



NEW MEXICO

OUTDOOR RECREATION DIVISION

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Outdoor Recreation Division 2023 Adventure Pitch Winners Receive \$15k in Cash Prizes

*6 applicants competed, 3 winners chosen at annual live pitch event
in Santa Fe*

SANTA FE, N.M. – The Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD) held the second annual Adventure Pitch, produced in partnership with CNM Ingenuity's Startups and Small Business team, at the Outdoor Economics Conference last Wednesday in Santa Fe. The startup pitch event is the third held by ORD, a division of the New Mexico Economic Development Department (EDD), leaving a legacy of outdoor entrepreneurial support for several successful New Mexico businesses.



The Adventure Pitch, which took place in Santa Fe on October 25, brought together investors, capital, and mentors, along with the competitors to create economic opportunities beyond the \$15,000 in cash prizes. Six finalists took the stage for a five-minute live pitch in front of hundreds of conference attendees to gain valuable experience in reaching new audiences and receive constructive feedback from the panel of investor and economic development judges.

Competitors also earned full complimentary entrance to the Outdoor Economics Conference, a dedicated post-competition adventure tour, and several days of networking with hundreds of state outdoor recreation leaders, possible funders, industry experts, fellow outdoor business owners, and elected officials.

The Outdoor Recreation Division is thrilled to announce [Rezo Systems](#) hiked away with \$10,000 as the first-place winner of the live pitch. In second place, [GILZ](#) received \$3,000, and \$2,000 was collected by third-place winner [Buttnski](#) to support their next business steps.

This year, ORD and CNM Ingenuity received 24 applications, an increase from last year as the event grows in notoriety. Adventure Pitch applicants have a core offering in outdoor recreation, the environment, or health and wellness, are headquartered in the region, and have high-growth potential. All of the highly impressive entries contributed to an extremely competitive evaluation process.

"The entrepreneurs at Adventure Pitch bring innovation to a new level and represent how New Mexico continues to be a leader in the outdoor recreation economy," ORD Director Karina Armijo said. "ORD is proud to continue this annual event to support the prowess and potential of these startups. Each applicant can substantially impact our state outdoor

recreation economy through job creation and increasing income through their ventures.”

Outdoor Adventure Pitch winners:

Rezo Systems, Founder Marc Harrell: Located in Taos, this software development company is focused on building software applications for the outdoor recreation industry. They currently have four active software platforms in the market with clients both in the state and nationally.

GILZ LLC, Founder Josh Kefauver: This New Mexico-based social venture is dedicated to revolutionizing personal air pollution protection products. The GILZ Clean Helmet enables helmet wearers to breathe clean air and maintain comfort in any environment while meeting industry safety standards and merging cutting-edge technology with style. This technology is an homage to the “cleanroom” invented at Sandia National Laboratories.

Buttnski, Co-founder Kelly Mazanti-Nelson: This brand is women-owned and operated in Summit County, Colorado, making adventurous clothing that is both stylish and performs. The family-inspired product line began with influence from a fleece short worn for decades that kept Kelly’s mom warm on cold ski chairlifts. Buttnski has expansion plans for New Mexico in the future.

Other finalists included **Bowdacious Bowrest**, with the world’s first hydraulic stabilizer for compound bows; **Snowy Optics Inc.**, with lightweight, frameless, adhesive eyewear; and **Trail 9 Outdoors**, with their inflate and accelerate hydration system dryer pod.

The panel of eight distinguished judges included Karina Armijo of the New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division, Dan Brooks of Sun Mountain Capital, Cory Finney of Greater Colorado Venture Fund, Mark Fisher of New Mexico Venture Fund, Monique Fragua of Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, Professional Mountain Biker Racer Macky Franklin, Sydnie Keddington of Kickstart Fund, and Drew Tulchin of New Mexico Angels.





Adventure Pitch 2nd Place: GILZ



Adventure Pitch 3rd Place: Buttnski

The Outdoor Recreation Division, a division of the New Mexico Economic Development Department, aims to increase the overall mental and physical well-being of New Mexicans through the power of outdoor recreation, enabling residents throughout the state to hold jobs that afford them dignity, joy, and stability. We strive to commit to all residents to protect their state's natural heritage - its lands and waters, flora and fauna - and find a future on that path. We aim to parlay this commitment into long-term, sustainable investment, both in infrastructure and education.

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