May 22, 2026
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Contact: Becca Freimuth, Director of Entrepreneurship, 509-661-9000 ext. 5

Optimly Sweeps Top Awards at Flywheel Investment Conference in Wenatchee

WENATCHEE, WA – Seattle startup **Optimly** swept the top awards at the 2026 Flywheel Investment Conference in Wenatchee, winning the **$150,000 investment award** from the Flywheel Angel Network, the **$50,000 relocation offer** from NCW Tech Alliance, and the **$5,000 Fan Favorite award** following Thursday's live Early-Stage Investment Competition. The conference brought entrepreneurs, investors, students, educators, and business leaders from across Washington to Wenatchee for three days focused on innovation, business growth, and regional opportunity.

Hosted by **NCW Tech Alliance** in partnership with the **Flywheel Angel Network**, the conference featured six Washington startups competing for more than **$200,000 in investment awards and prizes**. This year's finalists came from communities across the state, including Seattle, Spokane, West Richland, and Wenatchee, with companies tackling challenges in wildfire response, healthcare access, drug development, supply chain resilience, real estate efficiency, and AI visibility for businesses.

"This conference is about creating opportunity," said **Becca Freimuth, Director of Entrepreneurship at NCW Tech Alliance**. "Flywheel brings people together around ideas that can grow jobs, strengthen industries, and shape the future of Washington. We are proud to host that energy here in Wenatchee."

A local highlight this year was **Subi**, a Wenatchee-based finalist in the early-stage competition. Subi's selection put local entrepreneurship on the main stage alongside startups from larger Washington markets, reinforcing Flywheel's role in connecting North Central Washington founders to capital, visibility, and statewide networks.

The conference also shined a light on the next generation of innovators through the inaugural **Student Pitch Competition**. **Virtual Track Club**, founded by **Cariann Bryant of Central Washington University**, won the **Judges' Choice Award** and received **$2,500**. **OhmLife Insoles**, founded by **Elliot Tiegel, a Cascade High School student from Leavenworth**, earned the **Fan Favorite Student Pitch Award** and took home **$500**. The student competition added a strong local and regional dimension to Flywheel by spotlighting emerging founders and showing how entrepreneurship is taking root across generations. Cariann Bryant and Elliot Tiegel are identified in the program as student founders from Central Washington University and Cascade School District, respectively.

Another standout piece of the conference was **Latino Founder Day**, a Spanish-language pre-conference program held at **Pybus Public Market** and designed to support Latino entrepreneurs building and growing businesses. The program created space for founders to connect with mentors, investors, and business leaders while gaining practical tools to help their businesses grow. It also highlighted graduates

of NCW Tech Alliance's **iLumina Digital Skills Accelerator**, supported by Microsoft and the Alcoa Foundation. The program's first cohort graduated **28 local entrepreneurs representing 19 small businesses in Malaga and surrounding communities**.

The main competition took place Thursday morning at the **Numerica Performing Arts Center**, where the six finalists—**BOVI.TECH, Optimly, Precision Quantomics, Reclaim Metals, Remmie Health, and Subi**—pitched live before investors and attendees. Winners were announced later that evening during Flywheel's closing **Awards Party** at Pybus Public Market.

Throughout the week, attendees also took part in networking events, exhibitor showcases, and breakout sessions focused on entrepreneurship, venture growth, regional innovation, customer discovery, manufacturing, and commercialization. Together, the events reinforced Flywheel's growing role as a statewide gathering place for innovation in North Central Washington.

NCW Tech Alliance thanked the sponsors, investors, partners, and volunteers who helped make the 2026 conference possible and continue building momentum for entrepreneurship in the region.

To learn more about the Flywheel Investment Conference, visit **flywheelconference.com**.

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About the Flywheel Investment Conference: The Flywheel Investment Conference is organized by NCW Tech Alliance and hosted in partnership with the Flywheel Angel Network. Held in Wenatchee, WA, the Flywheel Conference features an investment competition, educational speakers, and networking opportunities. Past investment award winners include Cartogram (2018), Agtools (2020), Iasis Molecular Sciences (2021), BrainSpace (2022), ZILA Works (2022), GemaTEG (2023), Gnara (2023), Alphi (2023), Dopl Technologies (2024), OneCourt (2024), and OoNee (2025). Public tickets for the 2026 Flywheel Conference are now available for purchase. For more information about this must-attend event, visit flywheelconference.com.

About NCW Tech Alliance: Since 1999, NCW Tech Alliance has served as the region's tech hub, fostering growth and innovation in North Central Washington. As a 501(c)3 nonprofit, NCW Tech Alliance brings people and technology resources together to support entrepreneurs, advance STEM education, and promote technology adoption throughout the region. Learn more at ncwtech.org.

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