

3AM Innovations strives to keep first responders safe with tracking software

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Startup Spotlight: 3AM Innovations strives to keep first responders safe

Back in 2009, Patrick O'Connor was a volunteer firefighter in Grand Island when two Buffalo firefighters [died](#) responding to a fire on Genesee Street. The two men's deaths shook O'Connor. He knew there had to be a better way to track firefighters when they were inside burning buildings or responding to other dangerous situations.

He spent many late nights in his home office, researching technologies that could help firefighters. But O'Connor couldn't find what he was looking for. So he decided to build it himself. He teamed up with co-founder Ryan Litt and situational awareness software company [3AM Innovations](#) was born. Bolstered by a recent \$9 million investment from Rochester billionaire Tom Golisano's Grand Oaks Capital and under the leadership of an experienced startup CEO, the company has its sights set on growth.

Software tracks first responders in real time

3AM's software is called Florian, named after the patron saint of firefighters. Through mobile apps, smartwatches and GPS radios, 3AM's software tracks first responders in real time and displays their locations on a map. Florian also provides first responders with 3D maps, which gives them a better idea of the location they are responding to prior to arrival, and records the entire incident response so agencies can play it back for debriefing and training opportunities.

"Everything that's going on in the world today, not just fires, but wildland fires, active shooters, disasters, floods, we cover that all," CEO Mel Passarelli said. Currently, 3AM's software is being used in several large cities in the U.S., though company leaders declined to name those cities. Litt and O'Connor have demonstrated their technology to the U.S. military, which is interested in using it.

New CEO is a WNY native

Passarelli started as CEO of 3AM Innovations in August. Before that, he was on 3AM's board of directors. He took over the CEO position from Litt, who is now the chief operations officer. O'Connor is president of the company. Passarelli grew up in Grand Island. His mother worked as a seamstress in the same downtown Buffalo building that is now home to 3AM's offices.

Passarelli has decades of experience leading software startups across the country. He's led five companies to successful exits. From left, CEO Mel Passarelli, COO Ryan Litt, and president Patrick O'Connor stand for a portrait in front of a whiteboard covered with positioning and localization brainstorming, at 3AM Innovations in Buffalo, September 26, 2022. Positioning and localization are key elements in 3AM Innovation's app Florian Mobile, an adaptive tactical command software which enhances situational awareness and operational efficacy for first responders. Florian Mobile is "device agnostic," meaning it can be downloaded onto any device that is compatible with the software.

But that's not his goal with 3AM. He believes in the company's mission and is dedicated to growing 3AM so its lifesaving technology can get in the hands of as many first response agencies as possible. "We're not here to

sell a company," Passarelli said. "We're here to build a really cool company. We want to build something that's valuable, add jobs and whatever happens in the future happens, but that's where our focus is in the long term."

Passarelli said it has been a dream of his to work for a Western New York company and help grow the local technology community. He's also always dreamed of working for a Western New York company and helping to grow the local technology community.

3AM wants to double employee count

Since 2017, 3AM Innovations has raised \$14 million from investors, with the most recent investment coming from Golisano's investment company, Grand Oaks Capital. In fact, Golisano funded 3AM's entire \$9 million round and has pledged to be a long-term, strategic partner going forward, Litt said. 3AM plans to use the investment to focus on expansion. Company leaders want to get their software into the hands of more agencies around the country and the world.

Ruggedized devices equipped with Florian Mobile, an adaptive tactical command software Florian Mobile which enhances situational awareness and operational efficacy for first responders, photographed at 3AM Innovations in Buffalo, September 26, 2022.

3AM has 14 employees, mostly in Western New York. The company is looking to double its workforce with a focus on filling tech, marketing, sales and customer support roles.

3AM also wants to establish regional hubs across the country, which will be important as more agencies use the Florian software. That way, employees will be much closer to the agencies using the software and can get there more quickly if something goes wrong.

"This is lifesaving stuff," Litt said. "It can't fail."