The Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce has awarded Urbix Resources, a startup company founded to commercialize University of Arizona inventions related to mining and batteries, its IMPACT Award for Exceptional Innovator in the small to medium business category. The honor, reserved for companies of 250 or fewer employees, recognizes the accomplishments Urbix has achieved, as well as the positive impact and influence it has generated for the community and the economy.

The GPC awarded four small and four large companies with recognition in each of four categories: Arizona Advocate, Community Champion, Economic Driver and Exceptional Innovator. Two of these eight honorees will be selected as Businesses of the Year at the 32nd Annual Impact Awards Luncheon on Thursday, May 23, 2019, at the Sheraton Grand Phoenix.

As a startup, the Mesa-based company worked with Tech Launch Arizona, the UA commercialization arm, to license a portfolio of lithium-ion battery and related materials technologies invented at the College of Optical Sciences. The technologies—an environmentally friendly low-temperature graphite purification technique first commissioned by Urbix Resources, a new electrode architecture, an electrolyte, and a graphene exfoliation reactor—were all developed by Dr. Palash Gangopadhyay when he was serving as an adjunct research professor at the college. Today, he is the full-time CTO at Urbix, overseeing the commercialization of these technologies.

"This honor demonstrates the kind of traction and impact startups from the UA are starting to create not only in Tucson but also in the Phoenix ecosystem," said TLA Assistant Vice President Doug Hockstad. "We're proud of Urbix and look forward to more of our companies continuing to amplify the impact of the UA across the state."

The new UA/Urbix-invented batteries can exceed 7,000 recharging cycles while still maintaining a greater than 95 percent specific capacity—more than double the performance of comparable top-of-the-line batteries which last 500 to 3000 cycles. Such performance translates to a 15 to 20-year battery life as opposed to three.

According to company co-founder and Chief Operating Officer Adam Small, "We are honored to be recognized for this award. Startups are never easy and to be recognized by our economic community as an exceptional innovator is extremely encouraging to continue to create new industries and jobs here in Arizona."

To date, the team has raised $4.8 million and is now in the process of raising Series B funding.

Small has deep ties to his alma mater. He graduated from the UA Eller College of Management.
in 2012, after which he became an entrepreneur and co-founded of a number of companies, most recently co-founding Urbix in 2014 with Cuevas and UA Engineering Management alumni Sergio Aguirre, Javier Ayala and Luis Ramos. While at the UA, Small won a national championship in swimming and was named one of Forbes 30 Under 30 in the energy sector in 2018.

You can link to this story and share it from the Tech Launch Arizona website: http://techlaunch.arizona.edu/news/ua-startup-urbix-resources-named-greater-phoenix-chamber-exceptional-innovator.

If you have any questions, please contact Paul Tumarkin, pault@tla.arizona.edu.

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