

**Acara Challenge 2011 - Finals**

**Date:** May 16, 2011

**Venue:** Institute on the Environment (IonE)

University of Minnesota, St. Paul Campus

1954 Buford Ave

325 VoTech Building

St. Paul, MN 55108

All presentations will be webcast live. [Join us online using UMConnect.](#)

<b>Room</b>	<b>Central Daylight Time</b>	
Board Room	7:30 am - 8:00 am	Coffee/pastries
Seminar Room	8:00am - 8:15 am	Welcome and Ground Rules
Seminar Room	8:15 - 8:40	Prithvi Pani (UMN-TERI)
Seminar Room	8:45 - 9:10	Sewasan (UMN-TERI)
Seminar Room	9:15 - 9:40	Swach (Cornell-Somaiya)
Seminar Room	9:45 - 10:10	PURigate (Hartford – VIT)
	10:10 - 10:45	Break
Seminar Room	10:45 - 11:10	Thenggai Thanni (VIT)
Seminar Room	11:15 - 11:40	Ankur Initiative (Duke – IIT Roorkee)
Seminar Room	11:45 - 12:10	TextRA (UMN-TERI)
Seminar Room	12:15 - 12:40	Prosperity Cart (Cornell – Somaiya)
Seminar Room	12:45 - 1:00 pm	Wrap Up
Board Room	1:00- 3:30	Judge lunch/discussions
Seminar Room		
and Board Room	3:30 - 4:30	Discussions with teams
Seminar Room	4:30 - 5:00 pm	Awards Open House
Commons	5:00 – 6:00 pm	Open House

**Acara Challenge 2011 Finalist Venture Descriptions**

**Prithvi Pani**

Prithvi Pani, a collaboration between UMN and TERI students, aims to decrease death and illness in urban slums by addressing a major root cause: poor water quality. Prithvi Pani will assemble, package, and distribute components for ceramic water filters, which eliminate 98-99% of contaminants, as well as educating customers on their use.

**Sewasan**

Sewasan, also a UMN-TERI team, is community-directed cooperative that will create and maintain toilet facilities in urban slums and charge residents to use them, either on a pay-per-

use basis or through a monthly- subscription fee. The presence of these facilities will decrease the spread of food and water-borne illnesses, increase quality of life, and provide employment opportunities for local residents.

### **Swach**

Students at Cornell and Somaiya created Swach to improve the efficiency and efficacy of the midday meal audit process in schools. Swach would provide testing kits and the communication infrastructure to test for food quality issues and report them to authorities, allowing time-strapped government auditors to focus where they are most needed.

### **PURigate**

The PURigate Water Services team, representing the University of Hartford and VIT, saw that crop yields are decreasing in Vellore because of soil contamination caused by tannery runoff. Their solution uses reverse osmosis technology to purify groundwater, which can then be used to irrigate agricultural fields for more robust harvests.

### **Prosperity Cart**

Another Cornell-Somaiya team designed Prosperity Cart, a durable, long-lasting state-of-the-art food cart for street vendors that will minimize food's exposure to dust and germs. Increased food hygiene will result in less customer illness, and, for vendors, an increased customer base and lower cost of operations.

### **Ankur Initiative**

The Ankur Initiative, a collaborative effort between Duke and IIT Roorkee students, aims to combat water stress in parts of rural India by selling affordable polytunnels—lightweight plastic miniature greenhouses—to subsistence farmers in order to reduce water loss and increase crop yields.

### **TextRA**

A third UMN-TERI team has developed TextRA, a versatile resource accessibility network that will instantly deliver key information on food and water availability at various locations to the hands of malnourished and resource-deprived individuals, saving them precious time and energy.

### **Thenggai Thanni**

Thenggai Thanni, a venture created by a team from VIT, will benefit coconut farmers in the Vellore district by buying coconuts from them at competitive prices, processing the fruits and selling them in various forms, including coconut water. The profits will then be used to provide farmers with technical know-how to boost their efficiency and economic situation.