

12-10-2012

Learning to grow

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Recommended Citation

"Learning to grow" (2012). *News Releases*. 531.
https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls/531

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Learning to grow

12.10.2012 | Engineering, Students, Campus and Community, Business Five teams of aspiring entrepreneurs will move into the final round of the University of Dayton's 2012-13 Business Plan Competition, competing for a \$25,000 top prize and up to 25 hours of free legal advice from the University of Dayton Law School's new Entrepreneurship and Intellectual Property Clinic.

"Our finalists this year are a technology-driven mix, including ventures offering online entertainment, retail and travel platforms plus mobile apps and a device that helps diabetics know when they can drive safely," said Diane Sullivan, competition coordinator and associate professor

of management.

Now in its seventh year, the competition offers nearly \$175,000 in total support with a \$25,000 top prize along with expert advice on transforming a great idea into a viable, marketable, innovative business plan. The competition was recognized last year as one of the 15 largest college business plan competitions by Under30CEO, a news and trend media site for young entrepreneurs.

"The fact that our competition is one of the largest university-sponsored competitions in the nation is a testament to the vision and hard work of our faculty," said Dean McFarlin, chair of the management and marketing department. "Every year, the competition has more to offer new startups and continues to increase its impact in the community. Not only do we provide an exceptional learning experience for our students, we give new ventures the support they need to launch. In the end, this benefits both the University and the entire region."

Finalists are:

Churchlink offers a mobile device application that allows pastors to communicate instantly with their congregations through sermons, events, videos, blogs, alert notifications and more. The app can be personalized for individual churches and offers the same features of a custom app for a low monthly subscription fee. Team members: William Bradford, Neil Peterson and University of Dayton students Robyn Bradford, Hans Hartwig and Brenda Zawaski.

Myendostore.com allows consumers to earn money for endorsing products through their social networks. Team members: Russell Gottesman and Dani DeTrude, University of Dayton student.

OurVinyl.TV is an online platform offering an intuitive way to discover, collect and share high quality music videos. Similar to Pandora, users can enter the name of an artist and stream content directly to their Apple device, television or Xbox. Team members: Allen Ralph, William Limratana and University of Dayton alumni Michael Reuther and Jordan Scheider.

TravelBlender connects travelers with each other and customizes trips based on preferences in destinations, time frame and travel group demographics such as age and gender. Users sign up online for free. Team members: Genevieve Catalano and George, L'Heureux, University of Dayton alumnus.

SafeStart by AoneC is an in-vehicle glucose monitor that tests glucose levels of diabetics. If levels are not in an acceptable range, a diabetic can still start the vehicle, but the drive wheels will be disabled. Team members: Cathy Armstrong, Anthony Saettel and John Saettel, University of Dayton alumnus.

All finalists also will be assigned industry-specific outside mentors to help them develop full business plans. Final presentations will be held in March; winners are announced at the School of Business Administration's entrepreneurship program banquet in April.

The University of Dayton is recognized nationally for its innovative programs for entrepreneurship education. For the past seven years, The Princeton Review and *Entrepreneur* magazine ranked the University of Dayton as having one of the top 20 programs in the nation.

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