Menlo College recent alumnus Massimiliano Genta ‘16 went to Seoul, Korea as a CEO. His leap to CEO came when Genta was selected by Silicon Valley Advantage (SVA), the start-up company where he was interning while still a Menlo College student.

“The main reason I was selected as CEO, despite my beginner’s experience, is that I have worked on the project since inception,” explained Genta. I participated and organized meetings with potential clients, developed the business plan, logo, company name, and I prepared the pitch for the investors.”
After he helped form SmartpHlex, Genta and his supervisor Gloria Marceliko, Director of SVA, entered a start-up competition called K-Startup Grand Challenge, conducted and financed by the Government of the Republic of Korea. The ultimate objective of the challenge is to promote entrepreneurship in Asia and to assist in South Korea’s evolution into a prominent hub of global start-ups.

The first three rounds of the competition took place in Redwood City, and the final took place in Seoul, Korea. Genta’s team passed 2 rounds and traveled to Korea in August to compete in the final against 80 other start-ups.

Genta’s team scored in Korea, and for the next three and a half months, they will be competing for a place in the top forty start-ups. At this stage, the government has begun to directly invest in his start-up. Genta is receiving $5,000 a month from the government, office space, and the assistance of an accelerator who is helping them secure additional funding.

SmartpHlex, founded in collaboration with SVA and University of Texas Arlington, produces highly accurate, durable, low cost, flexible, compact and easy-to-integrate sensor platforms for human, animal, and agricultural applications. The sensors took ten years to make, and were developed by University of Texas-Arlington Professor JC Chiao and his PhD students.

Genta’s team will engage with Korean partners, large and medium size, in the wearables space, and consumer electronic companies for direction of product and possible strategic partnership.

See a video of the K-Challenge: https://www.facebook.com/kstartup2016/?pnref=story

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