

# Alumni Highlights

January-March 2021

tsai center for  
innovative  
thinking

## Partnerships bring products to new audiences:

Accelerator and Summer Fellowship alum team **Grantas Cosmetics** (founded by **Lillian Childress YC '17, YSE '20**) launched its sustainable lip and cheek stick in Urban Outfitters in January. Meanwhile, **junzi kitchen** (led by **Lucas Sin YC '15, Wanting Zhang YSE '11, and Yong Zhao YSE '08, PhD '15** and supported by Tsai CITY predecessor Yale Entrepreneurial Institute, or YEI) marked the Lunar New Year in February by partnering with the Met Museum to launch a special-edition chili oil inspired by the Met's current exhibition, "Celebrating the Year of the Ox."



Image via [junzi kitchen](#)



Image via [Urban Outfitters](#)

## Yale innovators connect with national cohorts:

Several alumni teams are building on their work at Yale in national accelerators and incubators. Summer Fellowship alum teams **Bild** (founded by **Pradyut Paul SOM '21**) and **Raise Green** (founded by **Franz Hochstrasser YSE '18** and **Matt Moroney YSE '18**) recently joined Techstars cohorts. ThermaBand (a 2020 Rothberg Catalyzer Prize finalist co-founded by **Markea Dickinson SOM '20**) was selected to join the Google for Startups Founders Academy. Coming off of raising a seed round for her current venture, EdLyft, from investors like Kleiner Perkins, Backstage Capital, and Kapor Capital, Summer Fellowship alum **Erika Hairston YC '18** recently reflected on her experience in Y Combinator in a [piece on their website](#).



Image via [Havenly Treats](#)

## A focus on local impact:

Some teams marked milestones closer to home. Accelerator and Summer Fellowship alum team **Merry Go Rounds** (**Melissa Mazzeo SOM/YSE '20**), which was featured in a [fall 2020 Fast Company article on small businesses](#) by Tsai CITY/CBEY innovation fellow Ben Soltoff, officially became a B Corporation in March. Also in March, Summer Fellowship alum team **Havenly Treats** (led by co-founder **Caterina Passoni YC '18**) opened their community cafe in downtown New Haven.

**\$2M**  
Coral Vita  
seed round

## Investment in environmental innovation:

Yale environmental innovators garnered major support early this year. **Coral Vita** (co-founded by **Gator Halpern YSE '15** and **Sam Teicher YC '12, YSE '15** and supported by YEI) raised a \$2M seed round to boost their coral reef restoration projects, [as covered in TechCrunch](#). Summer Fellowship alum team **Symbrosia** (co-founded by **Alexia Akbay YSPH '19** and **Jonathan Simonds YC '18**) received a \$256K grant from the National Science Foundation; catch up on their work in [this video from The Verge](#).

**\$256K**  
NSF grant to  
Symbrosia

These teams have connected not just with Tsai CITY, but with Yale's broader ecosystem for entrepreneurship and innovation. Learn more about this ecosystem: [entrepreneurship.yale.edu](http://entrepreneurship.yale.edu)

To learn more about Tsai CITY:  
[city.yale.edu](http://city.yale.edu)  
[city.support@yale.edu](mailto:city.support@yale.edu)