



PRESS RELEASE: Ferris Entrepreneurship Institute Launches Innovation Unleashed Business Pitch Competition

Sandy C Gholston to: Archive

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Included below is a press release regarding the upcoming Innovation Unleashed event as sponsored by the Entrepreneur Institute at Ferris State University, bolstered by partnerships with local and regional entrepreneurs. Any questions about this release can be directed to Sandy Gholston, News Services and Social Media Manager.

To read the online version of this release, visit:

<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/archive/2012/april/entrepreneur.htm>

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Ferris Entrepreneurship Institute Launches Innovation Unleashed Business Pitch Competition

BIG RAPIDS – Ferris State University students and community members will pitch their innovative business concepts for a chance to win up to \$750 during Innovation Unleashed, a pitch competition, on Wednesday, April 11. The reception begins at 5:30 p.m. followed by the start of competition at 6 p.m. in IRC Room 120.

The event, presented by Ferris' Entrepreneurship Institute, is a startup version of a growing concept of networking entrepreneurs to launch new business concepts, said Frank Bower, project manager for the Entrepreneurship Institute.

“We are trying to incubate an opportunity for student entrepreneurs to reach out and bring their innovative business ideas to life,” said Bower, a non-traditional student working on an Accounting degree who also has experience as a business owner. “By sharing business ideas with the Ferris and Big Rapids communities, we are networking people and sharing resources that will help our entrepreneurs start new businesses. We can develop these resources and deliver them to students through education and innovation of new curriculum.”

Ten teams of Ferris students will compete in a Student Showcase and four teams of community members will compete in a Community Showcase. Each team will have five minutes to present a business idea, which will be rated by a panel of judges and the audience.

The grand prize winner of the Student Showcase will be awarded \$500, and \$250 will go to second place. A \$250 award will go to the team chosen by the audience. The Community Showcase winner will get \$250 and \$100 will go to second place.

The prize money was raised through contributions by more than 20 local business owners who see a direct benefit in entrepreneurial education and development of resources, said Bower, who lives in Morley.

Those businesses include Chemical Bank, Schuberg Insurance Agency, Kraftube, JW Speaker, Intrepid Plastics, Michigan Works West Central, ABC Auto, Simply Speaking and Applied Imaging. Several more businesses have donated products and gift certificates for door prizes for the audience.

“This is a great opportunity to watch people launch new business ideas and to network,” said Bower, who noted similar events will be held each spring and fall.

The panel of judges includes Ron Steiner, Michigan State University Extension Entrepreneurship Development Educator and founder of The Kitchen Incubator in Hart (www.startingblock.biz); Bonnie Knopf, a Ferris alumna who is president of Intrepid Plastics in Grand Rapids (www.intrepidplastics.com) and a founding member of the Grand Rapids Inventors Network (GRIN); and Kevin Kinnally, vice president/general manager of Kraftube, Inc. in Reed City (www.kraftube.com) and a local entrepreneur.

For more information on Innovation Unleashed, call Bower at (231) 250-7096 or email him at bowerf@ferris.edu.

For more information on the Entrepreneurship Institute, go here: <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/academicaffairs/extendedinternational/entrepreneur/index.htm>.

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