



## PEAK SAFETY SYSTEMS WINS BOB EVANS FARMS HEROES TO CEOS GRANT CONTEST

*Veteran Entrepreneur Beat Two Other Veteran Business Owners to Win \$30,000*

NEW ALBANY, Ohio (April 26, 2019) — [Bob Evans Farms](#) announced today Jonathan Norton, founder and CEO of [Peak Safety Systems](#), is the winner of the company's third annual Our Farm Salutes "Heroes to CEOs" grant-giving program. Norton is a former Army Ranger, inventor of RopeSafe Edge protection system, a combat Veteran-owned product development company, with a mission to create and deploy the best safety equipment for military, first responders, and rope access professionals. As the contest winner, he is the recipient of a \$30,000 business grant from Bob Evans Farms.

On April 25, three Veteran-owned companies, [Biao Skincare](#), [Peak Safety Systems](#) and [Living Tiny, LLC](#), attended an exclusive event at [blueprint + co](#) in New York City to pitch their business to a panel of judges for a chance to win the \$30,000 business grant. Prior to their presentation, they each had a 45-minute prep session with world-renowned businessman and investor [Daymond John](#) to refine their pitch and receive invaluable business insight.

Peak Safety System's goal is to create functional, life-saving equipment that inspires confidence in the men and women who serve the country and their communities, and provide meaningful employment for Veterans. The company is headquartered in Hartford, Connecticut. The other two finalists were extraordinary as well. The future will be bright for [Biao Skincare](#) (founded by Nicole Baldwin) and [Living Tiny, LLC](#) (founded by Levi and Chandler Green).

"This is the third year of the Heroes to CEOs program and, again, we saw lots of great entries. We continue to be blown away by the passion each Veteran holds for their business," said Mike Townsley, President and CEO, Bob Evans Farms. "Jonathan Norton did a phenomenal job during his pitch and his innovative business is really going to bring something special not just to the Veteran community, but to all of us."

For the third consecutive year, Bob Evans Farms partnered with Daymond John, the People's Shark, for the successful Heroes to CEOs program. They also extended their reach by partnering with [Bunker Labs](#), a 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to helping new Veteran entrepreneurs start their own business. In the grant-giving program's third year, there was a 33 percent spike in entries, with a total of 210 total entries.

Each eligible entry was scored based on reason, presentation, feasibility, opportunity and future success of the business, idea or plan submitted. The entry pool was narrowed to three finalists who attended the event to pitch their business.

"It was an honor to have the opportunity to sit down with Nicole, Jonathan, Levi and Chandler to provide advice before their pitch. Each one blew me away with their creativity, innovation and solid business plan," Daymond John, the People's Shark, said. "Jonathan Norton really rose to the top as an exceptional leader who is ready to take his business to the next level."



"These outstanding pitches by Veteran entrepreneurs are evidence that leadership, discipline, and strategic planning transcend military service," said Katherine Kostreva, Northeast Region Executive Director, Bunker Labs. "Bunker Labs is honored and grateful for the partnership with Bob Evans and The Shark Group, which inspired veteran businesses nationwide to compete, and awarded these finalists a once in a lifetime experience. Kudos to Jonathan Norton for the win!"

For more information on the "Heroes to CEOs" program visit [www.ourfarmsalutes.com](http://www.ourfarmsalutes.com). For more information about Bob Evans Farms visit [www.bobevansgrocery.com](http://www.bobevansgrocery.com) and for more information about Bunker Labs visit [www.bunkerlabs.org](http://www.bunkerlabs.org).

Past winners from the Heroes to CEOs contest, [BeneFIT Medical Apparel](#) (founded by James Reynolds), [K9 Salute](#) (founded by Jessica Harris), [Street Smarts VR](#) (founded by Oliver Noteware), FanFood (founded by Carson Goodale), Mutt's Sauce (founded by Charlynda Scales) and Vet Veggies (founded by Jerry Martin and Darryl Hill), have all had great success since receiving their grant. Because of the Heroes to CEOs grant, they've each been able to meet and exceed their business goals – including growing into new markets, expanding their production and sales as well as reaching new target audiences.

#### **About Bob Evans Farms, Inc.**

Bob Evans Farms, Inc. is a brand born and raised on the promise of farm-fresh goodness. For more than 70 years, the company has been making delicious, quick-to-table farm-fresh food that is sold in grocery stores all over the country. Today, Bob Evans brand mashed potatoes and macaroni & cheese products are the #1 selling refrigerated side dishes in the United States\*. Based in Columbus, Ohio and owned by Post Holdings, Inc., a consumer-packaged goods holding company, Bob Evans Farms is also a leading producer and distributor of refrigerated potato, pasta and vegetable-based side dishes, pork sausage, and a variety of refrigerated and frozen convenience food items under the Bob Evans, Owens and Pineland Farms brand names. For more information about Bob Evans Farms, Inc., visit [www.bobevansgrocery.com](http://www.bobevansgrocery.com).

\*SOURCE: IRI Total US MULO Latest 52 W/E 3/24/19.

#### **About Bunker Labs**

[Bunker Labs](#) is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization headquartered in Chicago, with chapters in 25+ cities, built by military veteran entrepreneurs to empower other military veterans to start and grow businesses. Through local chapters organized in cities across the U.S., Bunker Labs provides educational programming, mentors, events, and thriving local networks to help military veterans succeed and thrive as entrepreneurs and innovators.

#### **About Daymond John**

[Daymond John](#) can be seen Sunday nights on ABC's four-time Emmy Award winning series, Shark Tank, where as an original cast member he is in the midst of his 10<sup>th</sup> season. John is widely recognized for his accomplishments as an entrepreneur and branding expert following the success of his groundbreaking lifestyle brand, FUBU® and is a two-time *New York Times* Best



Selling Author, most recently for his book Rise and Grind. In recognition of his impact in the entrepreneurial space, John was named a Presidential Ambassador for Global Entrepreneurship under the Obama Administration, and has been bestowed the NAACP Entrepreneurs of the Year Award, the Congressional Achievement Award for Entrepreneurship and more.

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