



Winter Innovations secures pre-seed funding from Tennessee-based investors

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Memphis, Tenn. – Winter Innovations, Inc., a medical device startup dedicated to developing orthopedic surgical tools, recently announced that the company received funding from four Tennessee-based investment groups in January 2020.

Leading the investment round is the [Angel Roundtable \(ART\)](#), an early-stage angel investor network located in Johnson City, Tennessee. Ballad Ventures, an arm of the [Ballad Health](#) integrated healthcare system serving 29 counties in the Northeast Tennessee region, has co-invested with ART. Two groups from Memphis, [SAGE Business Advisors](#) and [Epicenter](#), have also contributed funds to Winter Innovations.

“Partnering with ART has already brought us incredible strategic value,” said Lia Winter, Winter Innovations co-founder and CEO. “They are a diverse group of individuals, each of whom possesses in-depth knowledge from their respective business experience. During the extensive due diligence process, we had the opportunity to meet with members who took the time to get to know the intricacies of our business, challenged us with thought-provoking questions, and provided recommendations or introductions when we needed them. The ART members feel like an extension of our team, which is really what we were looking for in an investor group.”

Winter Innovations is currently working to launch their flagship EasyWhip™ product, a two-part suturing needle that is used in orthopedic surgery to repair torn ligaments and tendons. The company plans to leverage the recently secured investment capital to perform testing necessary to submit for regulatory clearance from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Regarding Ballad Health’s participation in the round, Preston Dishner, Winter Innovations co-founder and COO, stated, “Having a well-known health system like Ballad involved in our funding round gives credibility to the utility of our EasyWhip™ product, and we believe that this relationship will help provide an early entry point into the market as soon as we obtain FDA clearance.”

Lia Winter and Preston Dishner initially founded Winter Innovations during their time in graduate school at The University of Tennessee in Knoxville. They worked closely with the Anderson Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation to transform their idea into a viable company.

The two competed in numerous business pitch competitions, including the Boyd Venture Challenge at The University of Tennessee, the 36|86 Student Edition Pitch Competition hosted by Launch Tennessee,

and Knoxville Startup Day sponsored by Innov865. The company has also won several national pitch competitions in Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, and even Canada. In October, they were featured as one of five finalists in a competition at the United States Patent and Trademark Office headquarters. To-date the duo has won ten competitions, earning over \$100,000 to fuel development of EasyWhip™. Last summer, Winter Innovations was a member of the 2019 ZeroTo510 medical device accelerator cohort in Memphis.

"We would not be where we are today if it weren't for the assistance that we received from the various organizations that support entrepreneurs throughout Tennessee," said Winter. "The Anderson Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation really helped us get our start and prepared us to become an investable company. Now in addition, organizations like Epicenter, Innov865, Launch Tennessee, Life Science Tennessee, and ZeroTo510 support our growth by providing connections and resources. I think that the diversity of support that we have received from all over the state really speaks to Tennessee's commitment to support entrepreneurs through collaboration. We are so thankful to be part of this ecosystem, and we are very grateful that our current investors have provided us with the means to achieve our next milestones."

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About Winter Innovations

Winter Innovations, Inc. is a medical device startup with a mission to create orthopedic tools that outperform conventional methods, make surgeons jobs easier, and can improve patient outcomes. To learn more about the company's EasyWhip™ product visit: www.winter-innovations.com.

About the Angel Roundtable

The Angel Roundtable is a select network of successful entrepreneurs, investors and other community and business leaders in the Northeast Tennessee, Southwest Virginia, and Western North Carolina region who provide investment capital, strategic advice and mentoring to late seed and early stage companies to help them achieve market leadership. To learn more about ART visit: www.theangelroundtable.com.