

News Release

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NDSU Research & Technology Park Announces Youth Entrepreneurship Awards

June 16, 2010-Fargo, ND- High school students from Fargo-Moorhead and the surrounding area competed for college tuition vouchers in the first annual NDSU Research & Technology Park Youth Entrepreneurship Academy during a special event on Friday June 11.

The \$500 vouchers are to be used at North Dakota State University. Eight juniors and seniors from Minnesota and North Dakota participated in the program.

"Minnesota, North Dakota and the country's economy depend upon not only the creation of new innovations and technologies but also their commercialization," said Tony Grindberg, Executive Director of the NDSU Research & Technology Park. "The future entrepreneurs who participated in the Youth Entrepreneurship Academy have advanced their critical skills and abilities, which will aid them in college and their careers."

The weeklong academy was based on Wendy Kennedy's entrepreneurship program "So what? who cares? why you?". Kennedy who resides in Ottawa, Ontario is known for her program by numerous entrepreneurship and educational organizations across the globe. Students formed teams to create investor presentations for a range of case studies.

First place went to "MHP- Manipulating the Healing Process" with team members Joey Gedgaud from Moorhead High School, and Trevor Sessing from Fargo South High School. The team was mentored by David Batcheller, Appareo Systems.

"I really learned what it means to create a marketing plan and a business," said Joey Gedgaud. "The most important skill I learned was working with people and understanding their strengths and weaknesses and getting the right relationship operating."

Trevor Sessing agreed. "The whole experience left me with an understanding of how much it takes to be a successful entrepreneur."

"I had no idea how much technical work goes into creating a business," added Trevor Sessing.

NDSU Research & Technology Park staff, industry experts and technology-based entrepreneurs worked with the teams to test the feasibility of the case studies, identifies capital needs and devise a management plan.

"It's been a busy week, but rewarding especially when you see the light bulb go off in a student's eyes when you answer their questions," David Batcheller said.

The Barry D. Batcheller Award for Entrepreneurial Distinction was presented to Joey Gedgaud. "When I came here last week I did not know a single person on my team," he said. "But when you spend this much time around the clock with people you get to know them pretty well. I have made many new friends through this experience."

Judges for the academy were David Martin, Choice Financial; Steve Halverson, Heartland Trust; Jim Buus, Goldmark Property Management; and Andrew Christiansen, Arthur Ventures.

Academy sponsors included:

Fargo Public Schools, West Fargo Public Schools, Moorhead Public Schools, Appareo Systems, Choice Financial, State Bank and Trust of Fargo, Indigo Signworks, North Dakota Department of Commerce, Heyer Engineering, Flint Communications, WCCO Belting, Inc., Gate City Bank, Eide Bailly, Dakota Medical Foundation, Cornerstone Bank, Bank of North Dakota, S&S Promotions, South East Educational Cooperative, Cass Clay and Fiebiger, Swanson, West & Co.

Other teams participating in the event included:

Nature's Catalyst: Saydee Mattson from Casselton High School, Kristian Lien from Moorhead High School, and Kent Kjesbo from West Central Area High School. The team was mentored by Brad Ness, S&S Promotions.

Red Cell Technology: James Kallander from Moorhead High School, Austin Swecker from Fargo North High School, and Jasmyn Sutton from West Central Area High School. The team was mentored by Joe Sandin, Onsharp.

About NDSU Research & Technology Park (www.ndsuresearchpark.com)

The NDSU Research & Technology Park operates to enhance the investments in North Dakota State University by the citizens of North Dakota. Through partnerships with international, national and regional centers of excellence, high technology-based businesses, and the research community at NDSU, the Research & Technology Park will achieve successful technology-based development and broaden the economic base of North Dakota.