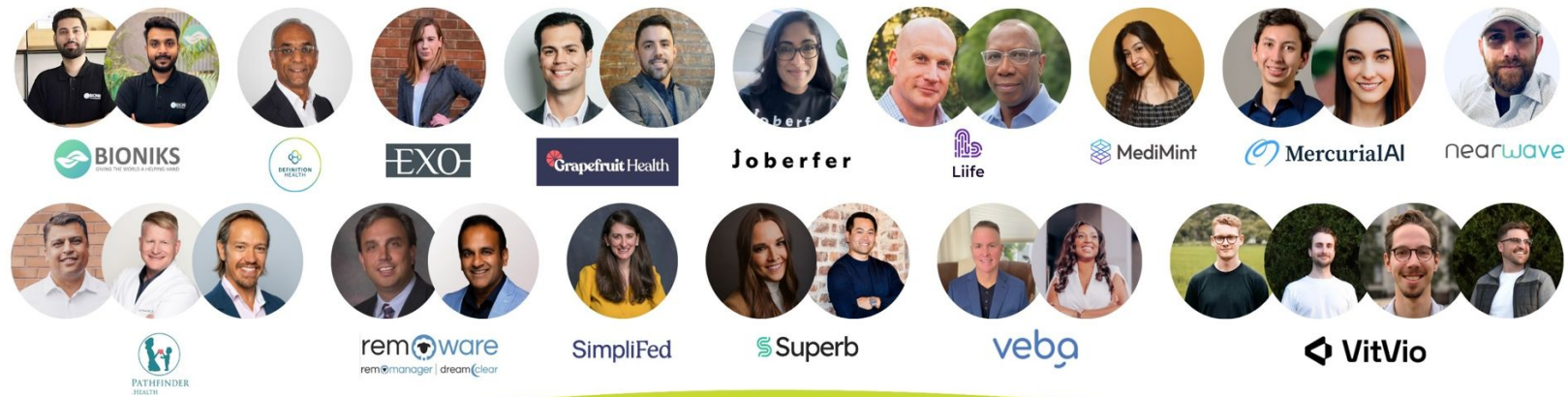


# 2024 HealthTech|X Highlights Recap Report

## 2024 HealthTech Accelerator



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The 2024 HealthTech|X Accelerator represented the second year of Tampa Bay Wave's ("Wave's") programming specifically for healthtech startups, thanks to a multi-year grant awarded by the US Department of Commerce's Economic Development Agency. And it represents Wave's 40<sup>th</sup> tech Accelerator. The inaugural 2023 HealthTech Showcase featured Wave healthtech alumni companies from prior Accelerators. Wave is hosting our traditional HealthTech|X Accelerators in 2024 and 2025.

Wave's traditional Accelerators not only offer a robust multi-week immersive program, but include: one-on-one mentoring and expert-guided advisory sessions, pitch coaching, investment readiness training, and support as cohort companies advance through funding rounds from Seed to Series B in an environment designed to support high-scale growth. Beyond the Accelerator, participating companies enjoy ongoing support and connections to further accelerate their development. Collectively, well **over 500 hours** of mentoring and other support are provided to these companies, as well as invaluable exposure opportunities through press, social media and Wave's signature events, which are attended by 200+ tech ecosystem and community members.

Enhancing these HealthTech|X Accelerators are the subject matter experts on the Advisory Council and from our all volunteer, professional Mentor Network, as well as the Investors looking to invest capital in this vertical. Wave would like to acknowledge its partnership with USF Health (University of South Florida) and CAMLS (Center for Advanced Medical Learning & Simulation) units, as well as our relationship with Tampa Bay Economic Development Council and new sponsors: Florida High Tech Corridor plus Levo Health. This Accelerator helps enhance the collaborative designation of downtown as Tampa Medical Research District, along with efforts to attract overseas medtech companies seeking a soft landing to market their advances in the US. Part of Wave's economic impact includes encouraging non-US companies to establish offices and to create good-paying US jobs, whether in the Tampa Bay region or beyond.

Wave recruited locally, nationally and globally for the 15 best healthtech startup companies from a pool of 312 applicants, 76% of whom applied from outside Florida and 21% from outside the US. As noted in our July press release, these founders are not only addressing key healthcare challenges through their innovative technologies, they truly are strong founders solving real problems for patients, providers and payors, thanks to their incredibly strong and diverse backgrounds.

Within this cohort are: military veterans from both the Army and the Air Force, alumni from MIT, Stanford, UPenn, Rush, Northwestern, Cal Berkeley, Georgia Tech, WestPoint, Notre Dame, FIU, Florida State, USF and more, as well as alumni from other Accelerators, like Y-Combinator and Techstars, plus innovation programs at Google and Nvidia. The founders also worked for some of the world's largest companies, including: Salesforce, Amazon, Google, Forbes, Visa, IBM, Deloitte, PwC, Citigroup, Kleiner Perkins, Pipedrive, Los Alamos National Laboratory, Best Buy, along with healthcare enterprises like: the VA (Veterans Administration), Athena Health, Cerner, Boston Scientific, MassGen, Advocate Aurora Health, Modivcare, Merck, and more. These founders are serial entrepreneurs, engineers, PhDs, MDs, MBAs, and highly credentialed. We even have a White House Presidential Innovation Fellow in this year's class.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - cont.d

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What sets Wave apart is our non-profit status and our equity-free approach to supporting startups. We are wholly committed to providing comprehensive assistance to startups, ensuring they retain full ownership of their ventures while benefiting from our expansive resources and community. As demonstrated by the metrics provided herein, Wave is committed to supporting diverse and underrepresented populations, with 86% diversity represented across our programs.

The following pages feature a selection of photos, links to articles published about the program, our Advisory Council, an outline of the topics that were covered by subject matter experts, plus notes about some of the successes and challenges relevant to this Accelerator, but not uncommon to other Wave Accelerators. We have also provided spotlights for a few of the 2024 HealthTech|X founders, along with updates on healthtech alumni companies plus additional context about Wave's broader Mentor and Investor network and about our Staff and Board.

The 2024 HealthTech|X Accelerator was a resounding success. Wave is grateful to all those who helped make it so successful and we look forward to providing updates on these startup companies as they progress. We hope this report demonstrates the return our sponsors and supporters receive for investing in our mission delivery and we hope it inspires additional engagement from across the business, academic, public and private community.



Linda Olson  
CEO, Tampa Bay Wave

# 2024 HealthTech Accelerator



**Company Name:** Bioniks  
**Description:** Bioniks is a social enterprise striving to facilitate humanity in every field of life. It is a symbol of hope for individuals with disabilities – giving them a helping hand in the form of advance AI prosthetics.  
**Location:** Karachi, Sindh, PK  
**Founder(s):** Ovais Hussain Qureshi & Anas Niaz  
**Website:** www.bioniks.org



**Company Name:** Definition Health  
**Description:** Definition Health is a AI driven Digital Care Navigation platform for Surgery.  
**Location:** Brighton and Hove, UK  
**Founder(s):** Sandeep Chauhan  
**Website:** www.lifeboxhealth.com



**Company Name:** EXO Technologies, Inc.  
**Description:** EXO Technologies is a pioneering healthtech company with a bold mission – to rebuild the foundation of women's health. By leveraging innovative technologies, EXO aims to bridge gaps in women's health research and treatment, ultimately enhancing the standard of care for women around the world.  
**Location:** Chapel Hill, NC, USA  
**Founder(s):** Emily Maginn  
**Website:** www.wereexo.com



**Company Name:** Grapefruit Health  
**Description:** Grapefruit Health is addressing the massive staffing shortage in healthcare by creating a tech-enabled workforce composed completely of local clinical students.  
**Location:** Chicago, IL, USA  
**Founder(s):** Eric Alvarez  
**Website:** www.grapefruit.health



**Joberfer**

**Company Name:** Joberfer Inc  
**Description:** Joberfer.com is a next-generation job referral platform helping healthcare employers find qualified applicants to hire 90% faster.  
**Location:** Calgary, AB Canada  
**Founder(s):** Prasanthi Naidoo  
**Website:** www.joberfer.com



**Company Name:** Liife, Inc.  
**Description:** Liife, Inc. is a pioneering health-tech startup that uses AI to revolutionize health identification and verification processes. Our mission is to improve healthcare access, enhance patient experiences, and streamline operational efficiencies for healthcare providers.  
**Location:** Warren, NJ, USA  
**Founder(s):** Aaron Oboh, Jamie Moses  
**Website:** www.datokrypt.com



**Company Name:** MediMint  
**Description:** MediMint streamlines medical image sharing between patients and providers through patented blockchain technology, powering a more efficient, highly secure, and patient-centric healthcare future.  
**Location:** Philadelphia, PA, USA  
**Founder(s):** Ava Ramesh  
**Website:** www.medimint.health



**Company Name:** Mercurial AI  
**Description:** Mercurial AI generates hyper-specific treatment plans for breast cancer patients.  
**Location:** Chicago, IL, USA  
**Founder(s):** Dennis Trujillo, Sarah Blythe  
**Website:** www.mercurial-ai.com



**Company Name:** NearWave  
**Description:** NearWave develops non-invasive bedside imaging that leverages the latest in AI, optics, simulation, and sensors to help physicians select the right therapy for their breast cancer patients.  
**Location:** Austin, TX, USA  
**Founder(s):** Roy Stillwell  
**Website:** www.nearwave.co



**Company Name:** Pathfinder Health  
**Description:** Pathfinder Health objectively measures a child's developmental health during the first 5 years of life, accelerating the time to diagnosis for delays and also providing a platform for parents to monitor and track their child's progress. Through an innovative approach leveraging artificial intelligence, Pathfinder Health reduces the burdens of a constrained healthcare system by delivering asynchronous therapy via parent-led interventions, saving time and costs while also increasing revenue for healthcare providers.  
**Location:** San Diego, CA, USA  
**Founder(s):** Samar Parikh, Paul Patterson, Hans Kullberg  
**Website:** www.pathfinder.health



**Company Name:** REMware  
**Description:** REMware provides home sleep testing services to expand access and lower costs across the population through a subcontractor relationship to medical practices and groups.  
**Location:** Tampa, FL, USA  
**Founder(s):** Steve Santo, Arun Ramabadrn  
**Website:** www.remware.io



**Company Name:** SimpliFed  
**Description:** SimpliFed is a Maternal Care at Home platform providing virtual-first care across the peri and postnatal period, centered on exceptional patient experience while driving strong clinical outcomes and reducing cost. We specialize in lactation and baby feeding support as well as high risk condition monitoring for hypertension and gestational diabetes.  
**Location:** Ithaca, NY, USA  
**Founder(s):** Andrea Ippolito  
**Website:** www.simplifed.us



**Company Name:** Superb Shifts  
**Description:** Superb is a tech company revolutionizing senior care by optimizing supplemental staffing, enhancing care quality, and reducing traditional agency staffing costs.  
**Location:** Omaha, NE, USA  
**Founder(s):** Molly O'Neil, Anousone Souvannasoth  
**Website:** www.superbshifts.com



**Company Name:** Veba Baby  
**Description:** Veba Baby has created the world's first baby bottle monitor that tracks the expiration of breast milk and formula in real time – giving parents peace of mind that their babies are getting the best nutrition possible, at home or on the go.  
**Location:** Coral Springs, FL, USA  
**Founder(s):** Veon Brewster, Sean Brewster  
**Website:** www.vebababy.com



**Company Name:** VitVio  
**Description:** Autonomously track and analyze surgical procedures, tool usage, and adherence to protocols in real-time with computer vision and AI - increasing the number of surgeries performed per day, reducing delays, improving communication actionability, and reducing the likelihood of readmissions.  
**Location:** Wilmington, DE, USA  
**Founder(s):** Thomas Knox, Maks Kozarzewski, Aleks Pajewski, Peter Rennert  
**Website:** www.vitvio.com

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# ADVISORY COUNCIL



**Brian Model (Topmark Partners)**  
Managing Partner



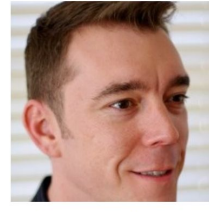
**Chris Molaro (NeuroFlow)**  
Founder & CEO



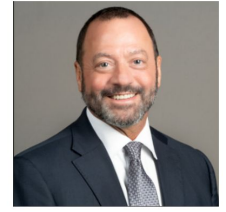
**Chuck Melendi Jr. (Johnson & Johnson)**  
Healthcare Policy & Advocacy Director



**Corinne Leach, PhD (Moffitt Cancer Center)**  
Acting Director Digital Innovation Research & Services



**Craig Anderson (BayCare Health System)**  
Director of Innovation



**Dan Vukmer (USF Health)**  
CEO, Tampa Bay Health Alliance; Chief Strategy Officer, USF Health; Senior Associate Dean, MCOM



**David Seo, MD (Nicklaus Children's Hospital)**  
Senior Vice President & Chief Digital and Information Officer



**David Williams (Levo Health)**  
COO & Managing Partner



**Demi Radeva (Akros Advisory)**  
Chief Strategist & Payer Expert



**Derek Pupello, MBA (FIVE Labs)**  
Founder & CEO



**Edmondo Robinson, MD, MBA (Downeast Digital)**  
Founder and CEO



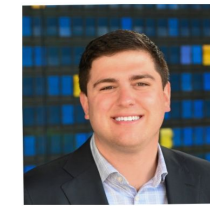
**Haru Okuda MD, FACEP, FSSH (USF Health Center for Advanced Medical Learning and Simulation - CAMLS)**  
Executive Director



**Indra Sandal, PhD, MBA (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs)**  
Chief of Innovation



**Jared Saul, MD (Amazon Web Services)**  
Chief Medical Officer, Commercial Healthcare and Life Sciences



**Jerett Smith (Ballast Point Ventures)**  
Vice President



**Kevin Sneed, MD (USF Taneja College of Pharmacy & USF Health)**  
Dean (USF College of Pharmacy) & Senior Associate Vice President



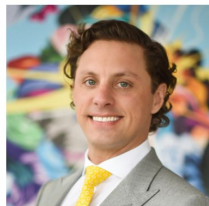
**Kirstie McCool (GuideWell Innovation)**  
Executive Director



**Lien Le, MD (TGH)**  
VP Hospital Medicine/Associate Chief Medical Officer



**Matt Durski (Accenture)**  
Health Strategist and Thought Leader



**Nate Lacktman (Foley & Lardner)**  
Equity Partner



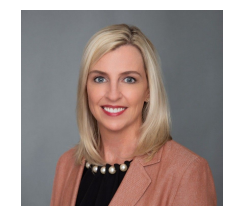
**Rachel Feinman (Tampa General Hospital)**  
VP Innovation (TGH InnoVentures)



**Santosh Mohan (Former Moffitt Cancer Center)**  
Vice President, Digital



**Shalen De Silva (Slayer Consulting)**  
Managing Partner



**Carey Officer (PERSOWN)**  
President

# RECRUITMENT & SELECTION

## Benefits of a Multi-Year Program

Since Tampa Bay Wave launched its downtown Tampa venture center and accelerator programming in 2013, the region's technology sector has seen transformative change. In just over ten years, the local ecosystem is hardly recognizable as the region seems to regularly boast about its startups getting national and global attention. With 2024 as the second year of the HealthTech Accelerator program, Recruiting continues to benefit from the brand awareness and reputation that comes from a multi-year program like this. Many applicants come from referrals by prior cohort companies as well as from individuals and organizations who are familiar with Wave's programs and benefits. They notice the success rates of our member companies and the mentoring and coaching that lead to long-term growth. The 2023 HealthTech program featured Wave alumni healthtech companies, some of whom are highlighted in the spotlight pages later herein.

### Key Recruiting Metrics

- 312 Total Applications received
- 76% of applications from outside Florida
- 21% of applications from outside the US
- 30 Semi-Finalists selected from initial screenings
- 15 Companies selected for the cohort

## Recruiting Efforts

Wave staff leveraged their extensive national and international network of partners, as well as various media channels, to raise awareness about the program.

- Global and national recruiting partners involved included: Morrow (GAN.co), Gust, F6s, Global Entrepreneurship Network, Startup Champions Network, and others.
- Referrals were received through Wave startups and founder connections, including alumni from past programs and members of other Wave accelerator programs.
- Referrals were also obtained from Mentor and Advisory networks associated with Wave.
- Investor networks provided additional referrals.
- Sponsors and Donors contributed referrals as well.
- Community partner referrals and connections were utilized.
- Cold inbound leads were another source of applicants.
- A combination of paid digital advertising campaigns, email marketing, and social media outreach was employed.

# RECRUITMENT & SELECTION - cont'd.



**76%**  
Applications  
Outside of FL



**21%**  
Applications  
Outside of US



**15**  
Companies  
Selected

## Year-Round Recruiting Impact

The **HealthTech Accelerator** greatly benefited from its year-round recruitment effort. Consistent, ongoing recruitment is crucial, as the reality in the accelerator space is that startups choose the program, not the other way around. Tampa Bay Wave's reputation as a "best-in-class" accelerator guarantees that top-tier applicants are solving real problems and are ready to bring their solution to Tampa Bay., trusting Wave's Mentor an Investor networks connections.

## The 2024 HealthTech Cohort was an outstanding group of founders

The 2024 HealthTech|X cohort was exceptionally strong, with seasoned entrepreneurs who have collectively raised over \$27 million in funding prior to joining the program. These founders, hailing from top institutions like MIT, Stanford, and Georgia Tech, and with experience at major companies such as Salesforce, Google, and IBM, are addressing critical healthcare challenges with innovative technologies. Their diverse backgrounds, including military veterans, PhDs, and MBAs, reflect a high caliber of talent. Tampa Bay Wave is proud to welcome this exceptional group of founders, whose work promises real-world impact.

## Program reach included Three International Startups

The 2024 HealthTech cohort featured 3 international startups, but even more applied. Utilizing international partnerships, Wave is able to extend its reach and establish Central Florida as a valuable emerging tech space.

## Featured Startup

### SimpliFed

SimpliFed is a virtual maternal care platform providing expert support for lactation, baby feeding, and high-risk conditions, while enhancing patient outcomes and reducing costs.



After participating in multiple healthcare accelerators, the Tampa Bay Wave HealthTech cohort has been the best experience. The founder-led content and key customer introductions helped me land major commercial deals that would have been impossible on my own.

**Andrea Ippolito**  
Founder & CEO

# SimpliFed

# Diversity in Healthcare Remains Strong

## A Continuing Legacy of Supporting Underrepresented Founders

Wave continues to make progress in engaging female founders, founders of color, and other diverse demographics. Thanks to our growing reputation and continuously broadening recruiting strategy. Wave does not discriminate, and some founders may choose not to self-identify. However, based on both founder self-identifications and observations, the following advances are apparent:

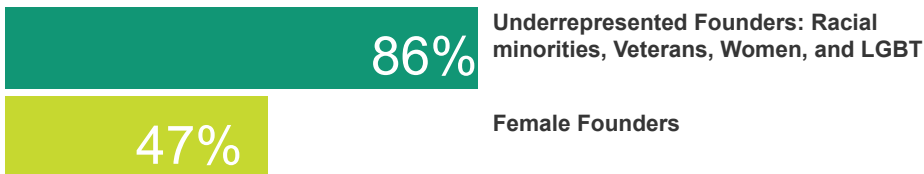
In the 2024 HealthTech Accelerator, **13 of the 15 startups have an underrepresented founder**. 47% are female-founded (7), and 67% have at least one founder who is a person of color (10).

Wave continues to make outreaches both directly and through its alumni and partners to encourage members from these communities to apply. The esteemed members of the Advisory Council also contributed to program success.

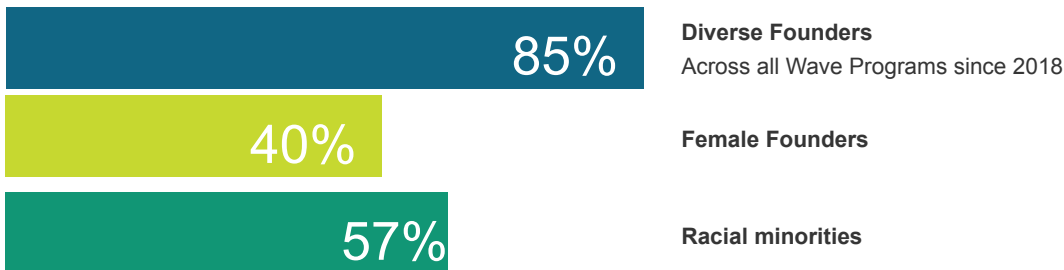


HealthTech|X Accelerator  
Pitch Night | Sept. 4, 2024

Prasanthi Naidoo  
Founder of Joberfer



Since launching the Accelerator programs in 2018, Wave has achieved nation-leading DEI statistics across all programs:



**85% of Wave startups identify as an Underrepresented Founder**



# PRESS + PR

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[2024 HealthTech|X Application Portal Press Release](#)

[2024 HealthTech|X Launch Press Release](#)

[2024 HTX Advisory Council Air Table](#)

[2024 HTX Press Release announcing application portal opening](#)  
[TBBW 2024 HTX Application Portal Opens](#)

[Nate Lacktman of Foley & Lardner Joins HealthTech|X Advisory Council](#)

[Tampa Bay Wave taps 15 startups for new HealthTech|X Accelerator from TBBJ](#)

[15 Groundbreaking Startups Begin Their Journey With the Inaugural HealthTech Accelerator at Tampa Bay Wave](#)

[2024 HealthTech|X Mentor Surge LinkedIn Post](#)

[2024 HealthTech|X Founders Describe Week 1 Experiences](#)

[2024 HealthTech|X Welcome Reception Highlights on Wave's YouTube Channel](#)

## **Other articles:**

[CBRE Report Names Tampa as a Top 25 US Market for Medtech Talent](#)

# PROGRAMMING

The 15 HealthTech cohort companies had access to over 500 hours of mentoring and other support including 70 workshops and training sessions utilizing an incredible line-up of expert speakers. Startup founders also benefited from numerous 1:1 mentoring and coaching hours with members of Wave's Staff and with our 230+ Mentor Network of professionals who donate their time and expertise.

## Featured Speaker

- **Government/Military**
  - David Wilkinson, Tampa Bay Wave
- **Venture Capital**
  - Danyell Jones, Raymond James
  - Kathy Chiu, Deepwork Capital
  - Chris Cunningham, C2 Ventures
  - Stefanie Diaz, Catalyst by Wellstar
- **Industry Experts & Founders/Alumni**
  - Cesar Hernandez, Omni Public
  - Nathan Beckord, Founder, FounderSuite
  - Mike Lingle, CEO, Rocket Proforma
  - Derek Barnett, Former Cogent Bank
  - Kevin M. Shuler, Foley & Lardner LLP
  - Samuel Urquijo, KeyBe (Alumni)
  - Ty Audronis, Tempest Dronewerx (Alumni)
  - Chris Rohe, GuardianSat (Alumni)
  - Christy Cull, Davinci Wearables (Alumni)
  - Matt Puccini, IBM
  - Nicholas Flaquer, IBM
  - Daniel McDonald, Lake Michigan Credit Union
  - Sam Li, Thoropass
  - Patrick Johnson, Silicon Valley Bank
  - Laura Epstein, Pulse Charter Connect (Alumni)
  - Trill Paullin, Free to Feed (Alumni)



## Featured Topics

- SBIR Funding, Process, and Hacks
- Exploring the US Government as a Customer
- State of Venture Capital
- Financial Projections and Modeling Best Practices
- Alternative Funding Sources (Family Office, Venture Debt, RBF, Crowdfunding)
- Building with an Exit in Mind
- Tax-Advantaged Strategies
- Enterprise Sales Strategies & Hacks
- Enterprise Marketing Strategies
- HR Best Practices
- Professional Business Presentations
- Growth Strategies and Scaling Up
- Insights from an Enterprise CTO
- Sourcing and Hiring Top Talent
- Targeting and Managing Talent
- Securing Development Tax Credits
- Avoiding Burnout

# COHORT SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

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## Diverse and High Achieving Founders

The cohort consisted of a remarkable group of accomplished founders from diverse backgrounds. The Wave team successfully achieved their goal of selecting underrepresented founders while also choosing individuals from **top-tier academic and professional history**. The mixture of startup maturities also lends itself to new thoughts and leadership amongst the cohort itself.

## Advance Outreach for a record-breaking Investor Demo Day

The virtual Investor Demo Day attracted a **record-breaking 160 registrations**, indicating a healthy venture capital environment and demonstrating Wave's growing reputation. Almost every startup received connections following the event.

## Continuing Legacy of Alumni Returning to Speak

Wave has a strong alumni network of healthcare founders eager to share experiences. Founders learn best from peers, and startups can visualize their potential future. Succeeding in healthcare presents unique challenges, so industry-specific perspectives are crucial.

## Challenge: Funding Woes Continue, esp. for underrepresented founders

The startups entered 2024 undercapitalized. Despite efforts to address the issue, data from 2023 showed that only 2.1% of venture capital went to Black and Latinx founders, and women founders received only 2.8% of total venture capital. Many initiatives have been launched to counter this disparity, but they continue to face challenges.

Wave sees this as a critical opportunity to distinguish itself and continues to build relationships with fund managers to increase visibility for its program and startups, attracting early stage investor capital. In spite of a tough funding environment, Wave alumni continue to **raise over \$200 million in each of the past three years!**

## Onboarding of Specialized Mentors and Vendors, in AI and Deep Tech

Wave has invested significant time and effort in recruiting subject matter experts for its Mentor network and industry-based Advisory Councils. These experts have extensive experience in advanced technology fields such as AI, Machine Learning, and other cutting-edge technologies. Wave has established partnerships with prominent tech and medical firms including IBM, NVIDIA, hospital systems, insurers and others. These **partnerships will ensure Wave continues securing top startup talent** in future program years.

# PHOTOS

## HealthTech|X Mentor Surge July 24th @ Tampa Bay Wave

### Mentor Surge at Wave's Office



### Cohort offsite bonding activity at Top Golf - Week 1

# SIGNATURE EVENTS – WELCOME RECEPTION



# HealthTech Accelerator

JULY 25, 2024 | 6:00 - 8:00 PM

USF CAMLS Center For Advanced Medical Learning And Simulation  
124 South Franklin Street | Tampa, FL 33602

POWERED BY: **EDA**  
U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

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HOSTED AT:



Tampa Bay Wave hosted a Welcome Reception at USF Health CAMLS (Center for Medical Learning & Simulation) to introduce these startups to various community dignitaries and economic development partners.



HealthTech|X Accelerator

JULY 25, 2024



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high tech  
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# SIGNATURE EVENTS – Welcome Reception – cont'd.



Dignitaries like former County Commissioner Sandra Murman and Board Member Kathleen Shanahan joined Wave CEO, Linda Olson and Director of Development, Dee Garcia.

Sponsors Levo Health's Fergus Linsky, Brandon Gelfen and David Williams came to mingle with the founders and guests and participate on the Advisory Council.



# SIGNATURE EVENTS – WELCOME RECEPTION - cont'd.

Dr. Haru Okuda,  
Head of CAMLS and  
Linda Olson, CEO of  
Tampa Bay Wave,  
welcome guests.



Jennifer  
Burrington of  
Tampa Bay EDC,  
shares details  
about the new  
Tampa Medical  
Research District.

# SIGNATURE EVENTS – WELCOME RECEPTION - cont'd.



Dr. Richard Munassi, Accelerator Managing Director, introduces the startup founders.

Ovais Hussain Qureshi, Co-Founder of Bioniks, describes a biometric, low cost limb replacement advancement for economically disadvantaged countries.



An appreciative crowd listens intently to the tech founders.



# SIGNATURE EVENTS – PITCH NIGHT

# TAMPA BAY wave HealthTech|X Accelerator

## Pitch Night

### SEPTEMBER 4, 2024 | 5:30-7:30PM

USF CAMLS Center For Advanced Medical Learning And Simulation  
124 South Franklin Street | Tampa, FL 33602

HOSTED AT:

POWERED BY: **EDA**  
U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

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**Levo**  
HEALTH

UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH FLORIDA  
Research & Innovation

**CAMLS**  
Center for Advanced Medical  
Learning and Simulation



Great crowd!  
(Despite a torrential  
thunderstorm!)



## Networking Reception and Pitch Night



# SIGNATURE EVENTS: PITCH NIGHT (cont.)

- Dr. Kevin Sneed, USF Taneja College of Pharmacy
- Dr. Charles Lockwood, USF Health
- Dr. Haru Okuda, CAMLS



**Aaron Oboh, Co-Founder of Liife, is fighting Medicaid Fraud**

**Pathfinder Health monitors child development**



**Veon Brewster, VebaBaby's dedicated founder**

# STARTUP SPOTLIGHT 2024 - Featured Cohort Company

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**Andrea Ippolito**  
*Founder & CEO*  
*Lansing, NY*

**HealthTech|X 2024**

## SimpliFed

SimpliFed, a healthcare startup dedicated to enhancing maternal and infant care, has made significant progress since graduating from the Tampa Bay Wave accelerator. Andrea Ippolito is a multiple-time startup founder with previous exits to her name.

During the program, the company was able to secure a significant partnership with a leading regional healthcare network, and closed Seed funding round. Since completion, the company has activated its customer pipeline and formed partnerships with additional healthcare providers to expand its services.

They are rapidly scaling their operations and aim to positively affect a large number of patients across the United States.

[simplified.com](https://simplified.com)

# STARTUP SPOTLIGHT - 2024 Featured Cohort Company



**Veon Brewster**  
*Co-founder & CEO*  
*Coral Springs, FL*

**HealthTech|X 2024**



Veba Baby, founded by Veon Brewster, has made significant strides since appearing on Shark Tank. The company has developed a smart baby bottle monitor that tracks the temperature and expiration of breast milk or formula, providing parents with peace of mind.

Since its time in the accelerator, Veba Baby has expanded its product line, optimized its supply chain, and secured partnerships with both online and brick-and-mortar retailers, establishing a strong presence in the parenting tech market.

The company has won the 2024 TWICE Picks Award and has been featured in Forbes, boosting its visibility. Veba Baby's products are on major platforms like Amazon, appealing to tech-savvy, eco-conscious parents seeking safer baby care options.

[vebababy.com](https://vebababy.com)

# STARTUP SPOTLIGHT - 2024 Featured Cohort Company



**Ovais Hussain Qureshi**  
*Co-Founder & CEO*  
*Houston, TX*

**HealthTech|X 2024**



Bioniks is a pioneering health tech startup based in Karachi, Pakistan, making a significant impact in the field of prosthetics. The company is known for developing affordable, multi-grip bionic arms that mimic natural limb movement, revolutionizing accessibility for amputees, particularly in regions like Southeast Asia, where over 60% of the world's amputees reside. Their innovative prosthetics provide functionality at a fraction of the cost compared to traditional options.

Bioniks is relocating to Houston, Texas, to scale operations and enter the U.S. healthcare market. After gaining global recognition at major summits like AI for Good, this move will give them access to advanced healthcare infrastructure, potential partnerships, and a larger customer base, enhancing their impact in the prosthetics industry.

[bioniks.org](http://bioniks.org)

# STARTUP SPOTLIGHT - Alumni Company

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**Albert Huang, MD**  
*Founder & CEO*  
*Houston, TX*

**TechDiversity 2020**



Allotrope Medical offers advanced surgical efficiency and safety in the operating room through their StimSite technology. Dr. Albert Huang was a member of TechDiversity 2020.

After raising nearly \$10 million in venture capital and establishing partnerships with leading hospitals, the company was acquired by Northgate Technologies Inc. (NTI) in 2023.

Following the acquisition, Dr. Huang took on the role of NTI's Chief Medical Officer. The acquisition aimed to integrate StimSite into NTI's portfolio and expand its distribution through NTI's global network.

[allotropemed.com](http://allotropemed.com)

# STARTUP SPOTLIGHT - Alumni Company

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**Shalen De Silva**  
*Co-Founder and CEO*  
*Boston, MA*

**TechDiversity 2020**



Vincere Health, a TechDiversity 2020 alum, provides behavior change support for hard-to-reach populations. Focusing on areas such as weight management and tobacco cessation programs using an innovative incentive-based system

In 2023, Vincere was acquired by RVO Health, a healthcare partnership between Optum and Red Ventures. Vincere's clients included state Medicaid plans and a partnership with the Veterans Health Administration.

Shalen is now Managing Partner at Slayer Consulting and has returned as a mentor and speaker for Tampa Bay Wave.

[vincere.health](https://vincere.health)

# STARTUP SPOTLIGHT - Alumni Company

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**Laura Epstein**  
*Founder & CEO*  
*Chicago, IL*

**TechDiversity 2023**



Pulse Charter Connect is a solution that automates and streamlines the inefficient process of organ transport logistics. Leveraging real-time data, PCC improves organ transplant success rates by ensuring faster, safer, and more cost-effective transportation.

Most recently, PCC was selected for the 10th class of the Cedars-Sinai Accelerator program, one of the world's leading healthcare institutions. They recently went revenue positive in April 2024 and are onboarding new hospital networks every month.

[pulsecharterconnect.com](https://pulsecharterconnect.com)



# MAKING BIG WAVES

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The first 9 months of 2024 reflected even more success for delivery on Tampa Bay Wave's mission as we continue to deliver Accelerations focused on: CyberTech, FinTech, HealthTech, LatinTech and Tech Diversity. The second half will be filled with even more action, as we pursue adding a new bluetech accelerator focused on supporting ocean resiliency thanks to exploratory grant funding from NOAA. We continue to grow our portfolio of startups as we add new verticals. We are committed to supporting talented founders and enhancing the reputations of our region and state as an innovation tech hub.

Wave has continued to expand its reach and delivery across the region and beyond, tapping both its Tampa headquarters and a satellite office opened in downtown St. Petersburg in 2023. Our formal and informal partnerships within our community continue to expand. Our joint funding pursuits through a strong partnership with the University of South Florida is just one example of how we collaborate to enhance this region's tech reputation, bringing talent and exposure here

We anticipate reporting an amazing 2024, thanks to all who support us. Securing multi-year funding allows us to build upon the work of the prior year, which is critical to long-running programming.

Wave looks forward to celebrating startups successes at our December Hall of Fame Awards Celebration event.

**WATCH US MAKE MORE WAVES!**

# LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

BUILDING THE REGION'S TECH ECOSYSTEM

SINCE OUR PROGRAM LAUNCHED IN 2013

GUIDING ENTREPRENEURS FROM STARTUP TO UNICORN

ACCELERATING  
TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES

INSPIRING  
INNOVATION

CREATING A  
COLLABORATIVE ECOSYSTEM

SUPPORTING A BROAD RANGE OF EMERGING TECH

- AI
- EdTech
- Hospitality

- MedTech
- CyberTech
- FinTech

- IoT
- SaaS
- eCommerce

- HealthTech
- MarTech
- CleanTech

FOSTERING GREATER DIVERSITY & INCLUSION



**NOW 46%**

WOMEN FOUNDERS



**NOW 86%**

DIVERSE & UNDERREPRESENTED FOUNDERS



STARTUP FOUNDERS FROM  
**30** COUNTRIES SHOWCASED TAMPA  
AS AN INNOVATION HUB

LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

 **22**

COMPANIES RELOCATED TO TAMPA BAY

 **1300**

HOTEL ROOMS

 **450**

FLIGHTS THROUGH TPA

2022 WAVE ACCELERATOR PROGRAMS

 **403**

TOTAL APPLICANTS

 **11%**

APPLICANTS ACCEPTED  
(HIGHLY SELECTIVE)

 **9.2**

NET PROMOTER SCORE

# WAVE'S EXECUTIVE TEAM

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**Linda Olson**  
CEO & Founder



**Dee Garcia**  
Director of Development &  
Strategic Partnerships



**Dr. Richard Munassi**  
Accelerator Managing  
Director

# OPERATIONS & EVENTS TEAM

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**Jennifer Ptack**  
Manager, Strategic  
Branding & Events



**Michael "Mike" Lynn**  
Manager, Venture  
Center Operations

# WAVE'S PROGRAMS, MENTOR & INVESTOR RELATIONS TEAM

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**Demelza Genest**  
CORE Program Director



**Jonathan Truong**  
Sr. Mgr, National Programs  
and Partnerships



**Greg Pierce**  
Accelerator Associate



**Amit Agrawal**  
Director Investor  
Relations & Ops Platform



**Mariah Ramos**  
Manager, Accelerator Ops  
& Mentor Relations



**Matt Ymiolek**  
Investor Relations  
Associate

# WAVE'S BOARD as of JUNE 2024



**Santo Cannone**  
Board Chair



**Linda Olson**  
President/CEO



**Alfred Goldberg**  
Vice President



**Madeline Dent**  
Secretary



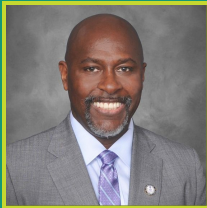
**Catherine Wilhelm**  
Treasurer



**Kailah Matyas**  
Program Strategy Committee Chair



**Kostas Stoilas**  
Fundraising Committee Chair



**Greg Celestan**  
Sustainability Committee Chair



**Diana Hayes**  
Gov. & Ethics Committee Chair



**Charlotte Baker**  
Immediate Past Chair



**Marcus Adolfsen**



**Rob Brown**



**Kathy Chiu**



**Brian Deming**  
Past Chair



**David Eason**



**Dr. Andy Hafer**



**Amanda Milligan**



**Brian Model**



**Jack Murray IV**



**Nick Outman**



**Penny Parks**



**Miraj Patel**



**Lance Raab**



**Cathy Ryan Reneer**



**Inga Schmitzer**



**Kathleen Shanahan**



**Yvette Segura**



**Alex Sink**  
Past Chair



**Andrew Smith**



**Lauren Weiner**

# INVESTOR & CUSTOMER NETWORKS

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## Wave's Investor Network

Wave companies have access to a **network of over 600 investors** known for supporting early-stage startups. They have established strong relationships with various investor targets in Florida, including Florida Funders, DeepWork Capital, Tampa Bay Ventures, and the Florida Opportunity Fund, among others. To broaden their reach, Wave's Investor Relations team actively extends its network beyond the region and has developed investment pipelines in key cities such as Atlanta, Austin, New York City, San Francisco, and more. For further details, you can [visit the Investor page](#) on Wave's website. Wave has created a platform specifically for investors to attract larger audiences from across the U.S. to their now all-virtual Demo Days.

Additionally, Wave maintains a long-standing relationship with PitchBook, the leading investor and startup fundraising database. This partnership allows them to effectively match member companies with active investors, providing a significant advantage, as PitchBook is typically only accessible to VC funds and large institutional investors.

Tampa Bay Wave dedicates substantial time to counsel and coach startups on investor readiness. This includes assistance with pitch deck reviews, investor relationship building, conversation preparation, and cap table management. Wave has also invested resources into SBIR/STTR preparation to unlock significant sources of non-dilutive capital for startups.

## Customer Networking

Wave team members leverage their connections to introduce potential customers to our member startups. This helps them build essential customer capital, revenues, and profits as part of their business growth success.

## INVESTOR READINESS & DEMO DAY SPONSORS

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# INVESTOR & CUSTOMER NETWORKS (cont.)

## HOW WAVE ENGAGES OTHERS

### HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT TOMORROW'S BRIGHTEST COMPANIES?



Scan QR Code to Contact Us  
and Learn More

Here are a few ways to engage our Accelerator and CORE Programs to help innovators:

- Volunteer Mentor
- Accredited Investor
- Sponsor or Financial Supporter
- Community Partnerships

## EXPANDING CONNECTIONS & REMOVING ECONOMIC BARRIERS

In 2023, Wave reached out to SouthWest Airlines and Delta Air Lines, requesting their help to help remove an economic barrier for cash-strapped startup founders. While Wave's programs are offered at no charge, the founders pay their own travel expenses to and from Tampa plus their lodging costs. We have long enjoyed being able to offer these traveling founders an incredible discount from the Hyatt House/Hyatt Place hotel next door but the cost of airfare was still a challenge for some. We were honored and delighted when both of these airlines offered us vouchers that we can distribute based on financial need to reduce this economic barrier.

And one unanticipated outcome will be the upcoming announcement of additional direct Delta Air Lines flights from Latin countries to Tampa and Orlando, thereby improving the accessibility and travel experience for future founders. We are seeking funding for a repeat of LatinTech in the coming year and look forward to sharing this great news with those applicants.

# MENTOR & COMMUNITY PARTNER NETWORKS

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## Wave's Mentor Network

Wave member companies have access to a wide network of professionals in our 220+ all volunteer Mentor network. These professionals have a passion for helping early stage startups. Some offer their expertise on specific topics (such as HR or trademark laws), while others may coach a startup on an ongoing basis, depending on what support the founder(s) need. We host regular Mentor mixers to build strong trusted relationships. Startups receive at least 20-30 direct mentor connections during their time in the program resulting in easily 100+ hours of consulting help.

Here is the [link](#) to the page on Wave's website, showcasing our Mentor network.

## Wave's Community Partner Network

Wave has also built a strong community partner network, with both formal and informal agreements in place. We connect our member companies to a wide range of community partners, such as our economic development partners and others who can help our startups build their base in our community.

We also provide introductions to others ESO (entrepreneur support organizations) in the ecosystem to encourage their participation and to magnify their visibility and exposure. Logos from several of our community partners are shown below but may also be found under this [link](#) on our website.

## NOTABLES FROM TAMPA BAY WAVE'S PARTNER NETWORK

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# SPONSORS & PARTNERS

## Wave's Sponsorships

Wave has grown its Pillars of Innovation (\$25K+) sponsors as well as all levels of sponsorship support, allowing to expand our programming. We continue to add national, regional and local sponsors, representing brands with a commitment to supporting diverse and underrepresented founders. Organizations like Delta Air Lines and Southwest Airlines have donated flight vouchers to make it possible for Wave founders to travel back and forth and to compete on national and international stages. Corporates have contributed either directly through their business units or through their foundations to underwrite programming and scholarships. The link to that page on Wave's website can be found [here](#).

Wave successfully won federal grants in 2022 and 2023, through the EDA and SBA, and continues to pursue new funding as a lead member of a regional consortium that includes academic partners like the University of South Florida, the three surrounding counties of Hillsborough, Pasco and Pinellas plus the City of Tampa and, economic development partners, plus the Port of Tampa, Tampa Airport and so many others.

We are eternally grateful for the support of Congresswoman Kathy Castor, for her advocacy in our securing \$500K in funding for an inaugural LatinTech Accelerator in 2023/24 to specifically support founders of Latin heritage.

We anticipate making at least 2 major announcements shortly about: (1) the outcome of a \$15 Million multi-year grant from NOAA to support advances in ocean climate resiliency and (2) reaching a significant and rare level of investor capital raised.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

### Federal Support



### Economic Development Partners





# SPONSORS & PARTNERS (cont.)

## Pillars of Innovation



## Tidal Wave Sponsors



## Corporate Friends of Wave



## Partners



# THANK YOU!

For questions, please reach out to:  
**Linda Olson, CEO, Tampa Bay Wave**  
[linda@tampabaywave.org](mailto:linda@tampabaywave.org)

Follow Wave on social media:



SCAN TO  
LEARN MORE

