

### Winners announced in business plan competition

On Friday March 2, 2007, 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. The five finalists were selected from a group of fifty-three entries from throughout northeast Wisconsin.

A lot was at stake. Their order of finish 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 and the scores tabulated, the following results were announced:

The first place prize of \$10,000 was awarded to The Luggage Club of Oshkosh –Gene Langenecker, President and Todd Kempinger, CEO. The business model includes door-to-door luggage delivery where luggage is picked up when and where its customers designate and delivered to their travel destination at the time that they choose. The Luggage Club has been in business approximately one year.

“I can’t say enough about (the contest organizers),” said Gene Langenecker, President of The Luggage Club and presenter of their business plan in Friday’s contest. “This was an outstanding contest. It is so wonderful that everyone supports entrepreneurs throughout Northeast Wisconsin the way they do.”

The second place prize of \$6,000 was awarded to Teaosity, a tea lounge in Green Bay. The plan was submitted by Quasan and Reva Shaw and outlines a business similar to a coffee house but primarily offering specialty, high quality teas. The teas can be purchased by the cup, teapot, in bulk quantities, or in pre-bottled varieties. There will be a small selection of alternative beverages offered as well as and there will be some pastry items available for purchase. The business will be located in Ashwaubenon at the Shoppes at the Village lifestyle center on Oneida Street.

The third place of \$4,000 was awarded to WatchDOG LLC of New London. The plan was submitted by Ken Langenhahn. According to the business plan, WatchDOG provides professional property management and home watch service for clients who are away from their primary and/or vacation property. This entirely new business fills a void in the local service industry by providing professional home watch services while the owner is away on business or vacation.

The fourth place prize of \$3,000 was awarded to Bean Street Café, Campbellsport. Cheri Stoffel submitted the plan. Bean Street Café plans to open as a coffeehouse and eatery in

Campbellsport, Wisconsin. The café will provide high-quality coffee, tea and food with exceptional customer service. The primary product will be specialty coffee and fine teas, complemented by a limited menu including sandwiches, ice cream, and bakery items.

"I am very excited," said Stoffel. "Tomorrow, I am meeting with the landlord and going through floor plans. It's just a matter of regrouping and seeing how this changes my original plan. This was a great learning opportunity. I'm very glad I did it."

The fifth place prize of \$2,000 was awarded to Stellar Blue Web Design of Neenah. Jim Dobinski, Cathy Wunrow and Dustin White submitted the plan. The business is a full-service design agency specializing in creative, affordable websites along with state-of-the-art programming, reliable hosting and domain name registration and search engine optimization.

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.

The second annual Northeast Wisconsin Business Plan Competition was coordinated by the Northeast Wisconsin Regional Economic Partnership (NEWREP) and the Northeast Wisconsin chapter of the Wisconsin Innovation Network (WIN). The competition was sponsored by NEWREP, the Fox Valley Workforce Development Board, New North, Wisconsin Public Service, Alliant Energy, We Energies, Dominion, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, Fox Valley Technical College, Lakeshore Technical College, Moraine Park Technical College, the UW-Oshkosh College of Business, the UW-Oshkosh Center for Community Partnerships and the Bay Area Workforce Development Board.

Photo identification: (left to right) Drew Fleck, Wisconsin Innovation Network - NE; Rob Kleman, Co-Chair, Northeast Wisconsin Business Plan Competition Planning Committee; Gene Langenecker, President, of The Luggage Club, Winner of the contest; and Brenda Hicks-Sorensen, President-Elect, Northeast Wisconsin Regional Economic Partnership.