The Alzheimer's Challenge 2012 Announces Winner for Open Source Innovation; $300,000 in Total Prizes

WASHINGTON/PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The Geoffrey Beene Gives Back® Alzheimer's Initiative (www.geoffreybeene.com/alzheimers.html [1]) today announced Team Ginger.io, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, as the winner of the Alzheimer's Challenge 2012. The winning team, selected today during an event in Washington, D.C., was awarded $175,000 to help further develop their idea for a behavioral analytics platform using a combination of a mobile phone application and web-based dashboard. The Alzheimer's Immunotherapy Program (AIP) of Janssen Alzheimer Immunotherapy and Pfizer Inc. sponsored and provided program support and funding for the Alzheimer's Challenge 2012.
The winning solution, announced by George Vradenburg, Chairman of GBGBAI, founder of the USAgainstAlzheimer's Network (www.usagainstalzheimersnetwork.org [2]) and a member of the National Alzheimer's Advisory Council, is an application that links ongoing monitoring of Alzheimer's patients' behavior relevant to their mood, memory, and functional status to health care professionals who are also provided with an integrated dashboard of diagnostic tools and treatment options to streamline therapeutic response time. Patients also get a digital window into their own brain health.

Five finalist teams, selected from over 100 submissions, presented a prototype of their idea to a panel of esteemed judges during the finalist event led by InnoCentive (www.innocentive.com [3]), the open innovation and crowdsourcing pioneer that assisted with development of the judging criteria.

"A disease as complex and pervasive as Alzheimer's demands multiple therapeutic solutions from a diversity of new perspectives," said Tom Hutton, Trustee of the Geoffrey Beene Foundation and President and Chief Executive Officer of Geoffrey Beene, LLC. "That is why we are committed to supporting today's winners and finalists as well as the next round of open source competitions under Geoffrey Beene's Rock Stars of Science Global Grand Challenge. This is innovation the way it should be: open, fast, and focused on the issues that matter most."

Vradenburg, a close ally in GBGBAI's ongoing commitment to innovation in Alzheimer's research, sees the winning and finalist solutions as part of a turning point in the fight against Alzheimer's:

"Technology-driven innovations are a critical tool in detecting and monitoring Alzheimer's progression. 'Business-as-usual' is a death sentence for the 10 million Baby Boomers who now have or are at risk for this disease. The winners and finalists of the Alzheimer's Challenge 2012 are the leading edge of the new high-tech weapons we need to defeat this disease by 2025. We are deeply grateful to all our finalists for forging new paths forward in the fight against Alzheimer's."

"We are honored to win the Alzheimer's Challenge 2012 and help bring a new tool to the Alzheimer's community that uses technology in a creative and effective way to help advance patient care," said Sai Moturu, Ph.D., the Ginger.io team lead. "We are eager to take our concept to the next level of development and are grateful for the support we've received through the Challenge."

All finalist teams, from which the winner was chosen, were awarded $25,000 in development prizes for such innovation solutions as:

The Digital Clock Drawing Test (dCDT), submitted by Team ClockSketch, Burlington, MA: The latest virtual rendering 'digital ink" technology extends a widely used diagnostic clock drawing test for mild cognitive impairment to more sensitively detect subtle and previously unmeasurable changes in behavior, then converts each patient's data into a universally sharable database.

ICHANGE - Intelligent Continuous Health Assessment with Noninvasive Gerotechnology, submitted by Team ICHANGE, Portland, OR: Seeks to transform the way we identify dementia by changing how and where we assess for change, from a brief unnatural snapshot of time in a clinic setting to a real-world, real-time view of a person's entire function in their home. The ICHANGE system continuously and coincidently monitors signature activities and behaviors of those with Alzheimer's disease that are readily assessed without the need to remember to wear or charge a device. An array of inexpensive sensors are used to unobtrusively measure key functions whose change has been associated with the progression of cognitive decline. Data are then aggregated and analyzed with prediction algorithms that are then streamed to stakeholders of interest (caregiver, doctor, clinical trialists), providing real-time reports of meaningful change.

BrainBaseline, submitted by Team BrainBaseline, Iowa City, IA: A convenient iPad-based time measurement of a patient's memory, attention, language and other cognitive processes that automatically cross-references with the patient's lifestyle to update family and caregivers, recommend ways to improve quality of life, and also track the effect of lifestyle factors on Alzheimer's progression for larger demographic studies.

The Verbal Fluency Meter (VF-Meter), submitted by Team VF-Meter, Minneapolis, MN: A brief, non-invasive computerized instrument that measures and monitors over time subtle cognitive changes specific to Alzheimer's disease. The instrument automates the administration and results analysis of a standard verbal fluency task using a variety of commonly used communication interfaces including telephones, computers and mobile devices. The automated measurements will then be used to evaluate individual current cognitive state, monitor cognitive change over time and predict the relative likelihood and rate of disease progression.

Building on the success of the Alzheimer's Challenge 2012, GBGBAI is soon set to launch the Geoffrey Beene's Rock Stars of Science™ Global Grand Challenge, the second in its series of prize-based challenge competitions designed in coordination with InnoCentive, which is aimed at accelerating clinical trials and mining data to

uncover risk factors in presymptomatic populations. Winning solutions will be announced in early 2013.

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