

The 2007 Entrepreneurship High School Challenge

Presented by
The Fifth Third Entrepreneurship Institute
at Northern Kentucky University

The Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow Compete Today

The *Fifth Annual Entrepreneurship High School Challenge* was held on April 19, 2007 at NKU. The Entrepreneurship Institute teams up with local high schools to hosts a competition founded on entrepreneurial principles and presentation of ideas. This year thirty teams from the region presented their business plans to a panel of judges.

Competing teams work to develop their plans at their local high school. In many cases, internal competitions are conducted ahead of time in order to select the best ideas. The tops teams from each high school go on to compete at the Challenge at Northern Kentucky University. The selection criteria for the winning teams include feasibility, logo, market research, and management styles.

The benefits of this program are two fold according to Cheryl Armstrong, an entrepreneurship teacher at Woodward Technical School. "The Challenge allows the students to learn from other people including peers and industry experts. They are exposed to different things in a professional atmosphere. "Cheryl also points out that this kind of press makes the general population aware of what the school and the students are doing. "It lets people see that we have productive, dynamic kids. This is a good thing as it opens doors for other types of support."

There were a variety of business ideas presented at the 2007 competition – fashion designers, paintball outfitters, hair salons to name just a few. In previous years, winners have gone on to place at the national *Young Entrepreneurs Conference and Business Competition* in Milwaukee.

Cheryl explained that, "Everyone in the Entrepreneurship Institute treats us royally. It is a wonderful event with wonderful people. We have benefited from this partnership with NKU. We receive 100% support from them and they are totally centered on the students."

The NKU Fifth Third Bank Entrepreneurship Institute (EI) and its programs also continue to grow. The program now has a major, minor, certification, specialization and avenues to take many courses online. The EI is a comprehensive resource for students, faculty, and the regional business community that promotes entrepreneurship and teaches the skills necessary to operate entrepreneurially in both start-ups and large, established organizations.

