

Angel Capital Association Names Outstanding Startups as Finalists for Luis Villalobos Innovation and Ingenuity Award

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The [Angel Capital Association](#) (ACA), the world's largest professional organization for accredited angel investors, announced finalists for the association's Luis Villalobos Award. The award honors ingenuity, creativity and innovation in startup companies backed by ACA members. The 2018 honorees, nominated by angel groups from across North America, are Catalyst OrthoScience, CNote, Oculogica and PhotoniCare.

"These companies are at the top of their games and represent the pinnacle of startup innovation and ingenuity," said ACA Executive Director Marianne Hudson. The finalists will be honored and the winner announced April 19, 2018, at 2018 ACA Summit in Boston.

The award honors Luis Villalobos, who founded Tech Coast Angels in 1997 and made 57 personal angel investments during his career.

[Catalyst OrthoScience](#), Naples, FL, has created a novel surgical treatment for shoulder arthritis and injury. Shoulder replacement surgery is performed about 100,000 times per year in the United States due to shoulder arthritis.

"The Catalyst CSR shoulder replacement system redefines shoulder replacement with advantages over competitors that include a less-invasive procedure that improves patient recovery and rehabilitation outcomes," according to Tim Cartwright and Susi Kimball, with Tamiami Angel Funds, the group that nominated Catalyst OrthoScience.

[CNote](#), Oakland, CA, identified two pain points in the financial industry, low returns associated with savings and cash alternatives, and the inequality in capital allocation available to Americans.

Its solution is to offer a 2.5 percent return on all invested savings. To create a return, "CNote created a new financial product that linked retail investors to proven, federally certified community lenders that funnel capital to financially underserved communities. Nothing like that existed," says Victoria Pettibone of Astia Angels, one of the investor groups that nominated CNote. Pipeline Angels also nominated CNote for the award.

[Oculogica](#), New York, NY, has developed EyeBOX, which rapidly and accurately detects brain abnormalities resulting from concussions and other head injuries. Currently, there is no objective assessment tool for concussions, monitoring recovery progress or to assess preventative tools.

Uzma Samadani, M.D., practicing neurosurgeon and founder of Oculogica, realized that tracking eye movements could serve as a measurement for the severity of brain injuries. "Dr. Samadani invented a new way to measure what is wrong with the brain by looking at eye tracking," says Matias Healy, Golden Seeds, the angel group that nominated Oculogica. The non-invasive technology uses machine learning on large data sets of eye tracking measurements to develop algorithms for the diagnosis of concussion.

[PhotoniCare](#), Champaign, IL, is introducing a solution to better diagnose middle ear infections, the leading cause of hearing loss, surgical interventions and antibiotic prescriptions in children. The current standard for diagnosis is a highly subjective exam using an otoscope. The limitations of current tools make it challenging to provide information about the consistency or contents of the fluid, which is essential to a proper diagnosis.

PhotoniCare's ClearView otoscope identifies the presence of fluid and quantifies the purulence of the fluid by using a near-infrared light. "PhotoniCare's ClearView technology for the accurate diagnosis of ear infections illustrates how creative problem solving can lead to an innovation with real, high-volume commercial value," says Ben Pidgeon, VisionTech Angels, the angel group that nominated PhotoniCare.

Plan to Attend 2018 ACA Summit

Investors and leaders of the startup support community can still register for the [ACA Summit](#), April 18-20 at the Westin Copley Place, Boston. The event is open to media.

About the [Angel Capital Association](#) (ACA)

ACA is the professional association of angel investors across North America and offers education, best practices, public policy advocacy, and significant benefits and resources to its membership of more than 13,000 accredited investors, who invest individually or through its 250 angel groups, accredited platforms, and family offices.

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