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A Winning Pitch

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Innovative business ideas incorporating high-tech systems and social media approaches took home elevator pitch prizes in the first round of the University of Dayton's 2012-2013 Business Plan Competition.

Dean McFarlin, chair of the University's management and marketing department and NCR Professor of Global Leadership Development said many of the entries demonstrated new, creative uses of technology or social media, some of which were targeted at helping solve

important social problems.

Now in its seventh year, the competition offers nearly \$175,000 in total support, including a \$25,000 top prize and up to 25 hours of free legal help from the University of Dayton School of Law, as well as expert advice on transforming a great idea into a viable, marketable, innovative business plan.

Entries from outside the University continue to grow and continue to do well in the competition, McFarlin said. The elevator pitch winner and more than half of the semifinalists are local entrepreneurs. Along with those entrepreneurs, University students from every academic unit on campus and alumni collectively submitted 114 entries, a new record. All entries presented their elevator pitches Oct. 27.

Fifteen entries were also selected to move on to the five-minute semifinal cameo round and will each earn \$1,000 for presenting in that round. Semifinalists will make presentations Nov. 17 vying for five finalist spots. Finalists will be assigned outside mentors to help develop complete business plans to compete for the \$25,000 top prize.

Elevator pitch winners:

First Place, \$1,500: Nancy Wheeler, Mach 3 ID, a security system for personal property.

Second, \$1,000: Genevieve Catalano, TravelBlender, an online service to match travelers with ideal companions and destinations.

Third, \$500: Robyn Bradford, ChurchLink, a mobile app company aimed at supporting churches.

Fourth, \$500: Dani DeTrude, Myendostore.com, an online store where people can earn money by endorsing products.

Other elevator pitch winners, \$250: Michelle Eldridge for Mods and Rods Garage, resources and facilities for car restorations; Yunqui Liu for Partyparties, a website for sharing information about parties and events; Catherine Saettel for SafeStart, a glucose testing device that prevents a car from starting if glucose levels are not acceptable; Aaron Pugh for The Hot Seat, a heated bleacher seat with back support; and Daniel Ricupero for MyEventMetrics, an analytic platform to help businesses manage brand ambassadors.

Business Plan Competition semifinalists are:

- Top four elevator pitch winners plus Saettel and Ricupero.
- Cole Aston for Brad Eley Project
- Philip Bohun for DRENCH
- Miles Grundy for MyDrink
- Colin Johnson for Hammocks that Help
- Phillip Koo for ShakeAlarm
- Michael Reuther for OurVinyl.TV
- Tim Sandlund for REACH Vitamins
- Tony Sisson for xPirate Games
- Emily Wood for Disaster Master

Final presentations will be held in March. Winners will be announced at the School of Business Administration's entrepreneurship program banquet in April.

The University of Dayton is recognized nationally for its innovative undergraduate entrepreneurship program. The Princeton Review and *Entrepreneur* magazine have ranked the program among top 20 in the nation for seven straight years.

For more information on the competition visit <http://sba.udayton.edu/udbpc> (url: <http://sba.udayton.edu/udbpc>) .