

Press Release

Winners announced in business plan competition

On Monday, March 9th, five finalists in the Northeast Wisconsin Business Plan competition took their turns standing before a judging panel. With a maximum of 15 minutes on the clock, each competitor explained why their business plan should be deemed the winner of the contest.

Much was at stake. Their placement after the final round was to determine the distribution of \$25,000 in prize money which is to be used to put the business plan into action within one year of its receipt. After the presentations were completed, the scores were tabulated. The presentation scores were then combined with the scores from the executive summaries and business plans submitted by each of the finalists. The following results were announced:

The first place prize of \$10,000 was awarded to Dr. Jessica Serwe-Rodriguez of Ideal Chiropractic, Fond du Lac. Finding the root of the problem instead of merely managing the symptoms is the unique approach presented by Dr. Serwe-Rodriguez. She has received extensive training on a new approach to chiropractic that takes patient care to the next level. Ideal has specific spinal rehabilitation equipment that only a handful of clinics in Wisconsin have. She focuses on improving a patient's posture and spinal structure to not only correct the root of the problems, but also make patients look and feel better about themselves. Dr. Serwe-Rodriguez is able to take both before and after x-rays and pictures of the patient's posture to objectively measure the amount of improvement in the patient. Ideal additionally offers massage therapy and has nutritional supplements available for sale. Ideal Chiropractic is a family practice serving anyone from newborns to seniors.

The second place prize of \$6,000 was awarded to Andy Reuland, Credit Coach Electronic Services (CCES) of Kaukauna. Reuland is developing Credit Coach Plus, a unique software application for Financial Institutions to maximize the potential of their current online banking. Using a model of "Software as a Service" that has no upfront costs and unlimited customization for the institution, the product can be adopted quickly and efficiently, with the end result of putting Credit Coach Plus in front of over 100 million online banking customers. The product itself is an automated system that assists customers with budgeting, repairing their credit report, and maximizing their credit scores, with the goal of making these consumers viable to the bank as borrowers.

The third place of \$4,000 was awarded to Rob Zwettler and Dustin Overbeck of Town Accounting of Sturgeon Bay. Town Accounting's business plan outlines a delivery of its flagship product, a web-based accounting and bookkeeping solution, to small towns and municipalities across Wisconsin and the Midwest. Their service, according to their plan, goes beyond what traditional PC-based software packages provide since they plan to leverage the many advantages of proven Cloud Computing technologies including web design and hosting; automatic data backups and recovery; and online document management. Town's customers will receive significant time-saving advantages over competing products, which will allow them to work more efficiently and effectively with less downtime.

The fourth place prize of \$3,000 was awarded to Heather Whittaker of Pen-Tech Professional LLC of Outagamie County. Helping their clients add "Published Author" to their resume is the vision of this local publisher. They are an independent publishing company providing copywriting, consulting, publishing, and

project management to authors and businesses throughout the Fox Valley. The business plan states that Pen-Tech Professional provides authors an alternative that maximizes profits by charging a flat fee for publishing, versus the industry standard of paying authors via royalties. Pen-Tech Professional retains no rights to the manuscript and 100% of the profits are retained by the author. Publishing is filled with potential traps associated with copyright registration, ISBN #'s, bar codes, cover design, typesetting, digital versus offset printing, galleys, e-books, marketing, and distribution just to name a few. Pen-Tech Professional aims to help their clients navigate through the publishing process.

The fifth place prize of \$2,000 was awarded to C.J. Schmidt of Fiber MX, LLC of DePere. C.J. Schmidt De Pere has created a "green" building product from cellulose fiber recovered from paper mill sludge, recycled paper and nylon (from post-consumer carpet). According to the business plan, this dramatically reduces micro-cracking in freshly placed concrete. Water, salt and other chemicals penetrate concrete with micro cracks reducing its durability and serviceable life. Expensive new petroleum-based synthetic fiber and steel typically used will be replaced by this low cost, low carbon footprint fiber blend. The burden on Wisconsin landfills will be reduced and LEEDS credits provided.

Business plans are a critical tool in the proper planning and launch of new ventures and are the preferred mode of communication between entrepreneurs, innovators and potential investors. The goal of the Northeast Wisconsin Business Plan Competition is to encourage the preparation of business plans for start-up businesses, making significant changes to existing businesses, or launching new products in northeast Wisconsin.

Sponsors of the Northeast Wisconsin Business Plan competition include The Northeast Wisconsin Regional Economic Partnership (NEWREP); Alliant Energy; Dominion; Florida Power and Light; Fox Valley Workforce Development Board; Fox Valley Technical College; Lakeshore Technical College; Moraine Park Technical College; New North; Northeast Wisconsin Technical College; We Energies; Wisconsin Public Service; UW-Green Bay; and UW-Oshkosh College of Business.