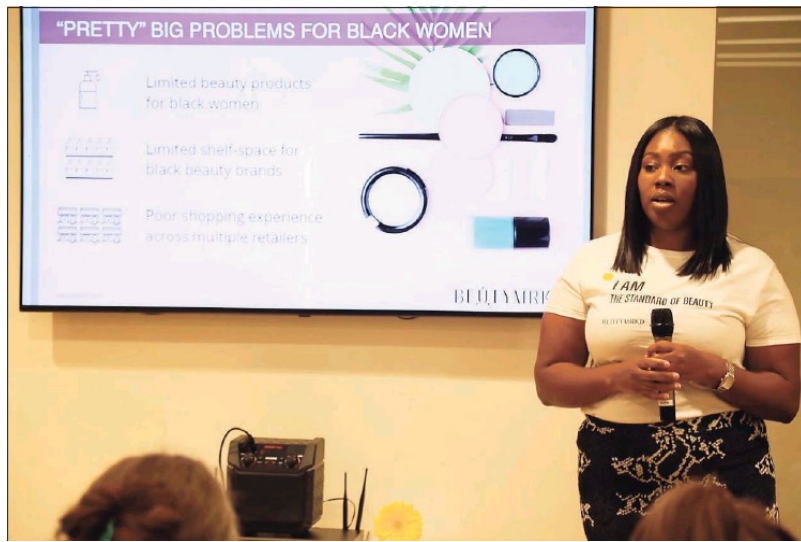


As seen in Stamford Advocate, The Darien Times, and Norwalk's The Hour



Startups

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'REALLY EMPOWERING'

Female entrepreneurs dive into 'Dolphin Tank'

STAMFORD ADVOCATE

By Jarret Liotta

22 Jul 2021

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DARIEN — Some female entrepreneurs made quite the splash in an event its founder likens to the popular TV show “Shark Tank.”



Wendy Ward of futuresTHRIVE presents to people at the Female Founder Pitch Night at Hayvn Hatch in Darien on Monday.

Female Founder Pitch Night at Hayvn Hatch challenged six burgeoning teams of businesswomen to present their ideas and their initial experiences in attempting to start different business ventures.

Hayvn founder and chief collaborator Felicia Rubinstein said it was more of a “Dolphin Tank,” as there’s a lot more support and encouragement for those presenting their ideas from the primarily female audience.



Vernita Tertullien of BigHire talks about her business at the Female Founder Pitch Night in Darien.

“It’s really nice to have this access,” according to Alexa Murray of Greenwich, who along with her mother has created a business called SCHEDULETE that focuses on athletic scheduling databases for coaches.

“I’ve watched a number of Hayvn Hatches and now to be on the other side is cool,” she added.

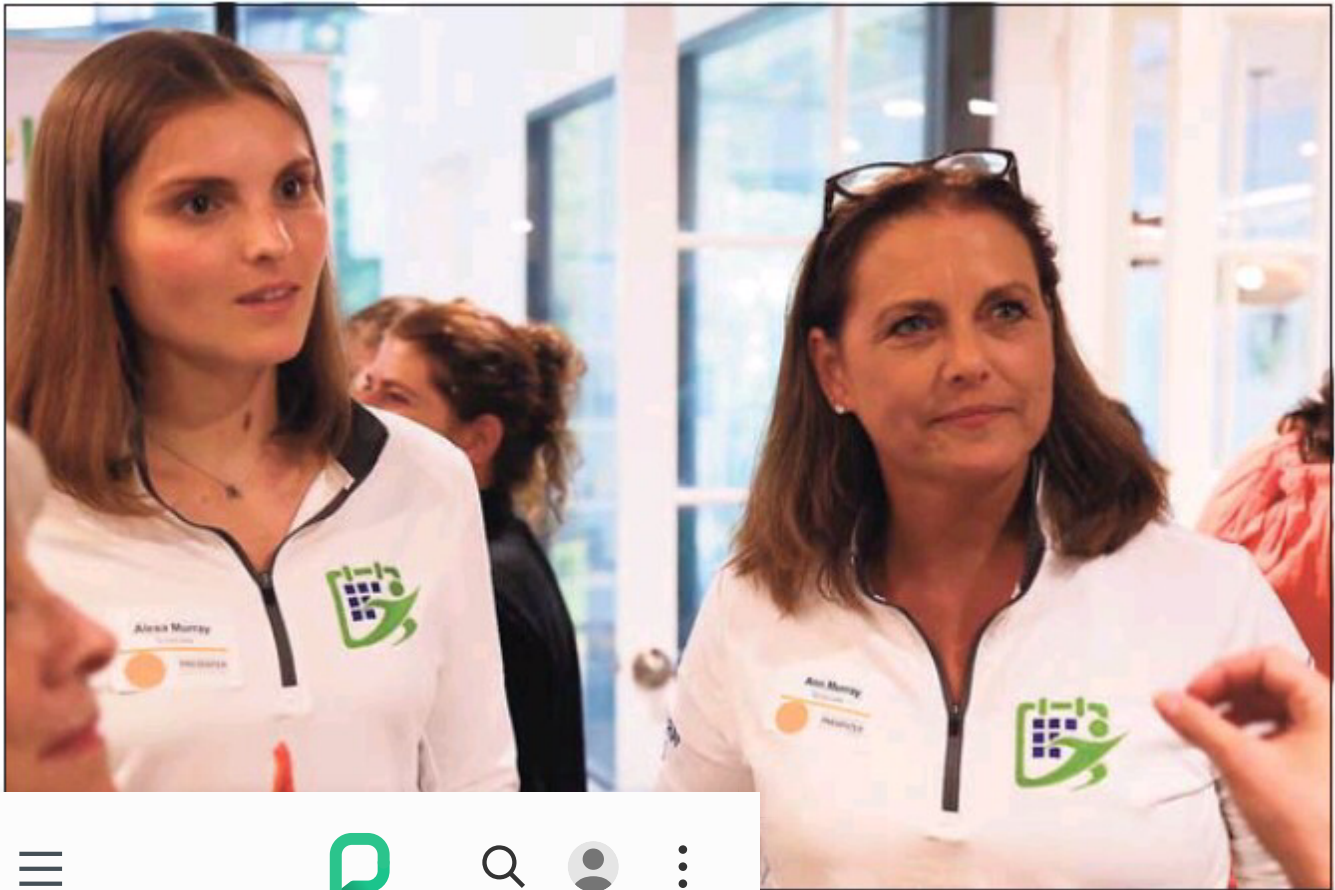
The event also gave each presenter an opportunity to earn some discretionary contributions from attendees, as well as network with a wide range of business professionals.

“It’s really fun,” Rubinstein said. “You get to vote,



Holly Hurd of VentureMomPinkBook.com talks about her business at Female Founder Pitch Night at Hayvn Hatch on Monday in Darien.

and the winner is going to get \$5,000.”



uture Schedulete at the Female Founder Pitch

Night at Hayvn Hatch.

“These people are ready to get funded,” Rubinstein said of the six businesses, which are in various launch stages but — as women-run ventures — suffer from long-standing challenges and shortfalls faced by female- and minority owned businesses in terms of seed funding and angle support.

“Women do not get funding,” Wendy Ward, presenter with futures THRIVE, said, noting that female business owners traditionally receive only 3 percent of the pie. “And for black and diverse founders, it’s less than 1 percent.”

Participants were all previously vetted by members of the Hatch team, which includes Realist Ventures, VentureMom, and P. Garyn Productions, as well as support from CTNext.

Other participants included Talia Friedman and Asya Geller of Werkzy, Holly Hurd of

VentureMomPinkBook.com, Zina King and Vernita Tertullien

of BigHire, and Kadene Brown and Shellise Josephs of BE.U.TYMRK.D, which took the \$5,000 prize.

Havyn has more than 200 members who participate in a shared work space on the Boston Post Road, furnished with different options and amenities for

different needs, including fulltime, part-time, and by the hour.

“This is a woman-centric co-working space,” Rubinstein said. “We really are here to support female entrepreneurs.”

Cameron Ruffa of Darien is using space at Hayvn to work on her upcoming Bar exam.

“It’s been great, just in terms of having a space outside of your home,” she said. “And it’s female-owned, female-run, and it’s mostly a female-only membership, so it’s really empowering to be in this space.”

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