

EDUrain Back Once Again For Inno Madness

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ST. LOUIS – EDUrain company and CEO Byron Pierson of Alton is back again this year for the annual Inno Madness competition.

Inno Madness is a friendly, bracket-style challenge where readers vote to advance companies based on one question: Who would you invest in? Whether you believe in one mission or product slightly over the other or would prefer to back a more established company versus an early-stage startup, how you answer that question is entirely up to the person voting.

Sixty-four local startups are vying for the top prize in Inno Madness this year.

"We won round 2 and round 3 Voting is open," Byron Pierson, CEO of EDUrain said.
"You can vote once per day. Please vote for EDUrain in round 3 now.

"Thank you for the round 2 votes. Let's bring this home. We need 2,000 votes this round to win! Please share the voting link and invite 1 person to vote as well."

Pierson also said: "As a former foster-care youth, to be in this position to support students with issues that I had is incredible. "Even the name of EDUrain means something. EDU is short for education and Rain is the name of my sister who died when I was 13. It is named this because I believe that higher education can build successful families regardless of your background.

"Colleges give students access to experts in their fields, mental health professionals, mentors, guaranteed housing, structure, a funding source, and usually every employee at colleges gives students a smile, because college employees know students are our future."

Pierson said EDUrain company started as a research assignment.

"I didn't know a thing about business, but I knew in my heart I could create an organization that can help students in college and makes money at the same time," he said. "I feel like we can win this market, because we are smart, coachable, hard-working, and our heart is in the right place, which shows in our product.

"We are 'for students by students.' Our team is recent and current college students who had trouble with finding and/or securing housing."

The bracket is designed to shine a spotlight on 32 innovative, fast-growing local businesses. The St. Louis Business Journal debuted Inno Madness in 2022, with Business Video School being our inaugural champion. EDUrain was knocked out in the first round last year but returns again this year.

To address students' struggles when moving off-campus, EDUrain partners with colleges to build official off-campus marketplaces that help with housing affordability, roommate search, college email verification, education about off-campus housing, locating housing, and its marketplaces help students create a positive financial identity.

The college partnership makes EDUrain a vetted service for their students and marketplaces are partnering with each individual partnered college's housing strategy, which big competitors like Zillow and Apartments.com won't do.

You can vote for EDUrain.org here: <https://www.bizjournals.com/stlouis/pulse/survey/st-louis-inno-madness-round-3/22226084>

This comes as EDUrain was nominated for local supplier of the Year by the [St. Louis Apartment Association](#) a few weeks ago, and in the interview, the [Tulsa Apartment Association](#) employees said "there is nothing like EDUrain in the market and if you keep going you can be big"! Also, we have partnered with [Ellen Weber](#) from [Robin Hood Ventures](#) and her [Fox School of Business at Temple University](#) class to pursue the [Arch Grants](#)! Each week the students will learn several components of the pitch deck (e. g., financials, value proposition, market opportunity, Go-to-Market Strategy, Funding Requirements, Use of Funds, Valuation, Competition, etc) and will meet with the [EDUrain](#) team to discuss what was covered in class and what information is needed to build upon what we already have. EDUrain is for and by students!

CEO Pierson is a fostercare alumni who spent his undergraduate experience studying enrollment and retention best practices; after college, he worked at a college student support organization and was the head of college outreach on a U.S. Senate campaign in 2022. Arron, a co-founder, is experienced in product development and has experience founding a company. His first business is currently generating over \$1.7 million in annual revenue.

Adam, a co-founder, is an experienced software developer and a graduate student at Washington University in St. Louis. All three founders are 4.0 Schools Tiny Fellows alumni.