the impact of the competition on their businesses. ***“Social Entrepreneurship – Innovation with Impact”*** will explore how mission-driven businesses are creating meaningful change while remaining financially sustainable. These discussions offer inspiration, practical advice, and a chance to learn from real-world success stories.

- You also won't want to miss the opportunity to connect with key resource partners offering invaluable support for businesses and startups. Organizations such as [Maryland Capital Enterprises / Women's Business Center](#), the [Upper Shore Regional Council Business Mentor Program](#), [TEDCO](#), and more will have tables showcasing their programs, funding opportunities, and expert guidance. Whether you're looking for business mentorship, financial assistance, or strategic resources to take your venture to the next level, these partners will be on hand to provide information and connect you with the tools you need to succeed.

"The Upper Shore Regional Council, in partnership with Washington College, is thrilled to host the Upper Shore STRT1UP Roadshow Pitch Competition for the second consecutive year, an event that continues to inspire entrepreneurship across Cecil, Kent, and Queen Anne's Counties," shares Susan O'Neill, executive director of the Upper Shore Regional Council. "By offering technical and financial resources, we're able to empower startups, students, and business leaders in the Upper Shore region. This pitch competition allows us to invest in innovative ideas from our community."

"We are excited to be hosting the Upper Shore STRT1UP Roadshow Pitch Competition again this year," said Caddie Putnam-Rankin, associate professor of business management at Washington College. "At last year's event our students connected with local entrepreneurs, offering both inspiration and valuable networking opportunities. A highlight of the event is the Pitch Competition where pitch finalists make the case for their entrepreneurial ventures in front of a panel of judges. From olive oil to lacrosse training equipment to community tutoring platforms students, alumni, and community members made the case that their idea was the best to win some start up financing. Washington College and the Upper Shore Regional Council look forward to again sharing our resources to support the next generation of visionary leaders. Together we can promote sustainable economic development in the region."

Don't miss this opportunity to experience the thrill of entrepreneurship and support the growth of local businesses. For more details and updates, please visit:

<https://www.kentcounty.com/strt1up>.

###

### **About StartUp Maryland**

*Driven from within the startup community and led by/for entrepreneurs, Startup Maryland is peer-driven and focused on high-growth ventures. Forged on the themes spawned by national initiatives, Startup Maryland strives to connect innovation communities. We recognize the importance of founding - entrepreneurs, startup, ramp-up and speedup*

*companies to the innovation economy. Startup Maryland rallies entrepreneurs, supporters, and other innovation stakeholders around four main mission themes: Celebration | Coaching | Curation | Capital. Learn more at [www.startupmd.org](http://www.startupmd.org)*

### **About Washington College**

*Washington College, Maryland's premier small college, enrolls approximately 1,000 undergraduates from more than 39 states and territories and 23 nations. Washington is known for outstanding academics in more than 50 academic programs. With an emphasis on experiential learning opportunities across the disciplines, ranging from internships and research to international study and civic engagement, Washington prepares students for successful careers and lives after graduation. The College is home to nationally recognized academic centers in the environment, history, and writing as well as the 5,000-acre river and field campus which provides unique research opportunities for students and faculty. Learn more at [www.washcoll.edu](http://www.washcoll.edu).*

--

Dominique Ellis Falcon

*Director of News and Media Relations*

*Washington College*

**W:** [washcoll.edu](http://washcoll.edu)

[See our News](#)